



PRESS RELEASE

## DEMOLITION OF GRENFELL TOWER

The story in the Sunday Times today is deeply distressing, irresponsible and deliberately spreading of misinformation by a 'Senior Whitehall source'. The impression given through this "project fear", is that the Tower is unsafe, dangerous and therefore there is no other option except demolition.

The facts of the matter are that the Government's own Structural Engineer Ed Newman-Sanders from Atkins has confirmed "we have assessed the varying levels of damage within the Tower. From the 10<sup>th</sup> floor upwards with varying degrees of damage....we've advised that floors above 10<sup>th</sup> floor are significantly damaged. 4-10<sup>th</sup> floor less damaged. Part of the structure should be deconstructed at the earliest opportunity and as a minimum down to the 10<sup>th</sup> floor level." "It is not currently Atkins' commission to assess what can be retained and what can't."

An independent Expert senior Specialist in Structural Engineering Safety risk at the Institution of Civil Engineers said: 'below level 10 would need work but what one would call moderate repair and established repair techniques for a structure that would no longer be in residential use but it would be for a memorial structure.'

MHCLG senior civil servant in charge of Grenfell Site & Community said 'Parts of the Tower can be retained for a Memorial if that is what the community indicate they would like. By that we mean potentially some of the more damaged parts not in situ if there is a desire for example like 9/11 to retain some of the damaged parts for symbolic reasons. Or it could be some of the less damaged lower floors could be an outline... for example a Coventry Cathedral option where you can retain part of the existing building and incorporate it into something new.'

Grenfell Next of Kin: "there are no safety issues that cannot be mitigated up to Floor 10 according to the structural reports and the Government's own commissioned engineers so we are very angry and upset by this elusive 'senior Whitehall source', and resident 'Jo' which claims demolition on the basis of fear of safety when the science does not support that."

Marcio Gomes, father of stillborn baby Logan who died as a result of the toxic fumes on the night of the fire says "The future of the Tower is the single most important thing for us in bringing peace. The cavalier way this process has been conducted is inhumane and brutal. They say the Tower is unsafe now and should be demolished, which we know to be untrue even from their own structural reports and meetings I have attended. The deliberate misinformation campaign is simply a tactic to scare people into demolishing the Tower in whole as soon as possible. Out of sight. Out of mind."

Over the last 18 months, Lancaster West estate Residents Association, requested the structural engineering reports from the Government and were denied. Subsequently a freedom of Information

request by the Residents Association, was lodged in order to access key information regarding safety. That was denied.

“We find it shocking that we’ve tried to engage about the future and safety of the Tower for our residents who live immediately at the base of the Tower for two years now and they have always denied us important information. We’ve had many meetings with MHCLG, and Senior independent Engineers we asked to look at the structural reports and we take issue with the Sunday Times reporters who simply took a briefing from a ‘senior Whitehall source’ to create anxiety and fear when the facts and evidence does not support full demolition as the only option. People need the truth, full and clear information to make informed choices about something so important.” David O’Connell Vice Chair Lancaster West Estate.

The daughter of a victim who died in the fire said: “Hearing this news is extremely distressing. Why are they so determined to demolish this building? Even though we have expressed to them on many occasions that we wish the building to be preserved as part of a Memorial for our loved ones? This is the place where our beloved kin that night were reduced to dust with all their hopes and dreams for themselves and the future of their families. Is it that difficult to preserve this building partially or in whole, as a Memorial for all those who lost their lives and for their families?”

Abbas Dadou, Chair of the Lancaster West Estate says: “Residents of Lancaster West Estate have been living under the shadow of the Tower over 4 years. We haven’t seen any justice. We haven’t been given any options or choices about what we want on our doorstep. We haven’t even been given an evacuation plan if the building is so dangerous? Government can’t step in and use nudgethinking companies to fearmonger and decide for us.”

Collective statement from Grenfell Next of Kin of 27 of the 72 victims of the fire: “Finding consensus between the different stakeholders requires skill and compromise. That can only be achieved through trust, honesty, integrity and transparency and most importantly respect. All of which has been missing from the process so far. It is important to remember there is only talk of a Memorial because of our kin who died in the Tower. But we need to heal collectively with the Community, the survivors, our wider bereaved families in solidarity and peace. This is the greatest National tragedy since the Second World War, one which triggered the biggest scandal in the Building & Housing industry, since the Second the world war affecting millions of people up and down the country. This is not a small matter. The Secretary of State Robert Jenrick has inherited this situation but he must not be pushed to signing for demolition by invisible ‘Whitehall sources’ nudgethinking pr spin doctors on ‘project fear’. Whoever this Senior Whitehall source is, needs to be identified and nowhere near this process. So far those in charge have failed in engagement. They have retraumatised the already traumatised. A new team of trauma informed expertise, with integrity and respect for all, needs to be brought in so we can all find peace, compromise and respectful dialogue around what is a deeply complex and sensitive issue. And they need to stop lying and appointing people to key positions based on chumocracy to railroad to their desired outcomes which is demolition of the whole Tower. 72 of OUR children, OUR parents, OUR partners, OUR siblings, OUR grandparents and grandchildren were reduced to ashes. Have some respect.”

For further information: [grenfellnextofkin@gmail.com](mailto:grenfellnextofkin@gmail.com) The Grenfell Next of kin is the support & Advocacy group for parents, partners, children, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren of 27 of the 72 deceased.

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