

23rd September 2026

Development Control
Cumberland Council
The Market Hall
Market Place
Whitehaven
CA28 7JG

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM DOG TRAINING STUDIO (USE CLASSES SUI GENERIS)
TO GYM (USE CLASS E (d)) - UNIT 1A, THE FLAX WORKS, CLEATOR**

This application is submitted on behalf of Peak Health and Performance Limited and seeks planning permission for the change of use of Unit A1 at The Flax Works, Cleator, from its existing Sui Generis use as a dog training facility to a gym falling within Use Class E(d).

Unit A1 forms part of The Flax Works, a recently regenerated former industrial complex which has been refurbished to provide modern commercial and office accommodation. The site is located within an established commercial setting and benefits from convenient access to the surrounding communities of Cleator, Cleator Moor and the wider West Cumbria employment area.

The established mixed commercial character of The Flax Works, together with the range of existing occupiers including B.A.F, Speedy Hire, Prima Uno, React Engineering and Flax by TEGretail, provides an appropriate setting for the proposed leisure and wellbeing facility. The gym would complement the existing range of commercial uses and contribute to the continued productive use of the development.

Unit A1 is currently vacant, having previously been occupied by Cumbria Canine Services. Peak Health and Performance Limited, a local independent health and fitness operator currently based on Cleator Moor High Street, now proposes to establish its business within the unit.

The proposed use would provide a professionally managed health and fitness facility, offering gym access, a range of expert-led fitness sessions with a maximum capacity of 20 participants, together with nutrition services.

The combination of these services would provide a holistic approach to health and wellbeing, supporting members of the local community in improving their physical fitness, nutrition and overall wellbeing. The proposal would therefore provide a beneficial community-focused use within an existing commercial premises, while making productive use of a currently vacant unit.

Suitability of the Proposed Use

Unit A1 is situated within an established non-residential commercial environment and benefits from designated on-site parking provision. The proposed use would bring an existing commercial unit back into productive use, with no significant external alterations other than appropriate signage. As such, the proposal would not materially alter the appearance or character of the wider development.

The proposed opening hours of 6:00am to 8:30pm have been carefully considered to meet the needs of customers, including those wishing to exercise before or after normal working hours. The defined hours of operation would provide a clear and consistent framework for the use while remaining appropriate to the established commercial setting in which the premises are located.

All hours of operation would be staffed by Peak Health and Performance personnel, ensuring that the premises are appropriately managed and supervised throughout the period of opening.

Noise Management

The nature and scale of the proposed use, together with the measures outlined below, will help to minimise the potential for noise and impact vibration to affect neighbouring commercial occupiers.

The gym floor will be fitted with high-density rubber flooring throughout the main training areas. This will provide a resilient surface designed to reduce impact noise and vibration associated with exercise and the use of gym equipment. Acoustic wall panelling will also be installed within the gym, where appropriate, to absorb sound, reduce internal reverberation and assist in limiting noise transmission beyond the premises.

Background music may be played during gym sessions but will be maintained at a reasonable level appropriate to the activity. Music will not be amplified to a level likely to cause disturbance to neighbouring residents or commercial occupiers and will be subject to the defined operating hours of the premises.

Peak Health and Performance Limited will adopt appropriate operational procedures to ensure that activities within the gym are conducted responsibly and that unnecessary noise is avoided. This will include the appropriate positioning and management of gym equipment, avoiding unnecessary impact noise.

Given the established commercial nature of The Flax Works and the proposed management measures, the gym can operate effectively while minimising potential noise impacts on neighbouring occupiers.

Parking and Accessibility

The proposal includes ample designated on-site parking provision for the gym, as identified on the submitted site plan. This would provide adequate parking for customers and staff while helping to minimise any potential impact on neighbouring businesses and the wider commercial area.

Impact on the Surrounding Area

A key benefit of the proposal is its proximity to existing offices & businesses. The gym would provide employees working at The Flax Works and within the surrounding area with convenient access to health, fitness and wellbeing facilities before and after work, as well as during breaks.

The availability of accessible fitness facilities close to places of employment can encourage healthier and more active lifestyles, while providing a convenient service for the local workforce without requiring additional travel to facilities elsewhere.

Given the established non-residential character of The Flax Works and its surrounding commercial and employment uses, the proposed gym would operate alongside, rather than conflict with, the established commercial activities within the site.

Economic and Community Benefits

The operation of the gym would support local employment through the creation and maintenance of roles associated with the management and delivery of fitness and wellbeing services. As a local independent operator, Peak Health and Performance Limited would also contribute to the local economy through its ongoing business activities and expenditure.

The proposed use would also complement existing businesses at The Flax Works, with increased footfall from gym users providing the potential to benefit nearby businesses such as Flax Café by TEGretail.

Overall, the proposal would deliver positive economic and community benefits by supporting a local business, bringing a vacant unit back into use, supporting employment and providing accessible opportunities for local residents and the surrounding workforce to participate in health and fitness activities.

Summary

The proposed change of use of Unit A1 at The Flax Works, Cleator, from its existing sui generis use as a dog training facility to a gym within Use Class E is considered well suited to the site. The proposal would introduce an appropriate use within an established non-residential commercial environment, benefiting from existing parking provision and a location in close proximity to offices and employment uses.

Particular consideration has been given to the potential for noise and vibration associated with the proposed gym use. The installation of high-density rubber flooring and acoustic wall panelling, together with the appropriate management of music and gym activities and defined opening hours of 6:00am to 8:30pm, will minimise the potential for disturbance to neighbouring commercial occupiers.

Overall, the proposed change of use represents an appropriate and complementary use of an existing commercial premises. It would make effective use of the site, support local economic activity and provide a beneficial health and wellbeing service, while incorporating appropriate measures to manage potential impacts on neighbouring occupiers.

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding any aspect of the proposal, please do not hesitate to contact us at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,

Helen Barwise

Director

Peak Health and Performance Limited