

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

Lambeth Planning,
(Development Management)
PO Box 734,
Winchester,
SO23 5DG

Please reply to:
Alan Piper, RIBA,



APiperBrix@aol.com

28th July 2019

For attention of:
Lauren Shallcross,
lshallcross@lambeth.gov.uk

Your ref:
19/02330/FUL

128 RAILTON ROAD, SE24 – Proposed change from shop to flat:

Dear Miss Shallcross,

Neighbours have recently alerted us to the above application. I am profoundly disappointed that you did not take the trouble to contact us directly – you appear to have notified the Camberwell Society instead!

I must make it clear that the Society **objects** to this application, for the reasons stated below.

Long-term Decline of Local Amenities:

When Railton Road was first developed in the 1870s, there were several shopping parades distributed along the length of the road. Over the past 60 years, the number of active shop units has sharply declined, with most services gravitating to Brixton Town Centre and Herne Hill as a local centre. Within the past 30 years, original Victorian shopfronts have been replaced by residential conversions, mostly including original basement spaces. As a result, the few surviving enterprises are more important in continuing to meet local needs.

Loss of Active Frontage:

The building was originally the Hamilton Arms public house. The previous conversion to retail use was a welcome reintroduction of an active frontage at a time when surrounding small retail units were closing. Compared with the older retail units, No.128 has the benefits of a larger and more efficient retail area and a more substantial construction.

Loss of an active frontage contravenes Lambeth Local Plan policy ED10(a).

Loss of Local Shop:

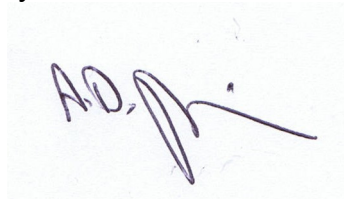
This is now a valued local shop, at considerable distance from both the Herne Hill and Brixton Centres. Closure would explicitly breach Lambeth Local Plan policy ED10(c.)

Lack of Market Evidence:

The obligation is on the applicant to demonstrate that there is no demand for continued use as a shop, including evidence that empty units have been actively marketed for A1 or similar business uses.

Of course the applicant cannot provide such evidence – in contrast, residents have drawn attention to the valuable service provided by the present enterprise, which appears to be thriving and meeting local needs.

Yours sincerely,

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

Hon. Secretary