

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2021/4921/P	CRASH	08/12/2021 10:09:55	OBJ	<p>I write on behalf of CRASH (Combined Residents' Associations of South Hampstead) to object to this application. The Council has a policy of retaining as far as possible the shop units on the stretch of the Finchley Rd between Swiss Cottage & Finchley Rd stations in retail use. This is particularly true of Harben Parade & other shops on the west side of the road. The applicant is proposing a change of use from retail to leisure (gym).</p> <p>Over recent years there have been many unsuitable conversions of properties to retail use, often resulting in the blocking of roads - most importantly the blocking of bus lanes - during the delivery of supplies to these shops. Retail premises with dedicated service roads and their own loading bays are few & far between, and are a precious resource - a resource not to be wasted. The property at 177 Finchley Road has such a dedicated service road and loading bay making it ideal for retail use. Such valuable facilities are not required by a gym, and would be wasted should the application be approved. We have already seen an example of this further along the Finchley Rd, on Harben Parade, where a similar serviced retail unit has been (again) converted to gym use, with the waste of a service road at the rear. The property at 177 Finchley Road is perhaps the only unit in the immediate area capable of hosting a medium-sized retail operation such as those being opened throughout the country by retailers such as Aldi and Lidl. Such a retailer would compensate for the recent loss of Iceland who previously occupied the sight. The Council is urged to refuse the application.</p>
