



**Unit 2, Nutts Lane, Hinckley, LE10 3EJ**

**Proposal:** Change of use from B2 (General Industrial) to Class E (Commercial, Business and Service - Martial Arts Club and Wellness)

**1. Executive Summary**

This statement is submitted regarding the potential refusal of planning permission for the proposed change of use from Class B2 to Class E. The Local Planning Authority have advised on the potential refusal of the application on the grounds that the site is located within a protected employment area (Class A / Strategic Industrial Location) and that the proposed use would fail to provide adequate employment.

Beyond direct club operations, the facility will introduce a dedicated sports therapist and serve as a business incubator for independent instructors—such as yoga and Pilates practitioners—seeking to rent space to build their own enterprises. Ultimately, the proposal delivers significant, tangible health, social, and economic benefits to the local community that far outweigh the retention of a vacant or underutilised B2 unit.

**2. Employment and Economic Viability**

The primary ground for potential refusal is the concern that the change of use will result in a loss of employment. We respectfully submit that this assessment overlooks the evolving nature of the modern economy and the specific operations of the proposed tenant.

**Direct Employment Generation:** Unlike traditional clubs which may operate with minimal oversight, this facility will function as an active wellness hub to the community. It will directly hold two directors and look to introduce part-time coaching staff, administrative personnel, and other personnel as listed with the expansion of the club.

**Co-Location of Allied Health Professionals:** The facility will feature a dedicated space for a resident Sports Therapist. This introduces a high-value, healthcare-related professional role to the site, generating independent economic activity and attracting clients from outside the immediate area.

**Micro-Enterprise Support:** By providing a venue for local martial arts clubs and independent fitness instructors, the site acts as an incubator for local micro-businesses. These clubs will utilise the space to run their own commercial enterprises, thereby multiplying the economic footprint of the site.

**Key Argument:** The B2 use class (General Industrial) is declining in demand for units of this specific scale and location. Rather than leaving the site at risk of long-term vacancy—which yields zero employment—the proposed Class E use guarantees immediate, sustainable, and diverse employment opportunities.



### 3. Community Benefit and Social Infrastructure

National and local planning policies strongly support the creation of healthy, inclusive communities. The proposed martial arts club directly aligns with these objectives:

**Health and Well-being:** The facility will provide essential physical and mental health infrastructure to the local area, offering structured activities for all age groups, from children's development classes to adult physical conditioning.

**Community Integration:** By hosting various local clubs, the venue will serve as a social anchor, promoting social cohesion and reducing anti-social behaviour by giving local youth a positive, disciplined outlet through schools, local town fayres, markets and youth clubs.

At present we have juniors within our club that each go to different schools across the Hinckley and Bosworth community therefore we have a strong networking hub.

**Complementary Use:** Operating primarily during evenings and weekends, the clubs peak hours complement neighbouring employment uses, ensuring the area remains vibrant outside of standard 9-to-5 working hours without disrupting daytime commercial operations. In terms of neighbouring amenity, the proposed martial arts club is entirely compatible with the existing businesses on Nutts Lane. The immediate vicinity comprises light industrial and commercial uses—including car garages, automotive sales, and carpentry workshops—none of which are sensitive to the low-impact, indoor operations of a fitness facility. Furthermore, a number of the surrounding units are currently underutilised, unmanned storage facilities or remaining derelict. As such, the club will generate no adverse displacement or disruption to existing operations, representing a harmonious integration into the local commercial landscape.

### 4. Location

We have undertaken an exhaustive property search over the past 2 to 3 years to secure a premises within the towns footprint. Despite rigorous efforts, viewings, calls, emails to multiple estate agents - no other suitable units have been identified. The proposed use requires a highly specific combination of adequate internal floor space, sufficient on-site parking, a convenient and accessible location for members, as well as the financial viability – costs per month for a unit within the centre of Hinckley makes it near on impossible for any business to run successfully for the community. This site represents the only sequential option within the vicinity that meets all these operational and financial constraints, meaning the refusal of this application would effectively prevent this valuable community facility from operating within the town

Unit 2, Nutts Lane enjoys a highly sustainable and accessible location, situated less than one mile from Hinckley town centre. This close proximity ensures that the facility remains easily reachable for local residents via a short walk, cycle, or drive. Furthermore, the site is perfectly positioned to complement Hinckley's ongoing growth, particularly with the upcoming retail and services development along the nearby A5. This major investment expands the footprint of Hinckley's commercial and leisure offering, making Nutts Lane an ideal, forward-looking location for a vibrant Martial Arts club for the ever-growing community.



## 5. Alignment with Use Class E Intentions

The introduction of Class E by the government was specifically designed to allow flexibility between commercial, business, and service uses to help units adapt to market demands.

While the area is designated for employment, Class E explicitly encompasses indoor sport, recreation, and fitness (Class E(d)). The planning system recognises these uses as vital components of a thriving economic area. The proposal does not seek a change to residential use, meaning the physical fabric of the employment zone is preserved, and the unit could easily revert to alternative commercial uses in the future if required.

However, while the current Class E designation provides vital commercial flexibility, the proposed transition to Class F2 (Local Community and Learning) represents a further commitment to securing long-term, non-speculative infrastructure for the local area. Moving the site into Class F ensures that the premises is legally protected and dedicated to serving the immediate community—whether through education, physical well-being, or social cohesion. This change of use aligns perfectly with both local and national planning policies that seek to protect and enhance social infrastructure, guaranteeing that the building operates as a sustainable, community-focused asset that directly supports the daily lives of Hinckley residents.

## 6. Conclusion

In summary, the proposed change of use does not represent a loss of employment, but rather a vital diversification and modernisation of employment on the site. It replaces a declining, speculative B2 industrial use with a guaranteed, multi-layered employment model that introduces management, coaching, a resident sports therapist, and opportunities for independent micro-businesses (such as yoga and Pilates instructors) to thrive.

When weighed against the substantial health, social, and economic benefits this martial arts and wellness club will provide, the proposal represents an exemplary form of sustainable development.

We therefore respectfully request that this permission be granted, enabling us to move forward and deliver this invaluable asset to the Hinckley community.

We await your response and advise regarding the above statement and how we can move forward with the planning permission to be granted.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr James A Clark

Mr Benjamin M O Murrell