



Mr Richard Serra MRICS MRTPI
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Dear Mr Serra,

Spurs Ground Redevelopment

SAVE Britain's Heritage has examined with interest current proposals for the redevelopment of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. Whilst we are broadly supportive of the decision for the club to remain in its home borough and redevelop on and around the existing site, we are strongly opposed to the plans for the demolition of a number of buildings on the east side of Tottenham High Road for a public piazza fronting the new stadium.

SAVE shares the view of many football fans that one of the most important and moving elements of the experience of visiting an 'urban' stadium, is the process of moving through traditional streets to a ground rooted in the existing community. By clearing a long section of buildings on the High Road, the proposed development would lose the most important element of its urban context - a context which should be viewed as an asset and an opportunity. It is SAVE's view that if this section of the High Road were cleared the new ground would simply assume the character of an out of town stadium and the relationship between it and the existing area would be lost.

As you know, the buildings in question, located between No.790 (Dial House) and the junction with Park Lane, fall within a conservation area. Two of these buildings, Fletcher House and Warmington House, are listed Grade II and eight others are locally listed. In all, SAVE considers that there are 15 buildings in this group, dating from the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, which make a positive contribution to this conservation area, the demolition of which would be very difficult to justify in light of planning policy guidance as set out in PPG15.

SAVE believes that by preserving these 15 buildings, removing rear extensions and clearing unattractive later 20th-century infill, it would be possible to maintain the important and distinctive linear character of the High Road, whilst creating permeability between it and the stadium to allow large numbers of match-goers to move freely and safely to and from the ground.

SAVE also feels, strongly, that the retention of these buildings would enhance and improve the overall quality of the ground redevelopment, both visually and in terms of visitor experience. The repair and conversion of these buildings to retail, bar and restaurant use would also add value to the scheme by creating a lively and upmarket destination on non-match days.

There are successful examples of this type of development elsewhere in London, most notably on Brushfield Street on the south side of Spitalfields Market where characterful 1930s shop units have been refurbished and integrated into the large Bishop's Square development by Foster & Partners. This element of the scheme is now, arguably, the most successful. Visitors are attracted by, and feel comfortable moving along, a piece of real, traditional, streetscape, enlivened by cafes and restaurants spilling out on the pavement. The large, modern office development behind is neither obscured nor obstructed by the older buildings. On the contrary, the retained units help to anchor the development in the conservation area and soften its impact at street level. A glass canopy at the rear of the shops links with the office block behind creating a pleasant, enclosed space. By opening up the ground floors of the shop units there is now public access both from the street and the piazza behind - creating a feeling of openness and permeability. SAVE sees no reason why a similar relationship could not be introduced on the High Road between the existing buildings and the new stadium.

In order to show how this might be achieved, SAVE has commissioned the architect Huw Thomas to undertake a study of numbers 744-766 High Road and draw the existing buildings as they might look and function if retained, repaired and put back into use. As you will see from the drawings, once restored, these buildings would be enormously attractive and could create a thriving area for eating, drinking, shopping and entertainment. With sections of unattractive later infill cleared circulation space and access routes to the stadium are opened up. Gates, flagpoles and other elements could link the buildings and create a sense of coherence, enclosure and local distinctiveness. These drawings alone bring home the wastefulness, both in conservation and economic terms, of demolition so many good, reusable buildings.

SAVE together with Huw Thomas, would value the opportunity to meet you and the football club, and explain this scheme in more detail. In the meantime, I am enclosing a watercolour elevation of the group of buildings on the High Road between No.744 to 766 and a plan of the site.

Yours sincerely,

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Secretary
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cc. Sue Cook, Haringey Council
 Katie Burnett, Haringey Council
 Richard Parish, English Heritage
 Stuart Taylor, Georgian Group
 Heloise Brown, Victorian Society
 Matthew Bradby, Tottenham Civic Society

Encs: Elevation and plan Nos. 744-766 High Road, Tottenham