

Comments for Planning Application 142671/FO/2025

Application Summary

Application Number: 142671/FO/2025

Address: 136 St Werburgh's Road Manchester M21 8UQ

Proposal: Change of use of a gym (Class E) to create 3 no. residential apartments.

Case Officer: Holly Wright

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Business

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am writing to formally object to the proposed planning application seeking to convert Little Box Gym and the wider shared premises into residential flats.

This development would result in the closure of not just a beloved and vital community fitness space, but also the displacement of several local businesses - including Hair by Jade, 121 Beauty Massage, Pippa Lubek Physiotherapy, and The Singing Hive - all of which contribute significantly to the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of our community.

1. A Crucial Hub for Health and Wellbeing

Little Box Gym is not a commercial chain - it is a deeply valued local resource, tailored to the needs of our neighbourhood. It provides accessible, affordable fitness opportunities to people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. For many residents, this gym is a crucial tool in managing long-term health conditions, improving physical fitness, and building self-confidence.

But more than that, it's a space that nurtures mental wellbeing. Physical exercise is widely recognised as an essential tool in supporting mental health, helping to reduce anxiety, depression, and loneliness. Many members rely on the welcoming, supportive environment that Little Box Gym offers. It is not an exaggeration to say that for some, this place is a lifeline.

2. Devastating Impact on Local Small Businesses

The proposed development will also displace other important wellness and service providers housed in the same premises. Businesses such as Hair by Jade, 121 Beauty Massage, Pippa Lubek Physiotherapy, and The Singing Hive do far more than provide treatments or classes - they build relationships, offer trusted care, and create safe, healing spaces for residents.

These businesses are run by local people, for local people. Their loss would not only disrupt livelihoods but rob the community of skilled, accessible services that cannot easily be replaced.

3. Social and Community Fabric

This site is a hub of connection, support, and inclusion. It brings together people who might otherwise never meet - across generations, backgrounds, and walks of life. It fosters friendships, mutual support, and a sense of belonging that is more important than ever in today's isolating world.

4. No Genuine Alternative

There is no like-for-like alternative in the area. Larger commercial gyms cannot offer the personalised care, community spirit, or affordability that Little Box Gym and its neighbouring services provide. Their closure would leave a significant gap in local provision - especially for more vulnerable groups like older residents, people with disabilities, or those struggling with mental health.

5. A Short-Sighted Loss for Long-Term Community Health

This proposal prioritises short-term financial gain over the long-term health, wellbeing, and sustainability of our community. Once a space like this is lost, it is lost forever - and with it, the social infrastructure that holds communities together.

I urge the planning authority to consider not just what would be built, but what would be lost. Please act in the interests of local people and reject this application. Little Box Gym and its surrounding businesses are not just services - they are the beating heart of this community.