

# The Brixton Society

Understanding the Past, Looking to the Future

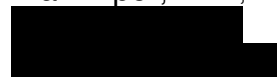
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Website: [www.brixtonsociety.org.uk](http://www.brixtonsociety.org.uk)

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*Please reply to:*

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16<sup>th</sup> January 2021

*For attention of:*

Lauren Shallcross,

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*Your ref:*

20/04516/FUL

## **81 LOTHIAN ROAD, SW9 – Revised Redevelopment Proposals:**

Dear Miss Shallcross,

Local residents have drawn our attention to the above application, but once again I am disappointed that you did not choose to notify us directly, in spite of our earlier interest.

We note that some welcome changes have been made from the previous application, but most of our previous concerns have not been resolved by this revised design, so the Society **objects** to the proposal, as detailed below:

### **1. Excessive Height and Bulk:**

This is a prominent site between the Minet Estate Conservation Area and the new Oval Quarter. The front elevation will dominate the view for pedestrians approaching along Patmos Road.

Despite the adjacent frontages being continuous at only 4 storeys, this design still presents 5 storeys across the full width of the block, plus a lumpen offset extra storey for access to the roof garden.

It remains our view that the maximum acceptable height should be 4 storeys overall, so the proposal is still too high for this site.

Furthermore, the building would stand forward of the adjacent frontage at 110-132 Akerman Road, reinforcing the impression of height and bulk when seen from street level in Akerman and Lothian Roads.

The design fails to meet Lambeth Local Plan policies Q6(iv), Q7(i) & (ii) and Q26(a).

### **2. Poor Design in Context:**

The site adjoins the Minet Conservation Area, with the distinctive mansion blocks of Calais Gate at the back of the site. The site is directly opposite the

spire of the listed St. John the Divine church seen at the far end of Patmos Road, in the Vassall Conservation Area.

While 110-132 Akerman Road is a modern terrace built as part of the Oval Quarter development, its frontage attempts to echo the formal design of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century terraces in the neighbourhood. The Akerman Health Centre directly opposite the site also has formal elevations with a horizontal emphasis.

Bathgate House is a standard maisonette block of its time, but has a strong horizontal emphasis, slender columns and materials sympathetic to its surroundings. Even the tower block at the corner of Patmos Road is set well back from the main road frontages, so that it does not dominate views from the streets approaching the application site.

In contrast, the proposed design completely fails to fit into its context. There is neither symmetry nor unity in the front elevation visible on the approach from Patmos Road.

We recognise that some of the cruder elements in the earlier design have been deleted, but we would prefer some more visible recognition of environment and sustainability issues in the external treatment.

In summary, the design fails to meet Lambeth Local Plan policies EN4, Q2(i), Q5(b) & (c), Q7(vi), and Q22(a).

### **3. Defective Entrance Design:**

It remains a concern that the entrance to the residential element is mean and austere, sandwiched between two refuse stores. It should have been possible to redesign the ground floor frontage so that both refuse stores were at the corners and the entrances to both residential and community elements were more welcoming.

Some form of projecting canopy above both entrances would be welcome. The proposed signage appears to be an afterthought, and is not well-considered in terms of visibility and durability.

The design fails to meet Lambeth Local Plan policies Q1, Q3(a) and Q12.

### **4. Daylight and Sunlight issues:**

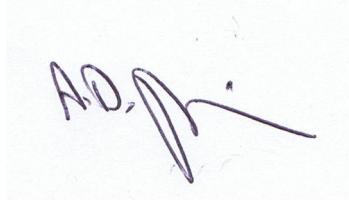
Although daylight calculations have been provided for the interior of the new flats, there is very little mitigation of the impact on the surrounding residential buildings. We estimate that the set-back of the front of the 4<sup>th</sup> floor will only marginally reduce the impact on rooms at the front corner of Bathgate House, and not at all to its rear or to 132 Akerman Road.

Furthermore, potential daylight, sunlight and overlooking for the Calais Gate mansion flats immediately to the rear have not been addressed at all in the applicant's proposals. The rear elevation is essentially unchanged. Local Plan policies Q2(iii) & (iv) should be respected.

### **5. Affordable Housing:**

We are concerned that this scheme will not in itself provide any affordable housing or meet any specific local needs. The applicants have not included a firm offer of a contribution to off-site provision, nor a viability assessment. It therefore fails to meet Local Plan policies H2 and H8.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the initials 'A.D.' followed by a stylized, cursive flourish.

Hon. Secretary