

The Brixton Society

Understanding the Past, Looking to the Future

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Lambeth Planning,
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Please reply to:
Alan Piper, Dip.Arch.,



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1st June 2025

For attention of:
Nathan Barrett,
Nbarrett1@lambeth.gov.uk

Your ref:
25/01377/RG4

Land on South-West side of Somerleyton Road, SW9 – Residential-led Development:

Dear Mr Barrett,

In response to your recent letter about the above application, our comments are as follows:

Excessive Density:

We accepted the original high density scheme on the understanding that all the dwellings would be affordable and that care would be taken to ensure oversight of the Somerleyton Passage pedestrian route.

After several years of obfuscation and mismanagement by Lambeth Council, the latest proposals are a great disappointment, with the site in fragmented control and the affordable element of the current site reduced to 56%.

Moreover, the height and bulk exceed what would normally be acceptable in this context, on the edge of Brixton Town Centre.

Excessive Loss of Trees:

One of the site's assets is the number of mature trees along the Somerleyton Road frontage, generally planted as semi-mature trees c.1978. While it is welcome to see most of these being retained, there are a few others capable of retention without compromising other aspects of the development, notably T029, T034, T053.

Residential Design:

Although the Council's residential design standards promote the use of dual-aspect dwelling plans to allow cross-ventilation, it is disappointing to see that the proposed layout has as many as 12 apartments per floor which are only single-aspect.

Inclusion of Non-Residential Uses:

Proposals for the non-residential uses lack detail, implying that little thought has been given to how they could be used, which in turn is likely to result in delay and difficulty in letting these units.

For example, no provision is shown for sanitary accommodation, which is essential for self-contained use.


We have identified 5 units on the ground floor of the block nearest to the Brixton House Theatre. One appears to be intended as a gym, including an upper part at 1st floor level, and no objection is seen to this. There is also a 1st floor communal space associated with the private rental apartments, directly above their entrance hall/ concierge desk.

In our experience, a high percentage of demand for ground floor retail units is for café, restaurant or take-away uses, all of which necessitate the use of extract ventilation to remove cooking smells from residential apartments above. “Maker-type” business uses similarly may need provision for dust or fume extraction, but there is no evidence that this has been considered.

In the absence of these, it is unlikely that all the proposed units can be let for business uses.

It would be more realistic to set aside one unit for a gym (reinstating an earlier use), one for community or general resident use, and one for retail or café use. The remaining two units would then be more useful if converted to residential use from the outset.

Yours sincerely,

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

Hon. Secretary