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STREET FIGHTERS

Pat & John Dunn, Bootle, Feb 2010

“They said they were demolishing these houses because they were too big. The houses on the Klondyke – that’s their other site – theirs were too small. Now the houses they’re building down there are three bedrooms, four bedrooms, five bedrooms. Now I can’t understand why they’re demolishing five bedrooms because they’re ‘too big’ and yet they’re building five bedrooms. So I can’t see what the difference is...why these weren’t refurbished, and just left.

“We had a meeting with them first off in 2002 and we were given plans by Grimleys. Now Grimleys showed us four plans which we were to pick, and in these plans we were to stay up. They were only supposed to be demolishing up to 61 on the other side and 62 on our side of Hertford Road. And then without us knowing, I think it was the beginning of 2004, they changed the plans and they said we were down for demolition. Then I had a meeting myself with them personally, with the other members of the NAD group [Neighbours Against Demolition] and I asked Joe Robinson why the sudden change in the amount of demolition. And his answer to me was: ‘because the developers want the land.’

“Now myself, and the rest of the tenants, we don’t feel that that’s a good enough reason for us to lose our homes. If they weren’t habitable or they were deteriorating like the rest of the houses that they’d left, yes. But no. That wasn’t the reason – the developers wanted the land. And since then we’ve had some...well, I put them down as threatening letters from the council myself personally. ‘We’d have to go out, move, if we didn’t move we’d be CPO-ed’ and all this palaver. Which now it’s come to a CPO, last week.

“Luckily enough we’re strong enough...we are the stronger ones. Because when you’ve got a family you’re not prepared to divide your family. I mean you shouldn’t have to divide your family when you’ve worked all your life to provide for those children. And also worked to put a roof over their heads, and to keep a roof over their heads. That’s part of buying a property. It’s for your family...it’s not for yourself. It’s for your family, in case anything happens to you when you pop your clogs. That’s what your house is for. It’s not for yourself.”