

## **ITEM 4.9 – 16 ORCHARD ROAD, BROMLEY**

### **REPRESENTATIONS IN OBJECTION TO THE APPLICATION RECEIVED FROM COMMITTEE MEMBER AND WARD MEMBER, COUNCILLOR KATE LYMER**

I find this whole report incredibly disappointing. Our planning department are supposed to be bastions of preserving our borough's architectural history and culture however, in recommending this application for permission they have completely failed in their duty.

Whilst acknowledging that this application is preferable to the previously refused block of flats and whilst the concept of splitting the house into two is acceptable, the plans submitted are not.

Orchard Road has a variety of Arts and Crafts style houses and the retention of this Arts and Crafts property is important to protect and preserve the established character of the area.

Architecturally the applicant has missed the point of Arts and Crafts design.

In attempting to impose elements of symmetry with the front centre extension to their design, they are actually creating a monster. Arts and Crafts houses should never be symmetrical. Their asymmetric design is one of the key principles of the design movement.

The planning report concurs that the addition of a further front gable and the first floor and second front extensions above the new entrance would add bulk but the planner considers that the design would be acceptable. The duplication of this front centre entrance and extension is not only unacceptable because of its symmetry but also because of its bulk. Two stone entrance porticos with columns and a pitched timbered gable positioned immediately side by side, would appear over dominant and visually imbalanced to the host building and again, this would be alien to the arts and craft style.

This front centre extension and entrance is reason enough for refusal but I must go on.

It is quite clear from the configuration at first and second floor levels that it is intended to install an extension of the staircase through the attic storeroom to form fifth bedrooms.

Furthermore the cavity brickwork will not match the solid brickwork unless Flemish bonding is used and bricks are carefully matched. Materials matter in the Arts and Crafts style and using traditional bonding and sympathetic brick work is essential. It is also highly unlikely that the window and door shaped brick arch and apron detailing will be faithfully replicated. It would be impractical with modern techniques and materials to do this and even if this was achieved, the existence of a duplicated door is inconsistent with the Arts and Crafts style.

Lastly, looking at both the internal and external plans, there is no apparent need to lose the two attractive chimney stacks, so to remove them would be historical architectural vandalism.

It is perfectly possible to convert this house into two without the 3 storey extension and duplicated entrance in the front which, disturbingly, ignores or misinterprets the principles of Arts and Crafts design.

It is fundamentally important to fight for the protection of our Arts and Crafts housing stock and therefore I propose refusal.