

A Vision for Forest Hill

This exhibition offers a vision for the area around Forest Hill Station. It has been developed by *Discourse Architecture** in consultation with the Forest Hill Society.

We have a once in a 100 years' opportunity to shape the centre of Forest Hill, reflecting the needs and aspirations of people that live and work in the area. This exhibition is intended to raise questions as much as to offer solutions. We hope that local people will provide feedback, so that proposals taken forward can reflect their views.



Making a Better Place

This proposal grew out of a discussion about the pedestrian underpass: currently a cramped obstacle course suitable only for the able-bodied and those unencumbered by buggies or heavy bags. We soon realised that the underpass is just part of a much larger problem encompassing the uncongenial and under-developed environs of the station.

**Discourse Architecture* was founded in 2016 to create a platform for people with an interest in the built environment to work together and exchange ideas. Some of us live locally and our work on this project is unpaid. We hope that our vision for the area around the station will act as a catalyst for debate and lead to positive change

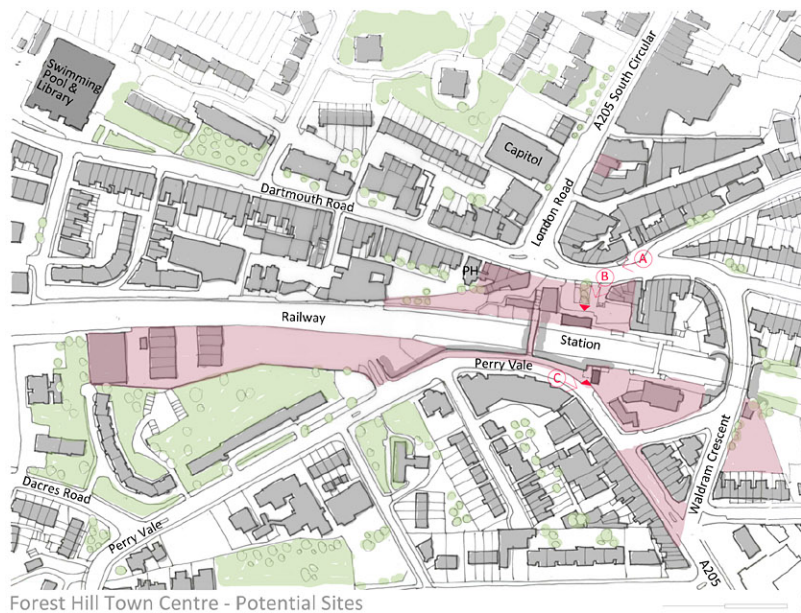
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A. Proposed station forecourt set back from the South Circular road



Forest Hill Town Centre - Potential Sites



A. Dartmouth Arms



Civic presence: late 19C Station & Dartmouth Arms



B. The station lacks presence



C. The soul-less setting of the station in Perry Vale



C. Proposed station & street improvements to Perry Vale

1. Introduction

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*We want to know what you think about these proposals:
Please complete a feedback form at the end of the exhibition*



A Victorian Railway Suburb
Forest Hill is shaped by its development around the Victorian railway line. Restricted crossing points have intensified traffic on the South Circular and other roads in the area. The later Victorian infrastructure that we have inherited has become a strait jacket that we need to challenge.



Terrace built on the former canal bed



The station environs have a negative character

The Croydon Canal at Sydenham in the early 19C



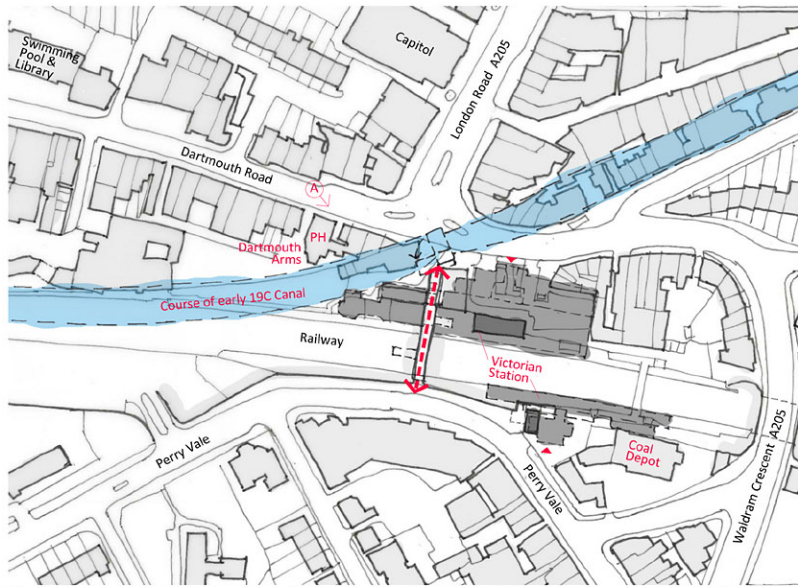
WH Smith on the original station site

The Railway Stations

Three successive railway stations were constructed in the latter half of the 19C, culminating in a grand edifice boasting a monumental brick clock tower. The current station was built following wartime bomb damage: a cheap single-storey building with zero presence.

Opportunities

Arrival in Forest Hill by rail could once again be a celebration of civic society. The under-used sites around the station will soon be developed. It is up to local people to ensure that the character of Forest Hill that develops in coming decades is one which we can all view with pride and affection.



The Victorian Station and course of the Croydon Canal overlaid on the plan of Forest Hill today



Should the former coal depot be retained?



A. The late 19C station & original Dartmouth Arms



Perry Vale: inconvenient stepped access to the underpass

2. The story so far
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*Forest Hill developed around the commuter rail line
that replaced the Croydon Canal*



Rail and Road

Forest Hill owes its existence to transport connections: the railway built on the route of the canal, and the South Circular road, punching through linked suburban streets. Forest Hill coalesced around the station, used by commuters to get to and from work. As well as an increasing volume of cars, these tight streets must now accommodate large buses and lorries. Our challenge is to find ways of humanising an environment that seems designed for machines at the expense of people.



The Horniman Museum



A. Proposed station from London Road



New rail footbridge to link with Forest Hill Pools A. Existing station from London Road

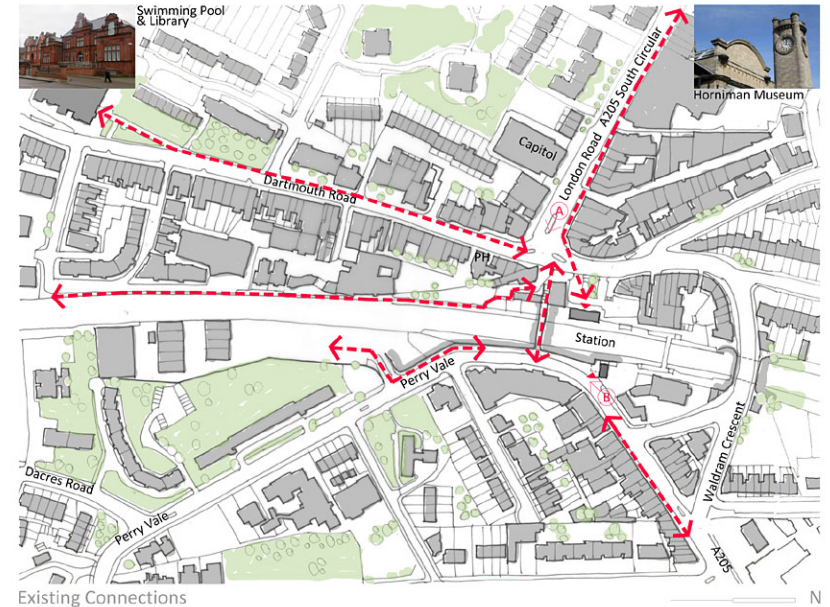


Improving Connections:

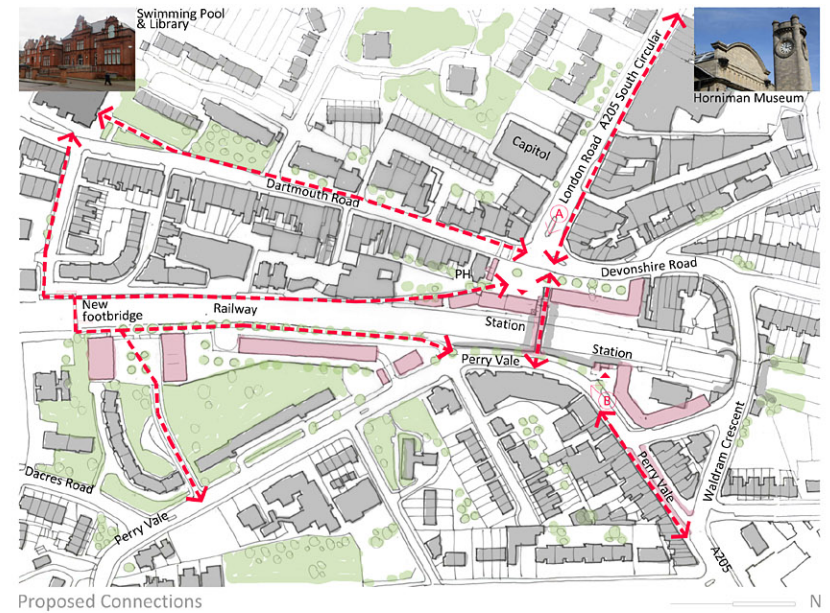
- **New station buildings**
Step-free access for people with buggies, heavy bags or restricted mobility
- **Generous pavements**
New buildings set back from Devonshire Road. The South Circular end of Perry Vale converted into a one-way street. Create wider pavements and a good environment for people to enjoy shops, cafes and restaurants
- **BUSES:** relocate bus stops closer to the station
- **Parking & Pedestrians**
Make the sorting office car park more convenient and safer. Improve the existing pedestrian underpass and create a new footbridge, providing better access to the station, shops, pubs and cafes, and the swimming pool



B. Perry Vale: step-free access via improved underpass and new footbridge to swimming pool



Existing Connections



Proposed Connections

3. Connections

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Improving access to the station and across the railway should be an integral feature of new development



Creating a New Town Centre

There are a surprising number of under-used sites around the station which would be prime locations for new homes and businesses. These should be developed as high quality urban spaces to enhance the vitality and character of Forest Hill:

- **A New Station**

Creating a new station forecourt with commercial units at street level and residential accommodation above. This sheltered west-facing space, set back from the South Circular, could have good quality natural stone paving and a continuation of the larger trees that line the road up to the Horniman. A new public space would create a focus for the town centre, a genuine sense of arrival, dispelling the current impression of a place divided by congested roads and the railway

- **Streets, Homes & Parking**

Extending the street layout from Perry Vale into the existing sorting office site would replace the sterile and under-used car park with homes above a parking deck, making a more attractive and safer environment. Changing the north end of Perry Vale to a one-way street will create a better environment for pedestrians and traders

- **Connecting Spaces**

Providing lift and ramp access to the existing pedestrian underpass, improving sight-lines and shortening it by a third would improve this as a space.



A. Proposed station forecourt set back from the South Circular road



B. Proposed station forecourt looking towards the Dartmouth Arms



B. Existing space in front of WH Smiths



A. Low quality buildings flanking the station



C. Proposed station forecourt

4. Activities & Spaces

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New development should be coordinated to create spaces that will promote a better environment for local people and businesses



A Centre for Forest Hill

We propose a new station at the foot of London Road, built on the site of the earlier station and currently occupied by WH Smiths. Public space around the new station would create a town centre that Forest Hill has previously lacked.

Improved Access

The existing pedestrian underpass could be shortened significantly and widened. Providing ramped access from Perry Vale, a lift and more generous steps to London Road, would make the route safer, as well as more pleasant and accessible.

Perry Vale Station

A new entrance to the existing station could include direct lift access to platform level.

Coal depot

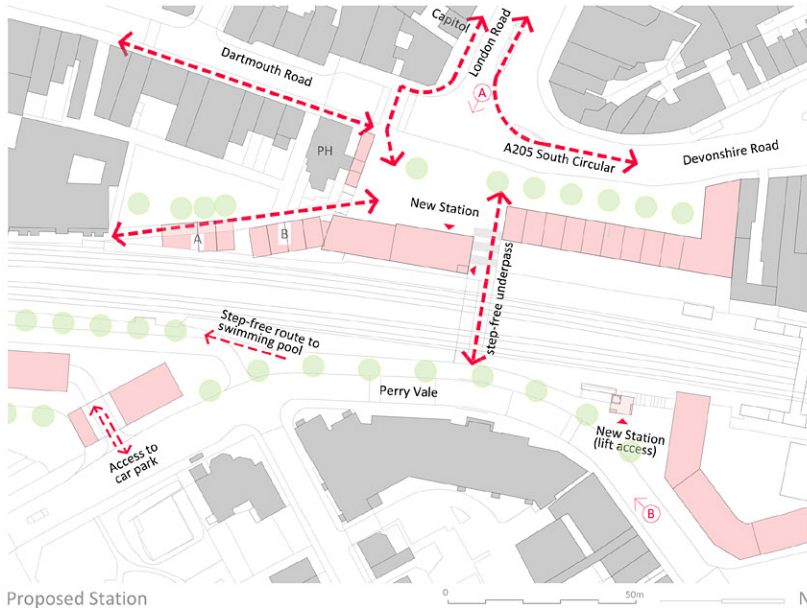
The adjacent coal depot site could be developed as housing with some commercial use at street level. Alternatively, the Victorian coal depot building could be retained and used as a hub for start-up businesses or a market.

Sorting office site

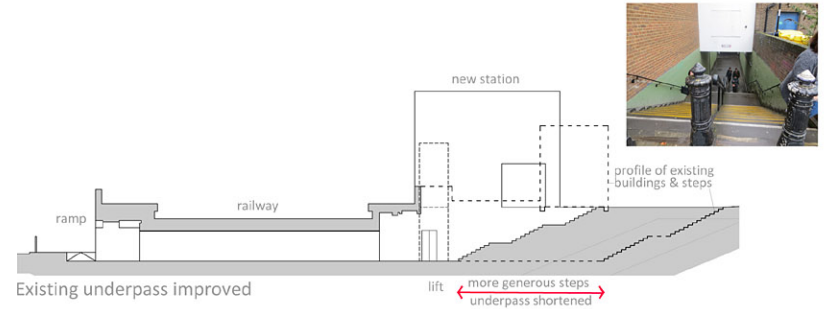
We propose new homes built over a lowered parking level with a link to Forest Hill Pools via a new ramped footbridge.



A. Proposed station & forecourt creating a town centre place for arrival, orientation & activity



Proposed Station



Existing underpass improved



A. Station from South Circular



B. Existing station on Perry Vale



B. Proposed station on Perry Vale

5. Forest Hill Station

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The station environs fail to do justice to the fine character of surrounding streets, buildings & local institutions like the Horniman, Library & Pools



Have Your Say

We want to know your views. Please fill in a feedback form or post your comments online:

Forest Hill Society

www.ForestHillSociety.com

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www.discourse-architecture.com

Twitter: @d_architecture #FHRenewal

Next Steps

A revised proposal incorporating your feedback will be published and used as a basis for consultation with key stakeholders including:

- Lewisham Council
- Transport for London
- Railtrack
- Local businesses
- Site owners



A. Station forecourt looking towards the Dartmouth Arms



B. Proposed housing over parking on Perry Vale



A. Existing space outside WH Smiths



B. Access to existing parking on Perry Vale



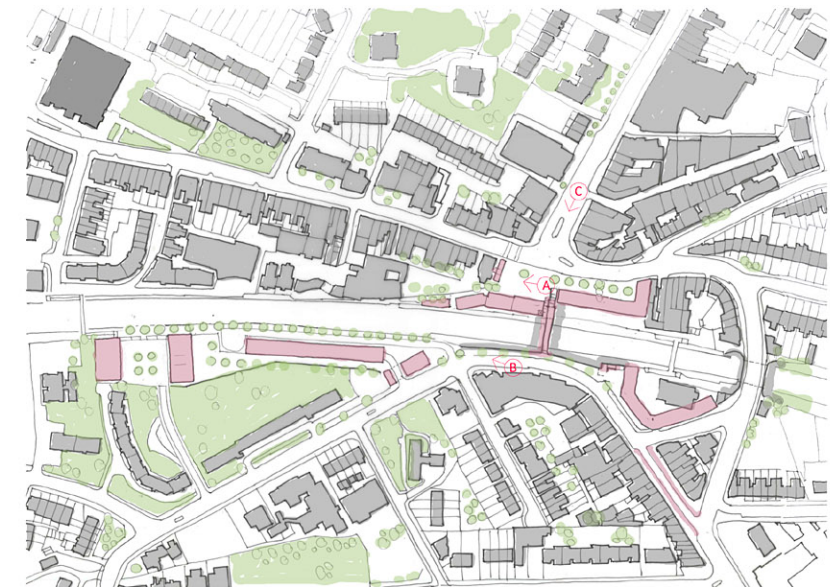
Forest Hill Library & Pools



The Horniman Museum



C. Proposed station & forecourt



Proposed layout

6. Have Your Say / Next Steps *Please complete a feedback form at the end of the exhibition*

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