
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2025

by J Evans BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/W/25/3368160

1 Gatcombe Gardens, West End, Hampshire SO18 3NA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr D Thompson against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is F/25/99109.
 - The development proposed is a change of use of domestic personal gym to 1 to 1 training with general public.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. At the appeal site visit it was apparent that the change of use had occurred, and that parking was happening on the lawn to the western side of the house. For the avoidance of doubt, the determination of the appeal is based on the evidence and drawings as submitted.
3. The description of development refers specifically to the use of the gym on a one-to-one basis, and this is how the original application and the appeal have been considered. Concerns of local residents regarding the use of the premises for group sessions would be a matter for the Council to address.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this case are:
 - The effect of the change of use upon the living conditions of nearby residents, having particular regard to noise and disturbance; and
 - The effect upon the safety of other users of the public highway.

Reasons

Living Conditions

5. Positioned within a residential estate comprising mostly two storey houses, 1 Gatcombe Gardens occupies a corner plot near to the junction of Gatcombe Gardens with Townhill Way. Set back from the road behind mostly lawns, the property has a front door within its northern elevation, and a garage attached to the south. The garage is flat roofed and is linked to that of the neighbouring property, 2 Gatcombe Gardens (No 2), and in front of both garages there are driveways providing parking space for two cars.

6. The conversion of the garage to a gym has taken place. The works have not altered the external appearance of the garage, with parking for an additional vehicle already occurring upon the lawn near to the property's driveway. The garage walls have been lined with timber boarding, and there are cushioned tiles upon the floor. Near to the garage door is an area of open space, and at the opposite end there is a rack and weights, along with two pieces of gym equipment. There is a window within the rear wall of the garage, and both this and the garage's side door that provides access to the gym are double glazed. Clients enter and leave via a timber gate in the front garden wall.
7. The appellant has explained that one-to-one personal training sessions on an appointment basis have been occurring since 2021, with an average of six sessions per day at any time between the hours of 06.30 and 20.30. Suggested conditions have been provided by the appellant that would include limiting opening to these times for Mondays to Fridays inclusive, with a maximum of six sessions occurring in any one day.
8. Despite such restrictions, in any weekday there could be a total of twelve vehicle movements focused upon the property. Whilst there is support for the appeal scheme from a local resident, the frequency of such movements would exceed the daily comings and goings associated with a four-bedroomed dwelling in a residential cul-de-sac. Some of these movements would occur early in the mornings as well as late into the evenings, both being times when nearby residents would have an expectation of a degree of peace and quiet. In addition to vehicle movements, there would also be noise and disturbance deriving from the closing of vehicle doors and from headlights. Given the long opening hours of the facility, despite limiting the use to six sessions a day there would still be frequent disturbance for nearby residents on a daily basis throughout the week.
9. From the appeal site inspection, it was apparent that some soundproofing to the building had been undertaken, and that there is also an ongoing background level of noise and disturbance from traffic using Townhill Way. However, there is no mechanical ventilation system for the gym, so if the window and door were open to provide fresh air, nearby residents would experience noise disturbance from music, voices, and from the use of the equipment. Such disturbance and noise could occur both early in the mornings through till late into the evenings, and these would be times when nearby residents are more likely to be at home.
10. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires decision makers to consider whether unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions, with such conditions having to be necessary, relevant to planning and to the development, enforceable, precise and reasonable. Even on a one-to-one basis, the use could occur several times a day at any time over a span of fourteen hours within any weekday. A condition requiring a ten minute period between sessions would not necessarily prevent client overlap, and such circumstances would also be difficult to enforce, particularly given the length of the day. The condition would thereby fail to comply with the tests of the Framework.
11. The appellant has provided details of planning permission for the use of a residential outbuilding for one-to-one personal training sessions (application ref: P/25/0408/CU). However, this permission allowed the use of a detached outbuilding rather than one linked to a neighbouring property, and it was granted

with more compressed daily hours than those proposed with the appeal scheme, along with a maximum of five clients in any one day rather than six. Given these differences, the comparison does not form a binding precedent for approving the appeal.

12. For these reasons the change of use would unacceptably harm the living conditions of nearby residents, particularly with regard to noise and disturbance, and the suggested conditions would not overcome these harms. There would be conflict with Policies DM1 and DM8 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2022) (LP) as these policies require, amongst other things, that development does not have an unacceptable impact upon the residential amenities of existing residents, including that arising from noise.

Highways

13. The appeal property is positioned close to the round-a-bout linking Gatcombe Gardens to Townhill Way. Both roads are speed restricted, with Townhill Way being a busy through road. Unrestricted parking could occur throughout Gatcombe Gardens and also along Townhill Way.
14. The houses within Gatcombe Gardens have dedicated parking spaces serving each home, with some properties having additional parking within their gardens. As evident from a late morning site inspection, on-street parking occurs throughout Gatcombe Gardens, which comprises a constrained network of narrow roads. The nature of the roads in the estate is such that pinch points are created wherever vehicles are parked on the highway, and where they are parked upon the public footways pedestrians are deflected into the road, to the detriment of their safety and convenience.
15. The parking requirements associated with the change of use would substantially increase and concentrate demand for parking on and near to the appeal property, and this increase would be in addition to the parking requirements associated with a family home. Furthermore, the hours of operation of the gym would be such that parking would be occurring at times when demand for on-street parking would also be high.
16. Whilst noting the Highways Department have not objected to the scheme, such a stance is heavily caveated through ensuring that no more than one client is on site at any time. The suggested conditional requirement of a ten minute interval between clients would in theory provide a degree of mitigation, but such a measure would not in itself prevent on-street parking if the space was occupied, a circumstance that could occur where clients overlap irrespective of the intentions of the appellant.
17. The additional on-site space would provide for some users of the facility, but manoeuvring into this space would in itself compromise the full use of the driveway for parking. Even if some clients would use alternative means of transport to private vehicles to access the gym, there would still be a significant and noticeable increase in daily movements focused upon the property with an associated need for parking, and this need would be in addition to that associated with the nearby dwellings. Having regard to the proximity of the use to two road junctions as well as the constrained nature of Gatcombe Gardens, whilst on-street parking may be allowed, parking near to either junction would result in narrowing the road and

possibly the footways, with a consequential impact upon safety for other users of the highway.

18. For these reasons the scheme would not provide a commensurate level of on-site parking to accommodate the needs of the gym and that of the existing dwelling, and this, combined with the nature of the area, is such that regular and frequent additional parking on the public highway would be to the detriment of the safety of other users. Having regard to the circumstances of this case, the suggested conditions would not overcome these fundamental harms, nor would the use accord with the Framework's requirement to minimise the scope of conflict for all users of the highway. There would also be conflict with LP Policy DM14, which seeks, amongst other things that parking benefits should outweigh any adverse effects, and that includes as explained in the supporting text for this policy, having regard to the creation of overspill parking onto the public highway.

Other Matters

19. The scheme would be a local business that would enable and support individuals to have healthier lives, thereby meeting objectives of the Framework. The business is the primary source of income for the appellant, but as regards the planning considerations arising from the appeal, this is a personal rather than public benefit. The modest scale of the social and economic community benefits would not outweigh the harms to the living conditions of nearby residents and to highway safety.
20. The occupiers of No 2 have referred to property damage occurring as a result of the change of use. However, this would be a matter for the relevant property owners to resolve separately from the appeal process.
21. The appellant has raised concerns regarding the Council's handling of the original application, including a failure to engage in meaningful dialogue. Such matters fall to be pursued by other means and have no bearing on the consideration of the planning merits of the case.

Conclusion

22. For the above reasons, the scheme would have an unacceptable impact upon the living conditions of nearby residents and also upon highway safety. There would be conflict with the development plan when considered as a whole, and there are no other considerations, including the requirements of the Framework, that outweigh this finding. Thus, for the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

J Evans

INSPECTOR