



**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

**FOR THE**  
**CHANGE OF USE TO**  
**CLASS D2 (FITNESS CENTRE)**

**AT**

**UNIT 2C SWAINES INDUSTRIAL ESTATE**  
**ASHINGDON ROAD, ROCHFORD, SS4 1RG**

**September 2012**

**REF SKX 001**

## **APPLICATION**

The application is for the Change of Use of the existing building from Use Class B1 (light industrial) or B8 (storage and distribution)\* to Class D2 as the proposed use is that of a fitness centre.

\*Current usage has not been determined due to unit being broken down from one large building into three separate units. Claire Robinson from the local planning authority has said that further investigation would be needed to determine the appropriate usage class.

## **PRESENT USE**

The property has been vacant since 2008 when the previous tenants Rochford Tyres relocated to a property across the road. The property has been advertised since then by local commercial agents Ayres and Cruiks. There has however been no interest.

## **PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for the conversion of the property to form a fitness centre. This will incorporate one training area with specialist mat flooring suitable for martial arts use. There will be a reception area but no café area. Changing rooms and toilets will be provided, additional ones being formed within the building if required.

There is parking in front of the property that will be retained for client use. The property is situated very close to the main bus routes of Ashingdon Road and with a large residential population in the adjoining area.

## **AMOUNT**

The proposed use will require the whole first floor of the building but no extensions or structural alterations are required.

## **LAYOUT**

There will be no significant internal alterations.

## **SCALE**

The building will not be enlarged and therefore will still be in keeping with the surrounding buildings.

## **LANDSCAPING AND APPEARANCE**

It is proposed that an internally illuminated fascia sign will be placed over half the buildings frontage to make it readily visible from Ashingdon Road.

There are no residential properties in the immediate vicinity that will be affected by the sign.

### **CONCLUSION**

There are no fitness or martial arts centres within Rochford and market research has indicated that there is a strong demand. These centres require a large floor space and must be close to public transport and are therefore best suited to industrial estates on the edge of residential areas. Sixty percent of Shi Kon Martial Arts members currently live in the Rochford area but are commuting to its current site in Hockley. This further indicates the local demand for a centre of this type and would reduce traffic caused by members currently commuting to Hockley.

Shi Kon Martial Arts also has strong ties with the schools within the Rochford area and has been in discussions with the local school sports coordinator Curt Mansel of Rochford Primary School to use the centre for P.E lessons and afterschool clubs.

The subject property has been vacant for over four years and which confirms the poor trading climate at the present time and that a first floor property is poorly suited to light industrial/storage usage.

The proposed use will provide full time employment and once up and trading it is anticipated that at least two part time employees will be required. This employment is at a similar level as would be expected if the unit retained its current usage.

A similar use has been permitted on both the Eldon Way Industrial Estate and Foundry Business Park in Hockley and which has confirmed that this type of use is suited to light industrial estates.

