

DC/11/78135 - 10a Dartmouth Road

I am writing to you on behalf of the Forest Hill Society to oppose the proposed change of use of 10a Dartmouth Road from A1 to A2. There are no documents currently on line for this application but we believe that the principle of conversion from A1 to A2 at this location should be resisted.

Dartmouth Road has had a difficult few year, since the closure of the swimming pool in 2006, however with the reopening of the pool next year we have a strong belief that retail units on Dartmouth Road will be revitalised with the increased passing trade, especially on the route between the station and the pool. At this time we need to council to protect existing retail units so that as the fortunes of Forest Hill change there will be opportunities for new businesses to set up retail units on the high street.

This site is within the core shopping area of Forest Hill and is therefore covered by STC4:

STC 4 Major and District Centres - Core Shopping Areas

Within the Core Shopping Areas, as defined on the Proposals Map and listed in Table STC 1 below, the Council will strongly resist any change of use involving the loss at ground floor level of Class A1 shops. The following factors will be taken into account when considering exceptions:

(a) whether the proposal harms the overwhelming retail appearance of the shopping frontage, with an over-concentration of non-retail uses (normally 3 non A1 uses together and 70% maintained in A1 use);

(b) whether the proposal will generate a significant number of pedestrian visits; and

(c) whether the proposal uses vacant units (having regard both to their number within the Shopping Centre as a whole and the Core Area and the length of time they have been vacant).

This unit is very small and a difficult unit to work as either A1 or A2. We would particularly favour the rejoining of the two retail units on this site to a single, more viable unit that would have the potential to attract larger retailer to this excellent location.

For the reasons stated above we ask the council to reject this application for a change of use for this unit.