

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

The Planning Inspectorate,
Temple Quay House,
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Temple Quay,
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Please reply to:
Alan Piper, RIBA,



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8th August 2021

Your ref:
APP/N5660/C/21/3275169
Lambeth ref:
21/00022/3DEV

58 BARNWELL ROAD, LONDON SW2 1PW: unauthorised roof terrace:

Dear Sir,

Neighbours have drawn our attention to the above appeal for use of the flat roof at the above property as a roof terrace for the above property, including retention of metal railings around the perimeter.

The Brixton Society **objects** to this proposal, and we ask that you forward this letter to the Inspector concerned.

1. Background:

The Brixton Society is the civic amenity society covering the central part of the London Borough of Lambeth. It was established in 1975 and currently has some 300 members, both individuals and local organisations. Over the years, the Society has commented on a succession of local plans and policies, in addition to many individual planning applications and appeals.

2. Context:

Barnwell Road was built up c.1877 as part of the Effra Hall or Stuart-Bruce Estate. Buildings SW of the junction with Rattray Road were lost in the course of the Second World War and have since been replaced.

Most surviving houses are of 2 storeys, with a few 3-storey examples at the NE end of the road, and a 3-storey group, including the appeal property, which were originally shops and are now all converted to residential use.

In the early 1970s, the wider area was subject to redevelopment proposals, but these streets were excluded at an early stage after representations from residents, and eventually included in a General Improvement Area. During the GIA period (around 1980) grants were offered to encourage repairs and the provision of modern amenities. In recent years, owners have begun to make more substantial alterations, including several examples of attic

extensions with mansard roofs above 2-storey houses, typically to provide an extra bedroom.

3. Privacy Issues:

The works were carried out without a prior planning application, so we did not have the opportunity of making a formal objection earlier. Clearly the applicant should have taken professional advice and consulted neighbours before carrying out the alterations, rather than pressing on in the hope of escaping official notice.

Our main concern is the applicant's failure to consider neighbours' privacy, and in particular, overlooking from the roof terrace down into rooms at the front of Nos. 53-61 on the opposite side of Barnwell Road.

As installed, the roof terrace was provided with a simple metal balustrade above a low brick parapet, enabling unobstructed views across the road and into the rear gardens of 77-79 Rattray Road to the rear.

Another concern is the potential for noise disturbance to surrounding dwellings when the roof terrace is used for entertaining guests on summer evenings.

In summary, the proposals breach policies in the Lambeth Local Plan, i.e. policies Q2(ii), Q5(c) and Q11(o), and depart from relevant guidance in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Building Alterations and Extensions.

4. Existing Use rights:

Most of the existing flat roof above No.58 is given over to extensive solar photo-voltaic panels, which is welcome in support of "greener" policies. In addition there is a portion at the NE end of the roof which remains open, shown on plan with a tiled finish.

Clearly there is a need for occasional access for maintenance purposes. However, the statement of appeal (by the Planning Lab on behalf of the appellant) is incorrect at para 5.3 in inferring that this extends to use by the occupants for regular amenity purposes. They have provided no evidence of established use of this kind.

5. Design Details:

A conventional solution to achieving privacy for private balconies and terraces would be to enclose them with screens in frosted or acid-etched glass screens rising to 1.7m high above the terrace level.

However, in the absence of detailed proposals, we are concerned that such a treatment would be visually too intrusive and discordant in the street context.

6. Notifications:

We ask to be informed of the outcome of this appeal, due to its implications for the privacy and amenity of residents in similar houses around Brixton.

Yours faithfully,



Hon. Secretary