



Planning Statement and Leisure Impact Assessment

In respect of

Amended application for increase
mezzanine for Leisure Use and
external alterations

at

The Forge Retail Park,
Biggar Street, Parkhead,
Glasgow, G31 4BH

On behalf of

The Gym Ltd

USP1050

April 2021

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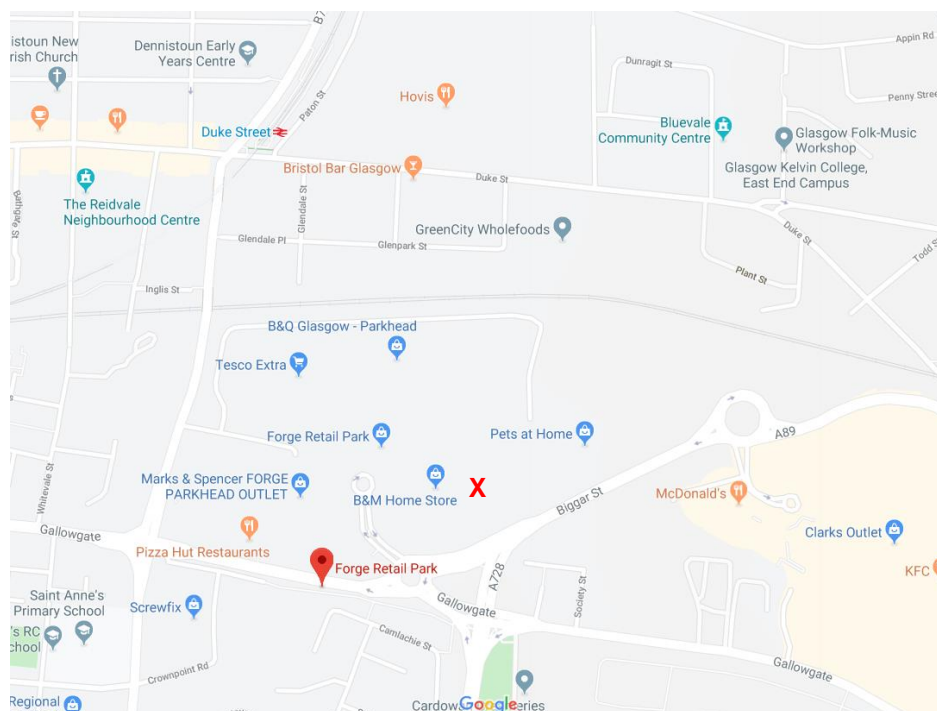
1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement and Leisure Impact Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the instructions of The Gym Ltd.
- 1.2 Planning permission was approved in November 2020 for *'the use of retail unit (Class 1) as a gym (Use Class 11)'*, application reference 20/00247/FUL.
- 1.3 The consent approved the use of the unit as a Gym (Use Class 11) and insertion of a mezzanine of 419 sq metres GIA. Together with the existing ground floor area (746 square metres), the total floor area approved for gym use was 1,165 sq metres.
- 1.4 The Gym Ltd are now proposing to take forward the fit out and occupation of the unit to bring it back into active use, however following a review of the detailed layout of the premises they have identified a need to increase the floorarea of the mezzanine to improve the operational layout of the premises. The mezzanine is to be increased to 549 sq metres, providing an additional 130 sq metres of accommodation within the premises. The total floorspace would be increased from 1,165 sq metres to 1,295 sq metres.
- 1.5 In addition, amendments are proposed to the front and rear elevations of the unit to facilitate the use and improve the operation and appearance of the building. To the front elevation new entrance doors are to replace the current doors in the existing openings. A new fire exit is also proposed to meet fire regulations. Minor amendments are proposed to facilitate level access and provide appropriate security. To the rear elevation new ventilation louvres are proposed to serve the heater plantroom and provide fresh air intake and extract. The rear fire exit is to be increased in width slightly to meet fire regulations.
- 1.6 The Gym aims to increase health and fitness activities to a wide demographic to encourage and improve health by providing a low cost and flexible gym membership option. The Gym provides a high quality but cheaper option for health and fitness activity with 24 hour opening hours providing flexibility for its customers.
- 1.7 On average 35% of The Gym's members have not been to a gym before with The Gym attempting to provide its facilities to a much wider market.
- 1.8 This statement provides a review of the site and surroundings an overview of the health and fitness market, planning history, planning policy context, proposed development, and addresses the planning considerations to assess the updated proposals in relation to the planning policy framework.

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2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site (hereafter 'the site') comprises a Class 1 retail unit which is currently empty since CarpetRight vacated the unit in 2018. The retail unit is situated within Forge Retail Park, which is located to the east of Glasgow City Centre.
- 2.2 The site is located within a highly accessible area, south of Duke Street station within an 'other retail and commercial leisure centre' allocation.' The site is well connected in terms of the local transport network. It is within walking distance to Duke Street Train Station approximately 800m away, which has various ScotRail links to Dumbarton Central and Springburn in addition to providing links to the surrounding area.
- 2.3 There are bus stops within the vicinity (approximately 400m away), two of which directly serve the retail park. These each serve 6 different routes to the surrounding local area.



X The Site

Figure 2.1 Site Location

3.0 THE HEALTH AND FITNESS MARKET

- 3.1 According to research carried out by Cushman and Wakefield LLP the health and fitness market in the UK was expected to reach a value of over £5 billion in 2019, with over 10 million members across the sector for the first time and these figures are expected to continue to grow. According to the Leisure Data 'State of the UK Fitness Industry Report 2019', 15.6% of the UK population are members of private health clubs, up from just 7.2% in 2011.
- 3.2 Over the last ten years the sector has witnessed a major structural shift with the development of a new 'low-cost' sector. One of the surprising features of the recent economic down turn is that many consumers viewed their gym membership in the same category as their mobile phone or car; a 'necessity' rather than a 'luxury' and as a result many customers have sought to reduce their membership package rather than cancel their contract altogether and to switch to more budget operators.
- 3.3 Although relatively new to the UK, the low-cost model is actually well established. McFit in Germany and PlanetFitness in the USA are examples where the model has expanded nationally with great success. The concept is based around a no-frills principle where clubs contain a large selection of (usually market leading) equipment with the items which are expensive to operate and maintain, such as swimming pools, saunas or studios not provided as part of the offer. While the exact level of 'extras' differs between operators, operators provide a simple level of service with items such as free towels or cafes excluded.

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4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The most relevant planning application pertaining to the site and this proposal is planning approval ref: 20/00247/FUL which consented use of the retail unit (Class 1) as gym (Class 11) in November 2020. The proposal seeks a variation to this permission to increase the mezzanine floor area by 130 sq metres and to make external amendments to the unit to facilitate the new gym use.
- 4.2 The online planning history of the site identifies the original planning applications for the reconfiguration of the retail park (ref. 08/02898/DC & 10/03048/DC) allowing for additional food/convenience retail space. There have also been applications for amendments to the original approvals, alterations and additions within the park, as well as consents to display advertisements.

Application Ref.	Site Address	Description of development	Decision (date)
08/02898/DC	Site at Forge Retail Park/Biggar Street/Gallowgate	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping.	Approved June 2009
10/03048/DC	Site at Forge Retail Park/Biggar Street/Gallowgate	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping	Approved April 2011
13/00622/DC	41 Biggar Street, Glasgow	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping – amendment to planning consent 10/03048/DC to increase floorspace.	Approved August 2013
13/00971/DC	41 Biggar Street, Glasgow	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1) petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (increase of 172 spaces)	Approved August 2013

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Application Ref.	Site Address	Description of development	Decision (date)
		and landscaping – amendment to planning consent 08/02898/DC to increase floorspace	
13/01009/DC	901 Gallowgate, Glasgow	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (Increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping – amendment to planning consent 10/03048/DC to extend the range of (convenience) goods.	Approved August 2013
13/01010/DC	901 Gallowgate, Glasgow	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping – amendment to planning consent 08/02898/DC to extend the range of (convenience) goods.	Approved August 2013
13/02447/DC	11 Biggar Street Glasgow	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping - amendment to planning consent 08/02898/DC to extend the range of (convenience) goods.	Approved January 2014
13/02445/DC	11 Biggar Street Glasgow	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping - amendment to planning consent 10/03048/DC to extend the range of (convenience) goods.	Approved January 2014
17/03072/DC	Site At Forge Retail Park/Biggar	Erection of single storey drive-through restaurant/takeaway (Class 3/ Sui Generis), with associated external seating and erection of single storey drive-through coffee shop, (Class	Approved February 2018

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Application Ref.	Site Address	Description of development	Decision (date)
	Street/Gallowgate, Glasgow	3) with associated external seating, retail sales and takeaway with access, parking, landscaping and engineering works	
18/03009/FUL	Site at Forge Retail Park/Biggar Street/Gallowgate, Glasgow	Installation of electrical substation, enclosure and associated works	Approved December 2018
19/00322/MSC	Site at Forge Retail Park/Biggar Street/Gallowgate Glasgow	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,778 cars (increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping. Section 42 application to vary condition 8 of planning permission 10/03048/DC to allow additional food/convenience retail floorspace	Approved July 2019
19/00323/PPP	Site at Forge Retail Park/Biggar Street/Gallowgate, Glasgow	Reconfiguration of Forge Retail Park including demolition and extensions to provide foodstore (9,945 square metres) (Class 1), petrol filling station, revised access and amended parking layout for 1,779 cars (increase of 172 spaces) and landscaping Section 42 application to vary condition 11 of planning permission 08/02898/DC to allow additional food/convenience retailing.	Approved August 2019
19/02858/ADV	Site at Forge Retail Park/Biggar Street/Gallowgate, Glasgow	Display of various illuminated and non illuminated signage.	Granted 15 November 2019

5.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The application relates to changes to the approved mezzanine and front and rear elevations to facilitate the use of the premises as a health and fitness operation by The Gym.
- 5.2 Planning permission was approved in November 2020 for *'the use of retail unit (Class 1) as a gym (Use Class 11)'*, application reference 20/00247/FUL.
- 5.3 The consent approved the use of the unit as a Gym (Use Class 11) and insertion of a mezzanine of 419 sq metres GIA. Together with the existing ground floor area (746 square metres), the total floor area approved for gym use was 1,165 sq metres.
- 5.4 The Gym Ltd are now proposing to take forward the fit out and occupation of the unit to bring it back into active use, however following a review of the detailed layout of the premises they have identified a need to increase the floorarea of the mezzanine to improve the operational layout of the proposed gym. The application therefore proposes to provide a mezzanine of 549 sq metres, providing an additional 130 sq metres of accommodation within the premises. The total floorspace would be increased from 1,165 sq metres to 1,295 sq metres GIA.
- 5.5 In addition, amendments are proposed to the front and rear elevations of the unit to facilitate the use and improve the operation and appearance of the building. To the front elevation new entrance doors are to replace the current doors in the existing openings. A new fire exit is also proposed to meet fire regulations. Minor amendments are proposed to facilitate level access and provide appropriate security. To the rear elevation new ventilation louvres are proposed to serve the heater plantroom and provide fresh air intake and extract. The rear fire exit is to be increased in width slightly to meet fire regulations.
- 5.6 The floorplans also show the existing bin store which will be retained for use by The Gym and provide sufficient refuse and recycling storage related to the use. This addresses Condition 03 on the decision notice for the previous application to avoid it being required for this consent if approved.
- 5.7 The proposed occupier is The Gym who aim to increase access to health and fitness activities to a wide demographic within the local community to encourage and improve health by providing a low cost and flexible gym membership option. The Gym provides a high quality but cheaper option for the health and fitness activity.
- 5.8 The Gym requires a floorspace of between 1,000 and 1,500 square metres for the format of health and fitness use. A large floorplate is required to accommodate the main gym equipment, whilst facilities such as male and female changing rooms, office, store, entrance lobby and refuse facilities are required to facilitate the operation. The business model of The Gym is as a budget operator without destination facilities such as swimming pools, sauna café, creche which means

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that the facility needs to provide capacity for a sufficient number of members requiring the large floor size.

- 5.9 The operation includes a range of cardio-vascular (rowing, running, cycling) and resistance (weights) equipment. It will provide a new facility for residents and employees that will complement nearby services and facilities. Music will be limited to provide low-level background music only.
- 5.10 The site will continue to be accessed from the existing access point from Biggar Street which has pedestrian access on either side of the road to the site from the surrounding facilities and residential areas.
- 5.11 The site will utilise the existing car park which provides over 700 free car parking spaces adjacent to the building, shared with the other occupiers and with a proportion of disabled parking space for visitors. The Gym members will have access and be able to make use of this provision.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY

6.1 The Scottish National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and the Scottish Planning Policy published in June 2014 form the national planning policy guidance document. These set out the Government's planning policies for Scotland and how these are to be applied.

6.2 The Development Plan for this location consists of the adopted Scottish Planning Policy (June 2014), adopted Glasgow City Development Plan (2017). This Plan sets out the Council's vision and strategy for land use whilst also providing the basis for assessing planning applications along with the relevant Supplementary Guidance documents which have been referred to in this planning statement.

Scottish Planning Policy (June 2014, Revised December 2020)

6.3 Under the Section 'Development Management', paragraph 71 of the SPP outlines that "*Where development proposals in edge of town centre, commercial centre or out-of-town locations are contrary to the development plan, it is for applicants to demonstrate that more central options have been thoroughly assessed and that the impact on existing town centres is acceptable. [...] Where a retail and leisure development with a gross floorspace over 2,500m² is proposed outwith a town centre, contrary to the development plan, a retail impact analysis should be undertaken*".

6.4 Paragraph 61 of the SPP states that "*Plans should identify a network of centres and explain how they can complement each other. The network is likely to include city centres, town centres, local centres and commercial centres and may be organised as a hierarchy*".

6.5 Paragraph 62 of the SPP states that "*Plans should identify as town centres those centres which display:*

- *a diverse mix of uses, including shopping;*
- *a high level of accessibility;*
- *qualities of character and identity which create a sense of place and further the well-being of communities;*
- *wider economic and social activity during the day and in the evening; and*
- *integration with residential areas."*

6.6 In addition, paragraph 68 of the SPP states that "*development plans should adopt a sequential town centre first approach when planning for uses which generate significant footfall, including retail and commercial leisure uses, offices, community and cultural facilities [...] This requires that locations are considered in the following order of preference:*

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- *town centres (including city centres and local centres);*
- *edge of town centre;*
- *other commercial centres identified in the development plan; and*
- *out-of-centre locations that are, or can be, made easily accessible by a choice of transport modes.”*

6.7 The following local policies within the Glasgow City Development Plan are considered to be relevant to the proposal:

Glasgow City Development Plan (Adopted March 2017):

- CDP1 The Placemaking Principle
- CDP2 Sustainable Spatial Strategy
- CDP3 Economic Development
- CDP4 Network of Centres
- CDP11 Sustainable Transport

6.8 Reference will also be given to the Council’s supplementary planning guidance documents including:

- IPG3 – Economic Development (Interim Planning Guidance)
- SG4 – Network of Centres
- SG11 – Sustainable Transport

7.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.1 In this section, consideration is given to the key issues raised by the scheme in relation to the planning policy context under the following headings:

- Principle of use and increase in the size of the mezzanine
- External works and design
- Residential amenity
- Transport

Principle of use

7.2 Policy CDP 1 refers to the Council's desire for development to create healthy and more equitable environments and promoting healthy lifestyle opportunities.

7.3 The proposal will facilitate occupation of the unit as a health and fitness use providing a leisure facility for the surrounding local community and local employees that is available 24 hours a day. The proposal seeks to provide an alternative town centre use in this allocated 'edge of centre' and 'other retail and commercial leisure centres' location, replacing an existing vacant retail unit.

7.4 Policy CDP 4 supports the 'Town Centre First' principle for a variety of uses generating significant footfall that are set out in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). These include retail and commercial leisure as well as offices, community and cultural facilities and other public buildings. This approach reflects the need to both provide accessible locations for a wide range of goods and services and also to avoid the diversion of activity away from Town Centres.

7.5 Supplementary Guidance SG4 sets out further criteria for the consideration of development in Other Retail and Commercial Leisure Centres in Assessment Guideline 7. Part (a) restricts the loss of bulky goods floorspace unless the unit has been vacant for at least 12 months and actively marketed for bulky goods use. The existing retail use has been vacant since, June 2018, without an alternative retail operator being secured despite active marketing. Other units remain vacant within the park, including 3B (466 sqm) and unit 11 (928 sqm), which would be available to bulky goods retailers if the market conditions changed and requirements did increase, whilst the existing floorspace within the unit is below the 900 sqm minimum threshold identified in criteria (b) for new bulky retail goods floorspace in this centre.

7.6 Planning application 20/00247/FUL has approved the use of the premises as a health and fitness use, with this proposal seeking a modest increase to the size of the mezzanine and minor external amendments to facilitate the use only. The health and fitness use will provide a complementary use to those within the retail and leisure centre, in addition to those uses within Parkhead Town

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Centre nearby, and will avoid the longer term vacancy of this premises, whilst providing an active use supporting the health and wellbeing of the community in the surrounding area. The proposal therefore meets part (a).

- 7.7 Assessment Guideline 1 provides further information on the application of the sequential approach. The Town Centres are the sequentially preferable location for new leisure uses, followed by edge of centre and other retail and commercial leisure centres (which the site falls within both). Assessment Guideline 9 provides further guidance for Large Scale Retail and Commercial Leisure Development Proposals. The guidelines state that (a) a sequential assessment or impact assessment is not required for new commercial leisure proposals under 2,000 square metres and (b) notes that in exceptional circumstances the local authority may require an assessment where sites fall below this threshold.
- 7.8 It is considered that there are no exceptional circumstances in this case, whilst the principle of use of the premises for health and fitness use has been confirmed as acceptable in November 2000 under application reference 20/00247/FUL. Given that this application adds only a further 130 sq metres of floorspace to the mezzanine level a detailed sequential site assessment is not therefore necessary under the above requirements.
- 7.9 However, to assist in determining this revised application a review of the previous sequential sites to ascertain any changes in circumstances has been undertaken and also identified whether there are any additional sites which require assessment as part of this submission.
- 7.10 Appendix 1 sets out consideration of the sites and demonstrates in terms of suitability, availability or viability that there continues to be no suitable sites available in the City Centre that meet the operational requirements of the proposal.
- 7.11 The operator has two existing facilities within the city centre which provide for this catchment and The Gym's requirement is for a facility to the east of the City to cater for the local community in this area of Glasgow, which the proposed site caters for.
- 7.12 The proposed use will replace an existing town centre use in this location which is an established Commercial Centre that accommodates large scale retail and leisure uses. The site is considered appropriate to the scale and nature of the centre and will serve the surrounding local community and workers, as well as being complimentary to the retail uses in the commercial centre. The increased floorarea proposed within this application is considered to be in line with policies CDP1 and CDP4 of the Local Development Plan.

Impact Assessment

- 7.13 Council policy SG4 (Network of Centres) states that any retail or commercial leisure developments that are over 1,000m² must provide an assessment of the retail impact of the proposal to ensure

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it will not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the Centres. As the proposal is over 1,000m² an impact assessment needs to be undertaken.

7.14 In order to assess the potential impact of the Proposed Development, it is appropriate to understand the proposed development in the context of existing health and fitness provision and the health of the surrounding centres within the catchment, which include:

- Glasgow City Centre
- Parkhead Town Centre
- Duke Street Local Centre
- The Barras Local Centre
- Bridgeton Local Centre

7.15 Assessments of impact need to be based on a direct comparison of facilities and whether there will be direct impacts which might have a detrimental effect on the centre as a whole, rather than individual sectors or occupiers. The operator in this case is The Gym Ltd and it is evident to see that there is significant growth in the leisure sector, particularly in 'low cost' health and fitness facilities.

7.16 According to the 2019 "State of the UK Fitness Industry Report", the UK Health and Fitness Industry continues to grow. There are reported to be over 10 million fitness members in the UK, with 1 in every 7 people in the UK being a member of a gym. In 2017, 272 new public and private fitness centres were opened in the UK. This growth is being driven mainly by the private sector. The low-cost fitness market has continued to be the main driving force behind the private sector growth over the last 12 months and there are now over 500 low cost clubs which account for 35% of gym membership in the private sector. There is also a continual growth of small private health clubs providing specialist training, in an upmarket environment.

7.17 The evidence available highlights an increase in the demand for health and fitness facilities, especially budget type facilities.

7.18 The Gym aims to increase access to health and fitness activities to a wider demographic to encourage improved health by providing a low cost and flexible option. On average 35% of The Gym's members have not been to a gym before with The Gym attempting to provide its facilities to a much wider market. Membership of The Gym is at low cost, with no minimum contract period. As such members can join for just a single month, or have a break within their membership at nominal cost. The Gym opens on a 24 hour basis to ensure flexibility of use by its members and to meet changing working habits and timings, and attracts members therefore that work shifts or who are employed in the emergency services. The Gym work on the basis of providing facilities which are accessible and available to those living and working close to the

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unit. The Gym's operations include a range of cardio-vascular (rowing, running, cycling, etc.) and resistance (weights) equipment for individual use for members to use when and as they choose to. The operation does not include facilities such as swimming pools, saunas or cafes, which draw people from a wider area and provide a longer duration of visit or provide a destination use for users willing to travel longer distances. Users are unlikely to travel further to budget gym operations as their key selling point is convenience and cost rather than the range and nature of facilities.

7.19 The site has consent for the use as a health and fitness centre, and the proposal within this application will increase the floorarea to provide an addition of 130 sq metres only compared to the approved scheme in November 2020.

7.20 The impact on the health of each centre has been assessed in turn below in light of the revised proposal and is assessed against existing, committee and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres within the catchment area, and impact on vitality and viability. Overall the key test when assessing impact is whether the proposal will have a significant adverse impact on a centre as a whole. Individual competition between operators is not the primary consideration, albeit the effect of impact on existing units needs to be considered in terms of the wider effects it will have on the function and health of a defined centre. Accordingly, the potential impact of the gym is considered below:

Glasgow City Centre

7.21 The SG4 Network of Centres Supplementary Guidance document identifies the role and function of Glasgow City Centre to be its primary retail location with a nationwide catchment. In addition, reference is made to its role as a centre for higher education, the centre providing the biggest office location in the city region, its importance as an international tourist destination, as well as the current extensive leisure and entertainment offer. The aims are to support the primary retail function, support a diversity of land uses, maintain attractiveness for investment, deliver additional employment opportunities and protect from development that would harm its role and function.

7.22 Glasgow City Centre accommodates a range of health and fitness centres, including sports and leisure centres, swimming pools, specialist fitness centres, mid and higher tier gyms and other budget operators such as Pure Gym and Xercise4Less. In addition, The Gym already operate two facilities located within the city centre at, Bothwell Street and Jamaica Street, which cater for the City Centre catchment. As such the city centre requirement has been met by the existing facilities and The Gym's requirement is for a facility to the south east of the City to cater for the local community in this area of Glasgow. Any impact from the new gym on the City Centre is likely to be minor diversion of trade from the existing operators facilities within the city centre, with the aim of the facility to cater for the increase in demand for health and fitness facilities and the lack of provision in this part of the wider city area.

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7.23 The principle strength and health of the Town Centre is derived from its primary retail, service, food and beverage, education, tourism and wider leisure and entertainment functions. The proposal will not affect these primary functions and uses, and a small diversion of trade from other health and fitness facilities will not impact on the overall health, vitality and viability of the centre given its form, function and make up. Glasgow City Centre will continue its role in terms of being a main centre for retail and service functions to the region overall, and the proposal which provides a more local use to the communities to the east of the City Centre will not affect the function or vitality and viability of this centre.

7.24 The City Centre will continue its dominant role in terms of being the main centre for retail and service functions within the borough and the City Centre's retail and service function will not be adversely affected by any increased competition that may occur. As the attraction and function of the Centre is reliant on these sectors, rather than health and fitness alone, no significant adverse impact effects are expected to occur. As such it is considered that the impact of the proposed development on the City Centre will be negligible. The revised proposal will result in the removal of an Class 1 retail use from an out-of-centre location, which has the potential to remove a competing use and have a positive impact on the health and vitality of the City Centre.

Parkhead Town Centre

7.25 The SG4 Network of Centres Supplementary Guidance document identifies Parkhead Town Centre as having a dual retail function and includes: The Forge Shopping Centre as being a strategic shopping location servicing the east of Glasgow and an area of smaller scale local retail within the tenemental area. Whilst vacancy levels are high within the tenemental area, which accommodates smaller scale local retail and service functions, the proposal has the potential to bring in new and additional shopfront and linked trips to encourage investment and improve the vitality and viability of the centre overall.

7.26 Parkhead Town Centre does not accommodate any existing gym facilities within the boundary of the centre. There is one existing facility which is located in an "edge of centre" location, facility knowns as the Forge Fitness Centre. The centre is relatively underprovided for given the catchment in the surrounding area.

7.27 The principle strength and health of the Town Centre is derived from its primary retail, and food and beverage functions. The centre is dominated by the retail use through the provision of the Forge Shopping Centre which also accommodates a number of food and beverage facilities, as well as other local services that provide for linked trips and draws users into the centre, including library, health centre, pharmacies, beauty treatment premises and other service facilities. Together with the retail uses these form the main attractions within the town centre. As set out above there are no general purpose health and fitness operations within the centre. Given the nature and make-up of the uses within the centre; and the good health, vitality and viability of the centre; Parkhead will continue its role in terms of being a main centre for retail and service

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functions to the local community, and the proposal will not affect the function or vitality and viability of this centre.

- 7.28 The revised proposal will result in the removal of an A1 retail use from an edge-of-centre/other retail and leisure location, which has the potential to remove a competing use and have a positive impact on the vitality of the Town Centre. On this basis, the scheme complies with SG4 and will have no individual or cumulative adverse effect on the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Local Centres

- 7.29 The SG4 Network of Centres Supplementary Guidance document identifies Local Town Centres to cater for day to day shopping needs of the surrounding neighbourhoods, as well as providing a range of other local services and employment. The aim is to protect the shopping function, and provide other appropriate town centre uses.

Duke Street Local Centre

- 7.30 The Duke Street Local Centre has one health and fitness offer, Paul Wallace Fitness, although this is a personal trainer service as opposed to a wider gym facility that is 'low cost', accessible with a capacity for larger audience. As such the offer is very different to that provided by The Gym.
- 7.31 Given the local centre is dominated by its retail, food and beverage functions, the revised proposal increasing the mezzanine floorspace will not result in a diversion of trade from the principle functions and uses within the centre and will not have a harmful impact on its health or vitality and viability.

The Barras Local Centre

- 7.32 The Barras Local Centre does not currently have a provision for a health and fitness facility.. It is apparent that the principle strength of The Barras Local Centre is derived from its retail and food and beverage functions. The revised proposal will therefore impact on the existing use, function or health of this local centre.

Bridgeton Local Centre

- 7.33 Bridgeton Local Centre, located south east of the City Centre accommodates a boxing centre. This centre however provides a specialist boxing centre which trains and develops elite talent. It does not provide a general needs gym facility for the local community. The principle strength and health of the Local Centre is derived from its primary retail and general needs service functions. The Local Centre will continue its role in terms of providing local retail and service facilities for the area and will not be adversely affected by the revised proposal for a leisure/health and fitness use as a result.

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Design

- 7.34 This revised application includes minor amendments to the front and rear elevations in order to facilitate the proposed use.
- 7.35 To the front elevation new entrance doors are proposed to replace the current doors in the existing openings. The proposals will provide appropriate entrance facilities enabling access to all whilst improving the appearance of the entrance. A key pad entry will be installed to provide appropriate entrance for members only during late opening hours when the main doors are closed to provide appropriate security.
- 7.36 A new fire exit is also proposed to meet fire regulations to the front elevation. This is located adjacent to the main entrance and finished to deliver a sympathetic appearance to the front of the building. The proposals will ensure that the front elevation maintains an appropriate frontage to the building, meeting its operational requirements and delivering an acceptable appearance reflecting the character of the building and area.
- 7.37 To the rear elevation new ventilation louvres are proposed to serve the heater plantroom and provide fresh air intake and extract. The rear fire exit is to be increased in width slightly to meet fire regulations. These modifications will enable the operation of the building and are contained to the rear service area of the building. The proposals will be finished to tie into the building fabric and their location, scale and appearance will not appear overly obtrusive or out of keeping with the context and character of the rear elevation of the site.
- 7.38 The proposed amendments to the building will facilitate the proposed use and meet the design requirements of the City Plan.

Refuse

- 7.39 The floorplans also show the existing bin store which will be retained for use by The Gym and provide sufficient refuse and recycling storage related to the use. This addresses Condition 03 on the decision notice for the previous application to avoid it being required for this consent if approved.
- 7.40 The nature of the gym use means that waste generation on the site is very low. The main waste is from plastic bottles (al be it most members bring their own reusable drinks containers), with some limited administrative waste generated. The level of waste is significantly reduced from that generated by the former retail use of the premises. Waste is to be stored within two separate receptacles, a 1100L general waste bin and a 1100L recycling waste bin. Collections are made from the site on a weekly basis. The receptacles will be stored to the rear of the building, in the same location as the former retail stores waste storage. The proposed provision of waste storage will adequately cater for the requirements of the use.

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Residential Amenity

- 7.41 CDP 1 seeks to ensure that new activity does not introduce unacceptable additional noise.
- 7.42 Supplementary Guidance 2 states that development should be informed by a place based approach, which means new development should be responsive to its context. It also states that development must realise the role noise management can play in mitigating the intrusion of such nuisance on a development's surroundings in order to reduce the loss of any public amenity.
- 7.43 The proposed revisions do not change the operation or mitigation as set out and confirmed within the approved planning application in 2020.
- 7.44 The unit is in the Forge Retail park with the nearest residential properties to the south of the proposed unit with a separation distance of over 300 metres. The Gym has built a successful business model operating 24-hour health and fitness uses, and therefore has considerable experience in ensuring that their units operate efficiently and without disruption. The Gym operates in over 170 locations with well-established and tried and tested measures to ensure that there are no harmful noise impact or disturbance on surrounding occupiers. The operating management procedures will be adopted so that the proposed 24-hour gym use will not adversely impact upon the residential or other uses in the surrounding area.
- 7.45 From an assessment of visitors to other similar operations around the country and the scale and nature of the operation proposed, only 9.29% of visits are made between the hours of 23:00 and 06:00, with very minimal attendance between 00:00 and 06:00. Due to the nature of the gym use members attending between these hours tend to do so on an individual basis, rather than as part of groups, and comprises those working shifts, such as emergency service personnel. As such, the potential for any impact in terms of noise and disturbance during these hours is limited and the extended hours of operation of the unit would not result in additional harm to the amenity of adjoining neighbouring or surrounding properties.
- 7.46 The fit out of the gym will include the use of flooring material across the gym floor area, which provides sound insulation for equipment and reduces impact sound to ensure noise is contained within the unit. The existing building structure and proposed noise insulation measures will provide appropriate sound insulation for the areas used for cardio vascular equipment, whilst further acoustic mats are laid in the free weights areas to provide further mitigation against the potential noise resulting from dropped equipment and to restrict the transfer of noise into the building's structure.
- 7.47 In terms of the operation of the gym facility itself, audio / visual equipment is placed on anti-vibration mounts, with volume limiters on all equipment to restrict sound to an acceptable level. The volume limiter is kept in a secure area of the gym to ensure that this cannot be interfered with. Audio / visual equipment in the gym is limited to a small number of units which are located

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- around the building to avoid hotspots of noise. These are kept to a minimum noise level, enabling members to utilise headphones.
- 7.48 Given the nature of the operation and the management controls and mitigation measures employed by The Gym, it is considered that the proposed change of use of the premises would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of residents within the surrounding area. The Gym are a considerate and conscientious operator who rely on the local population for a considerable element of their membership and as such take their responsibility to the local environment and surrounding occupiers very seriously to ensure that disturbance does not occur.
- 7.49 The Gym has experience of providing 24-hour health and fitness uses in similar locations to the application site, which include a mix of commercial and residential occupants in the wider area. Due to the proposed nature of the operation and the proposed insulation and control measures to be incorporated, it is considered that the proposed use on a 24-hour basis would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers within the local area.
- 7.50 In addition to ensuring that the proposal would not adversely impact neighbouring amenity, the provision of a high level of security is a principle objective of The Gym. Maintaining a friendly and welcoming environment and deterring any anti-social behaviour is a priority of both The Gym and to its members. The Gym Group successfully operate on a 24 hour basis utilising this well tested system and have an exemplary safety record across all existing operational Gyms in the UK. The established operation and management measures set out will ensure a safe environment without an unacceptable impact on local amenity.
- 7.51 Access to the property is strictly controlled. Between the hours of 8am and 8pm the front door of the premises will be open and access will be afforded to the lobby. At this point a two door portal will be in operation which requires a personal entry code to be entered into a key pad and restricts access to one person at a time only. The pin code enables The Gym to record attendance within the premises. The full height glazed partitions and portals also provide a barrier to noise transmitting from the main body of the gym via the accesses.
- 7.52 Free standing computer terminals within the entrance area of the premises enable people to join up to The Gym or to manage any issues relating to existing membership and entry. Call points are located externally to enable any users to address issues directly.
- 7.53 An extensive network of CCTV cameras will be operated throughout the premises providing coverage of all internal areas and external entrances. This CCTV will be monitored on a 24 hour a day basis through a remote monitoring system enabling operatives to quickly identify and react to potential issues.
- 7.54 Overall, the proposed nature of the operation, together with the mitigation and management measures and the existing building specification will ensure that there are no unacceptable

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impacts on adjoining and surrounding occupiers or the local environment. As such the proposal continues to comply with the General Policies of the Local Development Plan.

Transport

- 7.55 CDP 11 states that major development proposals should be informed by a transport assessment that considers all mode of transport. The policy also refers to how the Council will apply restraint-based maximum parking standards to non-residential development.
- 7.56 Furthermore, the policy states that the Council will require new developments to be designed to promote and facilitate walking and cycling including the provision of cycle parking and direction connections to the walking and cycling network.
- 7.57 The Council requires 1 cycle space per 10 users at peak time for customers and 1 space per 10 staff members. Where possible cycle parking should be provided within the curtilage of the development site.
- 7.58 The proposed change of use would have no material impact on the surrounding highway network or other transport networks and that the existing 700+ car parking spaces dedicated to the retail park can meet the demand from gym users across the day.
- 7.59 The site is located within a good accessible location. It is considered that there are significant sustainable options with public transport providing good accessibility to and from surrounding communities and town centre evidenced by the nearest bus stop located approximately 300 metres away and Duke Street train station located 800m away with various ScotRail links to Dumbarton Central and Springburn in addition to providing links to the surrounding area.
- 7.60 The Gym attracts clientele which are usually based locally and are likely to go to the gym on foot or cycling home from work. It also attracts people who work locally and the gym will form part of a linked trip utilising other services and facilities within the surrounding areas.
- 7.61 The Transport Statement submitted with the approved scheme has been reviewed and updated in relation to the revised proposals for the site and is provided as part of the application pack for this application. Whilst the updated report identifies that the increase in floorspace will result in additional trips to the use during the peak times, and an increase overall, the level of increase is small and will not impact on the overall operation of the highway network, whilst the car parking facilities available are sufficient to accommodate the minor increase in floorspace proposed. As a result it is concluded that the proposal will not result in any unacceptable transport impacts.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This planning statement is submitted on behalf of The Gym Ltd in support of the application for a revised scheme related to 31 Biggar Street, Glasgow. Consent was granted in November 2020 for the change of use of the retail unit of 746 square metres (Use Class 1) to a gym/health and fitness centre (Use Class 11) together with the insertion of a mezzanine floor (419 sqm).
- 8.2 The Gym are planning to fit out and occupy the premises, however have identified an operational requirement to increase the floorarea of the proposed mezzanine by 130 sq metres. In addition amendments are proposed to the front and rear elevations of the building to facilitate the use.
- 8.3 The principle of health and fitness use was therefore approved in November 2020 and a review of the sequentially available sites and impact assessment has confirmed that there continues to be no available sites within centres that would be sequentially preferable that are available, suitable or viable to accommodate the use, whilst the revised proposals will not result in an unacceptable impact on existing centres.
- 8.4 The proposal is appropriate to the scale and nature of the centre and will serve the surrounding local community and workers, as well being complimentary to the retail uses, providing opportunities for improved health and wellbeing for the local community within the area.
- 8.5 The proposed alterations to the front and rear elevations will facilitate the use, are sympathetic to the building and will not harm the character and appearance of the area.
- 8.6 The mitigation measures incorporated into the building and the building fit out specification, together the operational and management controls, will ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts in terms of noise on adjoining and surrounding occupiers or the local environment. Noise from the proposed unit will likely be generally inaudible to occupants of nearby dwellings.
- 8.7 The Gym successfully operate premises across the country on a 24 hour basis and utilise this well tested system in all locations. The Gym have an exemplary safety record across all existing gyms in the UK. Therefore, the operation and management of the premises will ensure a safe

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environment without an unacceptable impact on local amenity. As such, it is in accordance with Glasgow City Development Plan.

- 8.8 The revised proposals for the gym will provide positive benefits for the local neighbourhoods within this area and has the potential to improve the health of local residents and employees. The proposal will ensure this unit returns to active and beneficial use following it being vacant since 2018 and will make a positive contribution towards the local economy creating new jobs as well as providing a facility to improve health and well-being in the local area.
- 8.9 The proposal is in compliance with the Development Plan and we therefore respectfully request that the Council grant consent for the change of use application as proposed.

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APPENDIX 1

SEQUENTIAL SITES

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Sequential Assessment

The proposed unit is located in an edge of centre location and within a commercial centre, potential sites within the city centre and town centre boundaries within the catchment were reviewed as part of this application.

The Gym work on the basis of providing facilities which are accessible and available to those living and working close to the unit. It aims to provide exercise facilities which can be used on a day to day basis for those looking for the convenience of a health and fitness facility close to their home or place of work as part of a regular routine. The operation does not include facilities such as swimming pools, saunas or cafes, which draw people from a wider area and provide a longer duration of visit. The majority of members that use budget type gyms do so as part of linked trips on their way to and from work, or on foot from their home or place of employment or as part of utilising other retail and leisure facilities and as such they serve local areas and populations. Users are unlikely to travel further to budget gym operations as their key selling point is convenience and cost rather than the range and nature of facilities.

The Gym need a total floor area of between 1000 and 1500 sq metres. Ideally the Gym's requirement is for all this floor area to be located on one floor. A large ground floor plate is required to accommodate the main gym use including the gym equipment which need to be laid out in a specific way. The smaller area required for support services such as the office and changing facilities can be located on a different level if required, however must be immediately adjacent and directly accessible from the main gym area.

The Gym must have its own dedicated entrance with a visible street frontage easily identifiable and accessible for visiting members of the public. This is due to the nature of the use and the opening hours under which the gym operate. In addition, sharing an access or reception area with the gym may not be preferable for some neighbouring occupants. For instance, an office could consider that the leisure use undermines their professional environment, whilst also creating potential security issues.

Due to the nature of the proposal, none of the components of the proposals (i.e the gym floorspace, changing rooms and the vending area), can be located in a separate location. Therefore, there is a legitimate need to seek units/sites which can accommodate the proposed use as a whole.

A search for available properties was conducted using EGi (www.propertylink.estatesgazette.com), which is a well known and established property database using a 5 miles radius of the proposed site to include the City Centre, Major Town Centre (Parkhead) and three local centres . In addition, representatives of The Gym visited the area on a number of occasions to seek to identify appropriate premises for the provision of a health and fitness facility, whilst local agents were also contacted to identify potential sites. A total of one site was identified:

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Property address	Within Centre?	Assessment
180 West George Street	Yes – Glasgow City Centre	<p>Further floorspace has been let in the building since the original application in 2020. The only available floorspace comprises 740sqm on the 1st floor. The available floorspace is therefore below the minimum required to facilitate the use. In addition, the site is located within the principle office area/principle retail and commercial area where the Council seek to support office and employment uses.</p> <p>There is a lack of a suitable frontage at ground floor level for visiting members of the public as the gym require their own dedicated entrance due to the nature of the use and the hours under which The Gym operate. This premises is therefore not suitable for the proposal, whilst it does not provide sufficient available floorspace.</p>
95 Bothwell Street	Yes - Glasgow City Centre	<p>The available floorspace has reduced to 1,088sqm due to lettings since 2020. Whilst this floorarea is just above the minimum floorspace levels of the proposed use, the location and nature of the floorspace means it is not suitable for the proposed use.</p> <p>The only floor available within the building is the top floor at level 7. All of the other floors within the building are in use by existing companies as offices, with occupied retail at ground floor. All floors are accessed via the same entrance, lobby, stair and lift cores and there are no opportunities to provide separate access to the 7th floor to enable the accommodation by a use attracting visiting members of the public. The building is Category B listed and therefore it is not possible to make alterations to enable separate access or provide a separate core within the building to serve the 7th floor, whilst internal works to remove internal partitions and create changing rooms and install the required fitness equipment is unlikely to be achievable in a manner than is sympathetic with the heritage status of the building.</p> <p>The site is located within the city centre Principle Office Area where the council seek to maintain and improve the quality of the area by encouraging the redevelopment and refurbishment of obsolete office floorspace for uses that are consistent with the appropriate spatial guidance. The site is also located within the Economic Development Area: Strategic Economic Investment location, and an International Financial Services District and as such is safeguarded to meet the requirements of the economic sectors and support development proposals within use class 4 (Business), 5 (General Industrial) and 6 (Storage and Distribution). As such the Development Plan restricts appropriate uses and does not support Class 11 uses in this location.</p> <p>As such the premises is not suitable for the proposed use.</p>
220 St Vincent Street	Yes - Glasgow City Centre	<p>Accommodation is still available however whilst the total floorspace advertised is 1,307sqm over first and second floors, the 2nd floor is currently let, but not occupied. Therefore the first floor is currently available which provides only 566 square metres of available floorspace. The available floorspace does not provide a single floorplate large enough to accommodate the layout of the proposed use.</p>

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Property address	Within Centre?	Assessment
		<p>This site is located within the city centre and the Principle Office Area whereby leisure uses are not encouraged or supported within these areas.</p> <p>The remaining floors are currently occupied by office tenants which would therefore mean significant works would be required to provide a separate entrance and access to the first floor to provide the Gym its own separate access in order to cater for visiting members of the public.</p> <p>The building is Category B listed and therefore it is not possible to make alterations to enable the provision of a separate entrance or provide a separate core within the building, whilst internal works to install changing rooms and install the required fitness equipment is unlikely to be achievable in a manner than is sympathetic with the heritage status of the building.</p> <p>The property does not contain sufficient available floorspace and is not suitable for the proposed use.</p>
The Mercantile Building, 53 Bothwell Street	Yes - Glasgow City Centre	<p>The total available floorspace still comprises 1,776sqm, however this is accommodated across first and fourth floor and neither floor on its own provides a single floorplate large enough to accommodate the proposed use. The separation of these floors would not be capable of accommodating a health and fitness use between two separate /unconnected levels and would not enable direct movement and transition between them for members.</p> <p>The site is located in within the city centre, and is within an allocated within the Principal Office Area where the council seek to maintain and improve the quality of the area by encouraging the redevelopment and refurbishment of obsolete office floorspace for uses that are consistent with the appropriate spatial guidance.</p> <p>The site is also located within the Economic Development Area: Strategic Economic Investment location, and an International Financial Services District and as such is safeguarded to meet the requirements of the economic sectors and support development proposals within use class 4 (Business), 5 (General Industrial) and 6 (Storage and Distribution). As such the Development Plan restricts appropriate uses and does not support D2 uses in this location.</p> <p>Furthermore, The Gym require their own dedicated entrance due to the nature of the use and the hours under which The Gym operate and there is no separate entrance or core to provide access for visiting members of public. The building is Category A listed and therefore it is not possible to make alterations to enable the provision of a separate entrance or provide a separate core within the building, whilst internal works to install changing rooms and install the required fitness equipment is unlikely to be achievable in a manner than is sympathetic with the heritage status of the building.</p> <p>As such the premises is not suitable for the proposed use.</p>

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Property address	Within Centre?	Assessment
227 West George Street	Yes - Glasgow City Centre	<p>Accommodation within the building has been let since the previous application and the total floorspace that is currently vacant comprises only 960sqm across two floors. The available accommodation is therefore less than the minimum necessary to accommodate the proposed use.</p> <p>The site is located within the City Centre within the Principal Office Area where the council seek to maintain and improve the quality of the area by encouraging the redevelopment and refurbishment of obsolete office floorspace for uses that are consistent with the appropriate spatial guidance.</p> <p>Furthermore, the site is also located within the Economic Development Area: Strategic Economic Investment location, where these areas are safeguarded to meet the requirements of the economic sectors and support development proposals within use class 4 (Business), 5 (General Industrial) and 6 (Storage and Distribution). As such the Development Plan restricts appropriate uses and does not support D2 uses in this location.</p> <p>The remaining floors are currently occupied by office tenants and significant works would also be required to provide a separate entrance and access core to the second, third and fourth floors, whilst there is not separate ground floor frontage to provide a separate dedicated entrance.</p> <p>The premises does not provide sufficient available floorspace and is not suitable for the proposed use.</p>
24 St Vincent Place	Yes - Glasgow City Centre	<p>Accommodation within the building is still available however the total available floorspace within the building (1,225 sq m) is split across four floors at floors 1-4 of the building. None of the available floors provide a sufficient size of floorplate to accommodate the required layout of the use, whilst accommodating the use over four levels is not feasible.</p> <p>The site is located in within the western part of city centre, whereby it is allocated within the Principal Office Area and Principal Retail and Commercial Area where within this area of overlap, offices are generally on upper floors with shops on the ground floor. The PRCA includes a diversity of land uses in addition to retail including housing, offices, leisure and entertainment. These activities contribute to the vitality of the City Centre and will be encouraged.</p> <p>The site is also located within the Economic Development Area: Strategic Economic Investment location, and an International Financial Services District and as such is safeguarded to meet the requirements of the</p>

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Property address	Within Centre?	Assessment
		<p>economic sectors and support development proposals within use class 4 (Business), 5 (General Industrial) and 6 (Storage and Distribution). As such the Development Plan restricts appropriate uses and does not support D2 uses in this location.</p> <p>Furthermore, The Gym require their own dedicated entrance due to the nature of the use and the hours under which The Gym operate and there is no separate entrance or core to provide access for visiting members of public. The building is Category A listed and therefore it is not possible to make alterations to enable the provision of a separate entrance or provide a separate core within the building, whilst internal works to install changing rooms and install the required fitness equipment is unlikely to be achievable in a manner than is sympathetic with the heritage status of the building.</p> <p>The premises is therefore not suitable for the proposed use..</p>
191 West George Street	Yes - Glasgow City Centre	All floorspace is now occupied and therefore the property is no longer available.
125-139 West Regent Street	Yes - Glasgow City Centre	<p>The site is located in within the city centre, and is within an area allocated within the Principal Office Area where the council seek to maintain and improve the quality of the area by encouraging the redevelopment and refurbishment of obsolete office floorspace for uses that are consistent with the appropriate spatial guidance. The site is also located within the Economic Development Area: Strategic Economic Investment location, and is safeguarded to meet the requirements of the economic sectors and support development proposals within use class 4 (Business), 5 (General Industrial) and 6 (Storage and Distribution). As such the Development Plan restricts appropriate uses and does not support D2 uses in this location.</p> <p>Whilst the available floorspace available meets the minimum requirements of the use, it is split between two buildings and across multiple floors. As such it is not feasible to accommodate the use of multiple floor levels. The largest floorsplate provided is only 333 sq metres and none of the available floors are of a sufficient size to enable the required layout of the use. In addition there is no provision for level access from the front of the building which is above street level and accessed by steps. .</p> <p>As such the premises is not suitable for the proposed use.</p>
Forge Shopping Centre	Shopping Centre	The only available unit currently being marketed within the shopping centre is Unit 104, however it only provides 114 sq metres of floorspace and is therefore not suitable to accommodate the proposed use.

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The assessment undertaken has identified that there continues to be no sequentially preferable premises available that are available and suitable to accommodate the proposed use, whilst the operator has two existing facilities within the city centre which provide for this catchment and The Gym's requirement is for a facility to the south east of the City to cater for the local community in this area of Glasgow.

All other units that are available within the centre of Glasgow or within the Major Town Centre (Parkhead) and three Local Centres within the catchment, (Duke Street, The Barras and Bridgeton) which are currently vacant and being marketed are too small to accommodate the requirements of The Gym. As such there are no sequentially preferable sites that are available to accommodate the proposal.