
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 August 2015 16:04
To: Planning
Subject: OBJECTION / Observation Insulation and cladding works at Dobson Close, NW6 - REF 2015/4041/P
Attachments: Carlton House 1.jpeg; Carlton House 2.jpeg; Kiln Place exterior.jpg; Kiln Place Room.JPG

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am the leaseholder of 50 Dobson Close. I have previously submitted an objection through your online portal. This supersedes that objection.

Whilst this project has been worked on by Camden for over a year, Leaseholders and Tenants have only just been consulted and informed at the end of June, just before the summer holidays so that people are away and have less time to research and give their opinions. Camden have told us that they are rushing this though so that they can get a grant for the works. Whilst they have been unable/unwilling to tell us how much the grant is, we understand it to be 17% of the costs. Camden have told us that the works will definitely go ahead and have been booked for September and that Planning is just a formality. Indeed, S20 notices have already been issued even before planning has been applied for and granted. **Please can you confirm that Planning will be treated correctly and independently? And if so, kindly explain why S20 notices have been issued before planning has been granted?**

I strongly object to these works for insulation and cladding works to all the blocks for the following reasons:

1. I purchased my property here because I liked the way the estate looks and feels. The addition of cladding will change it from a pleasant brick to a grotesque modern looking block. It is not, and I do not want that. Neither does anybody else who lives there.

2. The cladding will deteriorate quickly in its appearance. Whilst Camden Council will show images of estates that have been clad that look bright and fresh, the reality is very different - primarily on estates where there are individual boilers in flats as against communal systems. The boilers will overflow over time causing bad staining that would not be apparent on a brick wall. The dirty rain in Central London also makes the walls look dirty. Please see the enclosed photos of Carlton House, Canterbury Terrace, NW6 5DX. This very similar cladding is about 5 years old. Dobson Close has a mixture of boilers in the kitchens that will cause this problem and back boilers in the lounges that will need to be removed and replaced with boilers in the kitchens over the next few years. Our estate will look this terrible within 5 years. Imagine what it will look like in 10 years, 20 years or 30 years. I don't want that. Neither does anybody else who lives on the estate. The existing brick still looks great after 60 years.

3. Camden's stated reason for these works are to reduce CO2 emissions and fuel poverty.

a. The S20 notices have been issued and costs of these works have been stated at between £8,400 and £17,400 per flat. The estimated savings as stated by Camden are £280 per annum. The savings according to The Energy Saving Trust is £145 per year.

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/domestic/solid-wall>

Camden have told us that the lifespan of the cladding is 30 years. So total savings £145x30 = £4,350 vs costs of between £8,400 and £17,400.

b. But these figures are incorrect. Camden have stated to the leaseholders that there will be no maintenance required to the external cladding. I refer you to point 2 above. Clearly it is not acceptable for the estate to deteriorate to this condition due to the cladding, so it will need decorations - lets say every 7 years at a cost of £10,000 per flat (based on other similar major works in the borough). That adds £40,000 over 30 years. So now the potential 30 year savings are £4,350 vs costs of between £48,400 and £57,400. Clearly, that is just a ridiculous was of leaseholders money and council/tax payers money.

c. Many of the leaseholders are pensioners and many are on low wages and have purchased under the right to buy. My neighbour at 54 Dobson Close is a pensioner with a disabled daughter living at home. She can no way afford this - neither can many other leaseholders. Camden have not considered Leaseholder poverty. Camden do not have any figures relating to Fuel Poverty. Of course cost of gas is an issue, but they have no figures or statistics, but use the words "Fuel Poverty" repeatedly to get what they want as it is so difficult to argue. But I can put numbers on Leaseholder poverty. Nobody can afford this money that equates to between £375 and £725 per month for 2 years for no benefit at all. Just further ongoing maintenance costs that would otherwise not be needed.

d. According to The Energy Saving Advice Service which is provided by the Energy Saving Trust on behalf of the Department of Energy and Climate Change, "In an average semi-detached property with 3 bedrooms, installing external wall insulation can save around 1,100kg of carbon dioxide each year. In the same property by replacing an old G-rated boiler with an A-rated boiler with a full set of heating controls could save around 1,200kg of carbon dioxide a year."

The cost if replacing the current back boilers with new systems would be considerably less than the costs for external wall insulation and would actually save more CO2.

e. For all this cost, according to Camden, the EPC rating will change from a D to a D/C borderline. Hardly an improvement.

4. The purpose of these works is to save CO2 to meet Camden's targets for reduction. But this is not the leaseholders objective. Why should we have to pay huge sums of money for works we do not want. It is an unfair tax. Camden should find other ways of reducing CO2 by spending their own money, Not taxing leaseholders.

5. Camden have just undertaken major works of decorations to the estate that will be charged to leaseholders. Most of these works will be covered by the cladding, so would be a waste of time and money.

6. The costs of this are being recharged to Leaseholders under our leases defined as "Improvements". The definition of "improvements" is "Change for the better". Changing a pleasant looking brick estate into a modern eyesore that will get filthy and cost significant amount in maintenance that would otherwise not be needed can hardly be a "Change for the better". All items of service charge need to be reasonable. For all the reasons above, these charges are not reasonable. Should these work go ahead, then the leaseholders will jointly apply to the first tier Land Tribunal for a determination. There are a large number of Leaseholders in this estate so should this prove successful, then Camden will be burdened with a very significant extra cost.

7. There are other blocks in Camden that would actually benefit from these works. eg Kiln Place NW5 see photos enclosed. This block and estate is an ugly eyesore and due to the nature of the construction the flats are very cold. The windows are oversized compared to the walls, and the sections below the windows are thin plastic offering no insulation what so ever. If Camden have money to spend on this type of project, then do it here where it is needed.

8. Not private landlords are undertaking similar works. That is because they are a waste of money.

Please DO NOT DO THESE WORKS. NOBODY WANTS YOU TO RUIN OUR LOVELY ESTATE.

I OBJECT IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE WAY

Regards

JUSTIN BARRINGTON