




Dear Mr Peres Da Costa

As one of the substantial majority of owners/shareholders who approved the plans in a ballot, I wish to strongly endorse their benefits, both for owners and for Camden's affordable housing stock:

- at no expense to existing owners, the 35 year old block will be refurbished, through essential works to the roof, a more hygienic direct water supply to all flats, a second lift, better disability access, enhanced security including better bicycle storage, more energy efficient heating and lighting for common parts;
- the look of a tired building will be refreshed with better landscaping, a neater roof aspect, a new reception area and tidier rubbish storage area;
- without this contingent investment, owners' share of the revenue from new flat sales, and the additional 15% contribution to service charge revenues from new flats, existing owners face a levy of around £5000 on average for essential investment only (eg the roof) on top of already high service charges (around £4000 pa on average, even after pegging for 3 years through savings). This is likely to be unaffordable for older owners on fixed incomes in particular;
- the additional income flows will allow existing service charges to be cut substantially, to the benefit notably of owners on lower incomes and promoting more affordable rents.

I believe the environmental impacts have been minimised by the plans. The development is unobtrusive, certainly by comparison with many approved by the Council in nearby Bayham St, including the KoKo redevelopment. Existing top floor flats will not be overlooked and have most to benefit from reliable twin lift access. The impact of the building works will be carefully managed and access to top floor flats will be substantially maintained. There will be no additional claim on street car parking.

I hope the Council will share the overwhelmingly positive cost/benefit assessment endorsed by a substantial majority of owner/shareholders. St Matthews Lodge is one of the more affordable blocks in Camden, but it is ageing fast. There is no other way of securing investment while reducing service charges. This can only enhance its accessibility to owners and tenants with a wide range of incomes, to the benefit of Camden's housing stock.

Yours sincerely, 

(Owner/resident of 