

REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Reference No: HGY/2007/1555

Ward: Seven Sisters

Date received: 26/07/2007

Last amended date: N/A

Drawing number of plans: L4251/SK(0) 050 RevA, 051, L(0)084, 40RevB, 039 RevC & 083 Rev B

Address: Unit 4 E Arena Estate, Williamson Road N4

Proposal: Change of use from vacant mezzanine floorspace (A1) to health and fitness studio (D2) with shopfront alterations at ground floor level

Existing Use: Vacant

Proposed Use: Health and fitness club

Applicant: Wildmoor Properties Ltd

Ownership: Private

PLANNING DESIGNATIONS

Road Network: Borough Road

Officer Contact: Stuart Cooke

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site comprises an internal mezzanine floor level within the corner unit of the Arena retail park, known as Unit 4E, closest to Williamson Road.

The Arena retail park is within the Green Lanes Town Centre as identified in the Unitary Development Plan 2006.

PLANNING HISTORY

Planning permission was granted for the new retail park in 2003 and the mezzanine was granted specific planning permission in March 2006, (ref. no. HGY2006/1988).

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The application proposes the change of use of the mezzanine floor area from retail (A1) as approved to a Health and Fitness Studio, which falls in Use Class D2. The use will be operated by Fitness First. The floor area to be occupied by the fitness club will be approximately 880 square metres. Access will be via a new door/entrance at ground floor level to be introduced between the existing retail frontages.

CONSULTATION

Ward Councillors

Transportation

Ladder Community Safety Partnership

Units 1-6, Arena Retail park.

RESPONSES

Transportation – do not object subject to cycle parking and Travel Plan.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

The Council's new Unitary Development Plan was adopted by the Council in July 2006 following its Public Inquiry and modifications procedures. It complies with relevant national policy guidance and the London Plan. The principal policies which are relevant to this case area set out below.

POLICY TCR1: DEVELOPMENT IN TOWN AND LOCAL SHOPPING CENTRES.

Proposals for new development or the expansion of existing facilities should be located in the identified town and local shopping centres. The use and scale of any proposed development should have proper regard to the size and role of the centre, and to the relationship with its surroundings including its traffic impact.

Where appropriate proposed development should take account of the Council's Strategies to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres.

POLICY M10: PARKING FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Council will apply its parking standards to restrain car use, to reduce congestion, to improve road safety, to give priority to essential users and people with disabilities, to improve the environment, to improve local accessibility and to encourage sustainable regeneration.

Cycle parking provision is set out in Appendix 1a.

ANALYSIS / ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION

The principal issues to be considered in terms of this application are:

- The suitability and scale of the proposed use
- Parking

1. The suitability and scale of the proposed use

Policy TCR1 requires that uses are appropriate to the scale, character and function of the town centre. The use of the mezzanine floor here as a fitness club is appropriate in terms of the nature of the use. Fitness and health Clubs are generally considered as appropriate uses in town centres and are not uncommon in these locations. There are fitness clubs in Wood Green and Crouch End town centres for example which add to and complement to the character and function of the centres. They are also considered to complement the prevailing retail use of the centre and contribute to its viability and vitality. In this light, the proposed use is considered appropriate and to meet the requirements of policy TCR1.

2. Parking

Policies TCR1 and M10 seek to ensure that all development is subject to appropriate parking provision, based on guidance from central government that dependence on the private car to be reduced.

No dedicated parking spaces are provided with scheme. However, Transportation consider that the retail park benefits from high levels of public transport accessibility and that therefore specific parking provision for this use is not required. In addition, the site is located within the Green Lanes CPZ which controls on-street parking Monday to Sunday from 0800 to 2200 hours. In this light they do not object to the proposal, subject to conditions being attached relating to a Travel Plan and cycle parking. The provision of additional cycle parking facilities in relation to this development will help to encourage alternative, sustainable modes of transport to be used by visitors to

the proposed facility. In addition, the Travel Plan should set out a raft of measures and initiatives to be undertaken and encouraged by the operator of the health and fitness club to encourage and promote the use of alternative means of transport to the facility. This approach is in line with central government guidance aimed at reducing dependence on the private car, particularly in busy urban areas with good access to public transport. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of Policy M10.

3. Other Issues

Access to the proposed use will be from a new entrance located between the existing retail frontages. It is considered that this will not adversely affect either the appearance or the operation of those uses. The proposed use may in fact bring increased activity to these frontages and may therefore contribute to the overall viability and vitality of the centre. A lift is available to provide access to the proposed use for disabled people.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The application site comprises an internal mezzanine floor level within the corner unit of the Arena retail park, known as Unit 4E, closest to Williamson Road. The application proposes the change of use of the mezzanine floor area from retail (A1) as approved to a Health and Fitness Studio, which falls in Use Class D2. The use will be operated by Fitness First. The floor area to be occupied by the fitness club will be approximately 880 square metres. Access will be via a new door/entrance at ground floor level to be introduced between the existing retail frontages.

Fitness and health Clubs are generally considered as appropriate uses in town centres and are not uncommon in these locations. They are also considered to complement the prevailing retail use of the centre and contribute to its viability and vitality.

No dedicated parking spaces are provided with scheme. Transportation consider that the retail park benefits from high levels of public transport accessibility and that therefore specific parking provision for this use is not required. Additional cycle parking facilities and a Travel Plan are required in order to encourage alternative methods of transport to and from the proposed facility.

Access to the proposed use will be from a new entrance located between the existing retail frontages. It is considered that this will not adversely affect either the appearance or the operation of those uses.

As such, the proposal is considered to meet the requirements of Policies TCR1 and M10 of the Unitary Development Plan 2006.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

Registered No. HGY/2007/1555

Applicant's drawing Nos. L4251/SK(0) 050 RevA, 051, L(0)084, 40RevB, 039 RevC & 083 Rev B

Subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby authorised must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.
Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.
2. The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: In order to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details and in the interests of amenity.
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) the premises shall be used as a Health and Fitness Club only and shall not be used for any other purpose including any purpose within Class D2 Assembly and Leisure unless approval is obtained to a variation of this condition through the submission of a planning application.
Reason: In order to restrict the use of the premises to one compatible with the surrounding area because other uses within the same Use Class or another Use Class are not necessarily considered to be acceptable.
4. Notwithstanding the details included in the proposal hereby approved, full details of the cycle parking proposed shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority, prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved.
Reason: To ensure a satisfactory level of cycle parking provision.
5. That a Travel Plan shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority, prior to the development hereby approved being commenced. Reason: To ensure satisfactory travel arrangements in relation to the development.

REASONS FOR APPROVAL

The proposal is considered to be appropriate in size, scale, character and function in terms of the Town Centre location and will contribute to the vitality and viability of the retail park. No additional parking is considered necessary given the high public transport accessibility of the site. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies TCR1 'Development in Town and Local Shopping Centres' and M10 'Parking for Development' of the Unitary Development Plan 2006.