

## SR4 Regional shopping centre

Within defined prime frontages of the regional centre, the change of use of existing Class A1 use shops to Class A2, A3, A4 or A5 uses, will be permitted provided that all of the following criteria are met:

- a. as a result of the proposal there would not be a significant break in the shopping frontage of more than 10m;
- b. it would not result in either the number of non-retail units or the proportion of frontages exceeding 25% of the shopping street(s) to which it relates;
- c. it would have a positive effect on the shopping environment of the area by encouraging combined trips and attracting pedestrian activity to the centre; and
- d. the development would not be significantly detrimental to the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties or the general character of the area.

Exceptions to (a) may be permitted if it would allow an existing business currently occupying an immediately adjacent unit to expand.

Outside the prime frontage of the regional centre, the loss of retail use will be permitted provided that a healthy balance and mix of uses (including Class A1 retail) is retained and concentrations of uses other than Class A1 are avoided. The proposed use should still attract pedestrian activity to the centre and should not have a significantly harmful impact on the amenity of the area.

- 6.21 The council considers it particularly important to maintain at least 75% Class A1 uses in the prime frontages of the regional centre. This is in order to maintain its role as the principal shopping centre in East Sussex, which is of considerable importance to the economic and social life of Brighton & Hove. It is also desirable to ensure that any proposed use will encourage pedestrian activity into the centre and therefore residential uses will not be permitted. Retail units at the corner of two streets can have added significance as they can "signpost" the beginning of at least one shopping frontage. Where a proposal relates to a retail unit on a street corner, the impact of the change of use on the frontage of both shopping streets will be considered.
- 6.22 Outside the prime frontages, the planning authority wishes to retain a healthy level of activity in the daytime and evening by ensuring that a good mix of Class A1(retail), A2 (banks /building societies), A3 (cafes / restaurants) and other uses prevail whilst avoiding any one particular class of activity dominating an area. Community uses falling within Class D1 (e.g. doctors, dentists) which would draw people to the centre and may generate a combined shopping visit will also be considered provided that a window display is maintained.
- 6.23 Participants in a focus group on 'Retail and Town Centres' thought that more flexibility was needed in applying the policy, and that Western Road, Brighton would benefit from more A3 uses - there remains some flexibility for further changes of use to non-retail uses within the terms of Policy SR4.
- 6.24 Implementation of the policy will be assisted by continuing to monitor numbers of retail / vacant units. In addition, new sites for significant retail development are identified elsewhere in this Plan in this centre.