

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250547

Location: 256 Singlewell Road, Gravesend DA11 7RE

Description: Change of use of incidental outbuilding for the dwelling to a mixed use Sui Generis building comprising of gym and incidental purposes in relating to the single family dwelling.

Applicant: Mr Munvinder Dhariwal

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form
Planning Statement (reference PR4394)
Drawing no. E116(20)001 (proposed plans and elevations)
Drawing no. E116(05)001 (existing plans and elevations)
Drawing no. E116(05)1250 (existing local and block plan minus canopy)
Drawing no. E116(20)1250 (proposed location and block plan)

Relevant Planning History

20250557	Erection of a single storey front extension to an existing outbuilding with roof lights.	Under consideration	
20250152	Extension of outbuilding to enclose existing canopy.	Refused	10.04.2025
20211562	Proposed extension to summer house.	Permitted	04.03.2022
20211273	Erection of a single storey front extension to existing summer house.	Permitted	13.12.2021
20211246	Application for variation of condition 3 attached to planning permission reference no 20130959 to allow the gym outbuilding to be used for a personal trainers business, Mon - Fri 8am - 8pm.	Temporary consent	03.12.2021
20211033	Extension and raising part of the roof of existing summer house.	Refused	05.10.2021
20150026	Erection of front and side boundary walls with railings and vehicular	Permitted	20.08.2015

entrance gates and the widening of the two existing vehicular accesses.

20140597	Application for a non-material amendment to planning application reference 20130959 for the erection of detached outbuilding with canopy in rear garden to replace existing to provide gym, play room/games room and shed; to allow roof height and footprint increase, alteration to the pitch of the canopy incorporating installation of roof lights, installation of two roof lights to outbuilding and also to allow deeper windows which will be frosted.	Permitted	22.07.2014
20130959	Erection of detached outbuilding with canopy in rear garden to replace existing to provide gym, play room/games room and shed.	Permitted	11.12.2013
20070377	Construction of additional vehicular access on to a classified road to form an 'in and out' driveway.	Permitted	29.06.2007
20061008	Erection of part first floor, part two storey and part single storey rear extension and single storey side extension to form garage, gym, family room, breakfast area and hobby room at ground floor level with two bedrooms, ensuite shower room/wc and two bathrooms/wcs; construction of pitched roof on front elevation to form canopy incorporating an open front porch; new bay window at first floor level on front elevation with new pitched roofs over both front first floor level windows and erection of wall mounted with railings and gates to front boundary of property.	Permitted	11.01.2007
20060132	Erection of two storey side, part first floor, part two storey and part single storey rear extension to form garage, breakfast area, family room and hobby room at ground floor level with two bedrooms each with balcony and en-suite bathroom/w.c. and enlarged bathroom/w.c at first floor level and erection of wall with mounted	Permitted	23.03.2006

	railings and gates to front of property.		
20051103	Erection of two storey side, part first floor and part single storey rear extension to form garage, enlarged kitchen/dining room, family room and hobby room at ground floor level with three bedrooms, two ensuite bathrooms and enlarged bathroom at first floor level and erection of wall and gates to front of property.	Refused	07.02.2006
19960566	Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged living room, dining room, w.c. and bathroom and erection of a pitched roof canopy at the front.	Permitted	03.10.1996
19860074	Erection of a conservatory at the rear	Permitted	10.04.1986
19850554	Erection of single storey rear extension to form breakfast area and sun room	Permitted	21.08.1985

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarchy of Centres
- CS11 - Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS13 – Green Space, Sport and Recreation
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 - Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision-making
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design for Gravesham: Design Code (2024);
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006);

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

GBC - Environmental Protection Team

Environmental Protection is aware that temporary permission was granted for the gym use under 20211246. Having checked our records, we have not received any noise complaints regarding the use since permission was granted

It is recommended that conditions 6 (hours/days of use), 7 (client numbers) and 8 (no classes/training outside) of the previous permission are re-instated should full permission be granted. It's noted that the Planning Statement requests that the number of clients be increased to 6 on days where there are no group sessions and 10 where there are. This is acceptable, but the condition should also restrict group session to 2 per week with a maximum of 4 people at a time (as per section 6.13 of the PS).

There should be no external plant/equipment such as air conditioning installed without a separate planning application.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual letters to seven neighbouring properties. One letter of objection stating that the gym is used outside of working hours and objecting to the noise of the music. The overall consultation period expired on 21.08.2025.

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the change of use from incidental outbuilding for the dwelling to a mixed use Sui Generis building comprising of gym and incidental purposes in relating to the single family dwelling. The proposed use of the building is to operate as a gym with clients visiting the site.

The application seeks the following:

- Proposed change of use to Sui Generis.
- Change of use to be permanent
- To allow both incidental use and commercial gym use.
- Proposed operation hours of the gym are 8 am – 8 pm.
- Outside the hours of operation, the outbuilding would be used incidentally to the dwelling.
- Number of clients to be limited to 6 per day with a 10-minute gap in between each client.
- The Applicant also offers group sessions. These will be limited to 2 sessions a week, with a maximum of 4 people per group.
- The Applicant's fiancé also operates out of the Site, but this is on a part-time basis due to other working commitments.

- One designated parking space to the front of the property for clients.
- Provision of one secure cycle storage space in the rear garden.
- There is no proposed built form as part of this application.

Background

The outbuilding at the application site was constructed in summer 2014, following a grant of planning permission and a non-material amendment approvals (references 20130959 and 2014597). Condition 3 of planning permission 20130959 states that the outbuilding should only be used for purposes incidental to the dwelling at the application site.

Planning application 20211246 sought to regularise the development and was granted a temporary consent for three years ending on 3 December 2022. The permission has therefore expired and this application seeks to obtain permanent permission with some minor changes.

Appropriateness of the development in principle

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) prioritises development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development. It states that this will be achieved by (amongst other things) revitalising the Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area as a focal point for retail, leisure, cultural and tourism facilities and by bringing forward a range of suitable sites in other parts of the urban area for residential and employment development.

Policy CS08 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) sets out that proposals for leisure uses will be directed towards Gravesend Town Centre in the first instance followed by edge of centre sites and then out of centre sites.

Policy CS13 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) seeks to make adequate provision for sports facilities, in accordance with an adequate, up to date and relevant evidence base.

This policy approach means that leisure uses, such as the proposed commercial gym would be broadly welcomed but that they should be located in accessible and sustainable locations, such as the town centre. The application site is a significant distance from the town centre or any local centre and would be a stand-alone commercial use in an entirely residential area, which does not comply with the main thrust of the development plan policy approach.

However some commercial activities can operate successfully in residential areas. Successful operation is dependent on the nature of the use and adequate mitigation of any adverse impacts associated with the use. As a small commercial gym, it is possible that the proposed use could be appropriate in this location. The formed the basis of initially allowing the use on a temporary basis, in order to assess the appropriateness of the use in the residential location. Therefore the main considerations in this application will be assessing the impacts of the proposal on the character of the area, the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and on highway safety. The outbuilding is proposed to be used incidentally outside of the gyms business hours.

It is acknowledged that this proposal would allow the applicant to continue working from home, which can have positive impacts (such as reducing the need to travel, improved quality of life etc), but it is considered that these benefits must be weighed carefully against any adverse impacts of the proposed development.

Design, Character and Appearance

The proposed development would not involve any alterations to the building physically but the proposed commercial use could not be in keeping with the surrounding residential area. The use would result in additional visits to the property above that which would be associated with a residential use, increasing the level of activity around the site and in the surrounding area.

It is noted that it is proposed to restrict the number of clients (to six per day and ten when there are group classes) and the hours of operation (08.00 to 20.00, Mondays to Fridays) and that only one client at a time would use the proposed gym. This differs from the temporary consent as that only allowed a maximum of four clients a day. Given that the hours of operation cover 12 hours it is considered that six clients over a 12 hour period would not result in significant disturbance over and above the previously allowed four clients. As such, the extent of the proposed commercial activities would not be so significant as to be detrimental to the residential character of the area.

The building is proposed to be used for incidental purposes outside of the gym business hours.

Overall the proposed development would be appropriate in character and appearance and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would not result in a reduction in the amount of amenity space at the application site and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines.

Neighbouring Amenity

The closest residential properties to the application site are nos. 248 and 258 Singlewell Road (located to the north and south respectively) and nos. 40 and 42 Windsor Road (located to the east). Nos. 265, 267 and 269 Singlewell Road are located across the roadway to the west.

Due to the design of the outbuilding (obscure glazed windows) and the screening provided by boundary treatments, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to the occupiers of any surrounding dwellings.

As a commercial activity, the use of the gym would have increased potential to cause adverse noise and disturbance impacts in the surrounding area, above that of a residential use. These impacts would be generated by additional visitors and vehicle movements and activities/music associated with the use of the gym. It is noted that local residents during the course of the 2021 application outlined that the unauthorised use of the outbuilding involved very loud music practically every day and the gym being used from 06.00 up to 22.00 hours and on weekends. It was also noted that one local resident did not raise an objection to the proposal, provided that the existing noise levels are reduced. The Council's Environmental Protection Officer however did not require a noise assessment as they were of the opinion that noise complaints would be dealt with under their own legislation. The applicant has provided clear details of the number of clients and operational hours they are proposing and have agreed to conditions to limit these.

Turning to the current application, one letter of representation has been received relating to noise but no noise complaints have been received by the Environmental Protection team. Noise complaints should be raised directly with Environmental Protection. The representation also stated that the gym operates outside of the stated hours. If this is the case, it should be reported to Planning Enforcement to investigate accordingly. As part of this application, it is proposed that the outbuilding is used for incidental purposes outside of the gym business hours. This is acceptable in principle and would most likely be used by family members only. If concerns were raised that the gym was operating as a business outside of the specified hours, this would be investigated accordingly and be for the applicant to prove how the outbuilding is being utilised.

It is proposed to restrict the number of clients (to six per day, 10 when there are group classes) and the hours of operation (08.00 to 20.00, Mondays to Fridays), which is an increase of two clients compared to the temporary consent, and that only one client at a time would use the proposed gym. Group classes are also now being proposed with no more than four clients at one time. This appears to have been the case for a while already and the application would regularise this. The GBC Environmental Protection Team have not raised objection to this and recommended it is controlled by condition. It was considered when the temporary permission was granted that restricting the opening hours and the number of clients would

be justifiable but that restricting music and amplified sound systems would be too onerous. Instead, as stated above, it would be more appropriate to utilise environmental legislation to ensure that no adverse noise impacts from music can occur. The same view is taken with this current application.

In addition, it would be appropriate to use planning conditions to ensure that there are no classes or training activities outside of the building; that windows/doors remain closed during working hours; and that sufficient refuse storage provision is available at the application site. These conditions would ensure that there would be no adverse impacts to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers. These conditions were imposed on the 2021 consent but there is no record that they were ever submitted to be discharged. These conditions should therefore be imposed again on any forthcoming permanent consent.

Overall it is considered that the proposed development would cause no significant adverse residential amenity impacts subject to conditions and as such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and paragraph 135f of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

Parking and Highways issues

The application property has at least four bedrooms and provides off-road parking on the site frontage with an 'in and out' access arrangement and in an integral garage.

The applicant is happy with a condition that one of the four parking spaces to the front of the dwelling is allocated for customers during operational hours. Cycle storage for one cycle can be provided on site and can be conditioned as it was on the 2021 permission.

Overall, subject to appropriate conditions, the proposed development would provide sufficient car and bicycle parking and would not be detrimental to highway safety and would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

Conclusion

The proposed development complies with local and national planning policies and subject to the conditions set out above, planning permission can be granted.

Recommendation:

Permission

(For detailed conditions / reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Alison Webster	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	26 August 2025	Dated:	27 August 2025