

# The Brixton Society

Understanding the Past, Looking to the Future  
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Website: [www.brixtonsociety.org.uk](http://www.brixtonsociety.org.uk)

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For attention of:  
Karim Badawi,  
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19 February 2021

Your ref:  
20/03579/FUL

## 34 STOCKWELL GREEN, SW9 – Proposed Alterations & Conversion:

Dear Mr Badawi,

Local residents have alerted us to the above application. This is a prominent site within the Stockwell Green Conservation Area, and the proposals impact on a number of Listed Buildings. I am therefore profoundly disappointed that you did not choose to consult us directly.

The Brixton Society strongly **objects** to this application, as detailed below:

### 1. Front Elevation treatment:

The building represents the transition between 18<sup>th</sup> century forms, as represented by the characteristic main roof shape, and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century front elevation, which initially would have been similar to Nos. 33 and 32, built perhaps a dozen years later.

Early photos show that the present projecting shopfront was added before 1876, so its retention would be acceptable, though a case could be made for reinstating the original residential frontage and forecourt.

However, this proposal takes a contrary view, so that the most prominent feature on the frontage will be the insertion of unsightly louvred doors into the existing shopfront to create a shared refuse store.

Apart from disfiguring the building, this will also be difficult to maintain in a sanitary condition, with attendant risks of attracting vermin. No information has been provided by the applicant about how the communal spaces will be managed.

The application fails to meet Lambeth Local Plan policies H6b(iv), Q2, Q5b, Q12 and Q15a.

## **2. Loss of Original Features:**

We deplore the loss of characteristic features from within the original house. Specifically, the removal of chimney breasts and flues from both flank walls will weaken the structure, in addition to the loss of these integral features. The drawings show the external chimney stacks retained, or even enlarged, at roof level, but this could only be achieved by internal steel supports which may put new strains on the existing structure.

We also object to the loss of the original timber staircase.

For alterations of this scale, the absence of an application for Listed Building Consent is unacceptable.

The application therefore fails to meet Local Plan policies Q20 and Q22a.

## **3. Design of Rear Wing:**

The proposed rear wing is excessive in size, and fails to follow the principle of subordination to the host building.

A more realistic approach would be no more than 2 storeys in the rear wing, with the upper storey ideally set within a sloping roof. This would better reflect the roof form of the existing rear wing. Better still, providing a shared amenity space between the main house and a new rear wing may reduce issues of overshadowing and overlooking (see para 5 below).

The application fails to meet Local Plan policies Q7(ii), Q11(b) and Q14(c).

## **4. Impact of Excess Density:**

The design is compromised by attempting to fit too many dwellings within this restricted site.

There is no communal open space in the scheme, and outdoor amenity space for the token family flat (Flat 2) is divided between 2 small narrow light wells below ground level, a configuration which would have been inadequate even 150 years ago. The absence of any soft landscaping is disappointing.

Even for a nominally “car-free” development, a development of 7 flats will put significant extra pressure on the restricted roadway, from parking and deliveries. In the short term, deliveries for construction will be problematic, bearing in mind that this arm of Stockwell Green is also a bus route. The applicant has not provided a Construction Management Plan to explain how this will be addressed.

The application fails to meet Local Plan policies H5b(iii), H6b, Q9 and T7.

## **5. Impact on Neighbours:**

There are some obvious deficiencies, some already highlighted by neighbours, but a full appraisal is difficult because critical information is missing from this application. There are no cross-sections through the rear wing, and in particular, it is difficult to judge its relationship to windows in No.33 adjoining. Despite the proposed increase in height and bulk, the applicant has not provided an assessment of the impact on daylight or sunlight for neighbouring properties.

The lower floor level in the rear wing, effectively creating a semi-basement, presents a risk to the shallow foundations of No.33 adjoining.

The application fails to meet Local Plan policies Q2 (ii, iii & iv) and Q14e(i).

## **6. Fire Safety:**

It is a major concern that there is only a single exit point, directly onto Stockwell Green. Rescue by the Fire Brigade from the rear wing of the building is dependent on side access from the private approach path to the adjacent Mosque, which may be obstructed by parked cars.

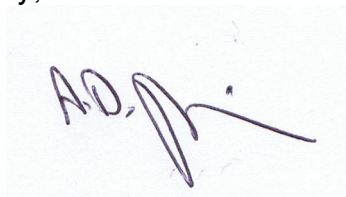
Unaided escape from ground floor windows is hampered by the configuration of sunken light wells and railings along this flank boundary. The light wells themselves are too shallow to be acceptable as places of refuge from fire under prevailing Building Regulations.

Internally, the layouts of Flats 4 and 5 are unacceptable because they rely on exit from the bedrooms through the kitchen/ living room.

The front bin store, opening off the public highway, is an additional fire risk.

In conclusion, we would be sympathetic to a residential conversion scheme for this property, but not in the clumsy and excessive form currently proposed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A.D.' followed by a stylized flourish.

Hon. Secretary