

CIARA LEEMING

Freelance Journalist

07886 532719

info@ciaraleeming.co.uk

www.ciaraleeming.co.uk

STREET FIGHTERS

Ada & Camilla Lombardi, West Hull

“I have no words to describe it...it looks like hell, it's depressing. It has almost completely been bulldozed...it's devastation.

“When we got into the house we found a letter, saying there is a regeneration programme etcetera. And the neighbour said ‘do you know these houses are coming down?’ And we said ‘WHAT’?

So we called a taxi and we went straight away to the regeneration team. And we spoke to the manager...he said the demolition project had just been approved on the previous day, which was the 18 December, the same day that our completion was done. So our house was among those which were coming down. And we looked at him like ‘how is this possible? Who has decided?’

“I used to have plants, flowers, herbs in the back garden. But the dust has destroyed everything. I cannot leave my house if there is nobody else because here the antisocial behaviour is systematic: it's every day – every day, every night. It's continuous. We have seen during these three years, children fiddling with the gas meters, setting fire to the houses. We've had to go out and buy a big torch so we can illuminate the street and see who's there. We sometimes just see people running off. We had a man who was in front of our gate in the night...everything is logged in my diary...midnight and three minutes, the man was there with a hand saw. We now have it, because to run he left it on the ground. We now have it in our back yard.

“We've had to chase youngsters from our roof so many times. We've closed the letterbox so that they cannot put anything to set the house on fire from the letterbox. I haven't put my house up for sale. If the council wants to acquire my property and my home, it has to give me the money to buy another one. And if they don't give me enough money to buy a property which is not in danger of demolition, then what's the use?”