

Unit 4,
199 Eade Road,
South Tottenham,
London.

N15 6RH

7th March, 2014

Representations to Haringey Council Site Allocations DPD, 2014

We are writing to you as residents of Unit 4, 199 Eade Road. Our warehouse is in the area covered by S3, specifically in the "area north of Vale Road".

Unit 4 is also one of the warehouses currently under enforcement action. Our landlord received notice of this just before Christmas, and we are obviously very concerned about the future of our home. Some of us attended the consultation meeting at CONEL last month, and some of us are active in our local residents' associations.

We would ask you to would consider the following comments when making your assessments and to keep us informed as the process moves forward.

Draft site allocation

In principle, we do not object to the inclusion of the place we live in the Council's considerations for redevelopment. As residents and regular users of the area, we recognise that there is a lot of potential for development. We welcome this and would like to be able to contribute.

However we are concerned that this proposal might lead to the redevelopment of our home into a place that we cannot live in the way we have chosen to, leading to the destruction of a community whose qualities have not yet been recognised or given a chance to flourish.

Design principles

We want the building we live in to be retained. Part of the attraction of ex-industrial buildings is that they allow people to do things they cannot do in flats or shared houses. We also believe they can make very good homes and that ours is a prime example.

We support the idea of a mixed-use community here, and we hope the ratio of commercial to residential use remains about the same as it is now. There are other parts of S3 which are better suited to pure industrial use or pure residential use. In the middle of S3 there is a very large plot of land, currently used for container storage. Despite it's size, it offers very little in the way of employment and is a badly underused resource.

The warehouse we live in is an example of the kind of mixed-use we would like to see preserved here. Some residents are self-employed and use parts of the unit for work such as photography or art projects. Some parts are used differently in the day and at night showing how we maximise our use of space. The unit offers rehearsal space for musicians and a fascinating location for video shoots. Most importantly for us it offers an affordable, comfortable and enjoyable place to live.

We are very interested in the idea of improving routes and spaces through this part of the warehouse district, and also the idea of creating access to the New River path without going on to Seven Sisters Road. This would provide a direct route to the green spaces of the river path and Finsbury Park for local residents.

Potential development capacity

We would be interested to know where the figures for this have come from. It is difficult to translate residential square metres into the number of people the Council wants to house here. We are against the kind of intensive housing seen nearby.

We also consider current living arrangements to make very good use of what is available. Sharing so much space means we use the surface area very efficiently. Dividing the same space into one or two bedroom units each with a bathroom and kitchen is a far less efficient way to use a space.

Implementation considerations

The most concerning aspect for us is that the enforcement action could result in the loss of our home and the way of life

that has developed here.

People are attracted to warehouse living for many different reasons. For some it is the space, for others it is the communal way of life, for some it is to live in a stimulating environment and for others it is a cost-effective solution that meets their unique needs. It also attracts many different types of people. At a typical evening meal in Unit 4 there are as many as six nationalities from as many different professions and walks of life around the table. This is the kind of diversity that Haringey prides itself on.

The community is not just within our warehouse, but is made up of the relationships between all the warehouses. We are cohesive and organised, and enjoy a sense of safety and community that is rare in London. We believe that the displacement of this established and vibrant community would be a huge loss both to the people who live here and to Haringey as a whole.

Other comments

In the section entitled "South of the Borough", the DPD states that residential use is occurring without planning permission and highlights three issues.

The first is that some of the residential accommodation is unfit for human habitation. This is simply not true of the units we live in. They are very spacious, with big rooms (at least 4m by 4m) and plenty of facilities. We have two showers, a bath, three toilets and a huge kitchen. We find this is plenty for the number of people who live here. We have a cleaner who comes every week and we all consider ourselves to be quite house-proud.

The most important thing for us is that our warehouse allows us to live in the way that we want to. We have all chosen to live communally and to share many aspects of our living arrangements. We have our bedrooms if we want privacy, but most of the time we choose to share the living space which is big enough to let us all do what we want without getting under each other's feet.

The second highlighted issue is that the necessary infrastructure to provide services to residents "cannot be adequately managed". Generally, we don't have any major problems with the infrastructure. The landlord provides extra bins on top of the ones provided by the Council, so rubbish isn't a problem. There is also an estate manager who tidies the place up every day. There are excellent transport links and plenty of local shops. There is always room for improvement, but we think the current management of infrastructure is adequate. Removal of the threat to our home and community would also mean that we can develop the communal areas between our warehouses, for example with planting and sculpture.

The third issue is that the document claims no affordable housing is being provided. None of the people who live here are rich, and living in shared houses or small flats costs just as much or more. We pay £650 per calendar month for a single room, and £800 for a couple. This includes Council Tax, gas, electricity, water, internet, TV license and two visits from the cleaner. This inclusive price makes dealing with monthly finances much easier because we don't get surprised by big bills. Many flats require a two month's deposit, some three, and the rents are the same or more, but for much less space. Other accommodation is available and we are not forced to live here, but we think it offers the best value for the way we choose to live.

We hope that you will take our representations into account when moving forward with this process.

Sincerely,

Residents of Unit 4, 199 Eade Road.