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| <b>APPLICATION NO.</b>  | <a href="#">P12/V1188/FUL</a>   |
| <b>APPLICATION TYPE</b> | FULL APPLICATION  |
| <b>REGISTERED</b>       | 23.5.2012   |
| <b>PARISH</b>           | SUNNINGWELL   |
| <b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>   | Jane Crossley<br>Timothy Foggin   |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>        | Mr Thomas Alden   |
| <b>SITE</b>             | Church Farm Barn Sunningwell Abingdon, OX13<br>6RD  |
| <b>PROPOSAL</b>         | Change of use from a craft centre to use as a<br>private office and studio for a personal trainer |
| <b>AMENDMENTS</b>       | None  |
| <b>GRID REFERENCE</b>   | 449680/200640   |
| <b>OFFICER</b>          | Mr S.Walker   |

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1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission to change the use of a vacant building, originally built for a craft centre use, to create a personal fitness training studio. The site lies in the Oxford Green Belt and the North Vale Corallian Ridge.
- 1.2 The application comes to committee because Sunningwell Parish Council objects to the application.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The building, measuring 74sqm in area, is located on the north side of Quarry Road behind Orchard Cottage and 71 Sunningwell. A vehicular drive to the side of 71 Sunningwell enables access to the site which is also used by Sunningwell Art School for overflow parking and two other dwellings located to the west of the application. To the north east lies Sunningwell House.
- 2.2 The applicant is a personal trainer who lives in the village and currently runs his fitness training business from home. The business runs various outdoor fitness classes in different locations around Oxfordshire through the hire of village halls, with an average of eight classes a week, along with indoor personal training sessions at clients' homes, private group training and outdoor running courses. The proposal seeks to reuse the building to create a fitness training area with a small admin office for the business. The proposal would enable the business to operate from a fixed base where classes up to eight people could be held along with space for one-to-one tuition. In addition to the applicant, two part time staff members are employed by the business and it is proposed to operate between the hours of 0600 and 2100 on weekdays.
- 2.2 A copy of the site plan and application drawings along with the applicant's proposed itinerary of operation is **attached** at appendix 1.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Sunningwell Parish Council: objection. "The permitted use of this building is for B1 use as a craft centre, the consent for which was given under SUN/3653/6 which also included residential conversion of nearby barns. It is understood the craft centre was to be a non-profit making facility for the benefit of local residents. However the original consent has never been fully implemented and the building remains unconverted to craft centre use. Sunningwell Parish Council object to the change of use to a D2

Assembly and Leisure planning use, as we consider the proposed use will generate considerably more traffic on and off site than a craft centre or similar use would. We are concerned at the increased level of disturbance and car noise which would affect residents adjoining the site who already share the joint access with Sunningwell School of Art onto the main village road, especially as the facility proposed will attract up to a further 30 traffic movements per day and will be open from as early as 6am through to 9pm for 6 days per week. We also consider there is a shortage of on site car parking provided. The four neighbours who will be most affected by this application, have been consulted by the Parish Council and all are opposed to the change of use due to concerns regarding noise, increased car movements to/from the site, and on the local village road network, inadequate access to/from the site and the concern that future D2 use of this building under different management may lead to an intensification of the D2 use classification which also includes music, concerts and dance amongst other uses. For the aforementioned reasons we recommend planning consent is refused."

3.2 County Engineer: no objection, his full comments are **attached** at appendix 2.

3.3 Environmental Health: no objection.

3.4 Three letters of objection from local residents have been received raising the following concerns:

- unsuitable location for a gym in a rural area.
- potential noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and general disturbance to adjoining neighbours.
- traffic generation and highway safety.
- inadequate vehicle parking and substandard access into the site.

#### 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P11/V2904/COU](#) – Withdrawn (09/02/2012) due to insufficient information on use. Change of use from a redundant agricultural building to class D2 (Gymnasium) and internal alterations.

#### 5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 Policies GS3, DC1, DC5 and DC9 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan.

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012 and replaces all previous PPG's and PPS's.

#### 6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The Government has recently published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and crucially states a core principle is to plan for prosperity and meet the needs of business. The NPPF states (in paragraph 90) that *"the reuse of buildings within the green belt is not inappropriate development, provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction."*

6.2 The NPPF also states (in paragraph 123) that planning decisions should aim to: *"avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development"*, but *"recognise that development will often create some noise and existing businesses wanting to develop in continuance of their business should not have unreasonable restrictions put on them because of changes in nearby land uses since they were established."*

6.3 The principle of the proposed change of use to create a personal training gym is considered acceptable in this new policy context. The reuse of a vacant building of

permanent and substantial construction clearly aids business growth and is acceptable in green belt policy terms.

- 6.4 Bearing in mind the Government's direction of travel in relation to being more flexible to business, any impact on adjoining neighbours from noise and disturbance would not be so harmful to warrant refusal on such grounds, especially given the small scale size of the premises and the hours of use proposed. No amplified music is proposed and the building can be insulated to ensure it acoustically contains training activities. Furthermore officers consider its reuse for fitness training activities would be no more harmful than the impact that would arise from the authorised craft centre use had that use been implemented.
- 6.5 Vehicle parking, turning and access arrangements within the site are considered to be acceptable. The county engineer raises no objection (see appendix 2). The overall parking provision is considered sufficient to meet the needs of the business and subject to the small revisions requested by the County Engineer to the parking / turning layout and the access vision splays onto Quarry Road (covered by conditions 3, 4 and 5), the proposal is acceptable in terms of highway safety.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on residential amenity, parking and highway safety, and therefore complies with policies GS3, DC1, DC5 and DC9 of the adopted local plan.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

**Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:-**

- 1 : TL1 - Time limit - Full Application (Full)**
- 2 : planning condition listing the approved drawings**
- 3 : HY3 - Visibility Splays (Access) (Full)**
- 4 : HY9[I] - Car Parking Area (Det. not shown) (Full)**
- 5 : HY10 - Turning Space (Details not Shown) (Full)**
- 6 : HY20[I] - Bicycle Parking (Full)**
- 7 : Acoustic insulation in accordance with submitted details**

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