

The Brixton Society

Understanding the Past, Looking to the Future
Reg'd. Charity No.1058103, Registered with the London Forum of Amenity Societies
Website: www.brixtonsociety.org.uk

Lambeth Planning,
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Please reply to:



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14 November 2019

For attention of:
Akshay Sisodia,
asisodia@lambeth.gov.uk

Your ref:
19/03741/RUS

WINDRUSH SQUARE, SW2 – Proposed Memorial:

Dear Mr Sisodia,

Thank you for your letter of 10 October concerning the above application. We were unable to respond promptly because initially there were no drawings on the Council's website, but we subsequently received details directly from the applicant's architects.

This is a prominent site within Brixton Town Centre, and the Society's main comments are as follows:

Location:

We recall that as part of the remodelling of the Square completed in February 2011, it was intended to add a café kiosk at this approximate position. However, that was never followed through and instead an intermittent service is provided from a trailer or demountable gazebo on a pitch closer to the Tate Library. Thus there appears to be a precedent for a structure in this location. The siting between the grassed and paved areas should minimise the impact on other activities on the Square.

Overall Height:

A small reduction in height (say 500mm) would be welcome, and would provide more effective shelter for the bench seating. The additional seating is acceptable in that location.

Inscription:

Although the photomontages show a very simple inscription on the canopy, we would prefer the memorial to include a tablet or information panel providing more details about Mrs Groce and the circumstances which gave

rise to the 1985 riot in Brixton. Otherwise, with the passage of time, the significance of the memorial may be forgotten.

Need for Robust Materials:

Experience with the Afro-Caribbean War Memorial was that its base suffered early damage from impacts from the skateboarders who frequent the paved sections of the square. An improvised solution has been to surround that memorial by plant tubs, though it does detract a little from the original design intentions.

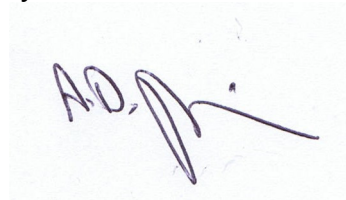
Such a solution is probably impractical in the central location proposed for this memorial, but certainly the base or plinth needs to be made from robust materials that will not be chipped or disfigured by impact damage. It may even be worth considering a material such as rubber sheet to provide a more resilient upstand.

Maintenance:

In the 2010-11 remodelling of the Square, the choice of materials was poor and the detailed design paid little attention to ease of maintenance or use. Consequently among Lambeth's public open spaces, for its size the Square is already more difficult and expensive to maintain.

Given the Council's reduced resources, it is important that the design and materials provide for the memorial to be easy to maintain, or otherwise that the promoters will accept responsibility for any specialist repairs that may become necessary.

Yours sincerely,



Hon. Secretary