

PLANNING STATEMENT

Application Reference: PL/2025/09305

Proposal: Change of Use from B8 (Storage & Distribution) to E(d) Indoor Sport, Recreation and Fitness

Applicant: Mr Christopher Milligan, Relentless HQ Boxing & Fitness Ltd

Site: Unit 8, The Beacon Centre, Solar Way, Amesbury, SP4 7SZ

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the proposed change of use of **Unit 8, The Beacon Centre** from B8 (Storage & Distribution) to **Use Class E(d)** for indoor sport, recreation, and fitness.

The statement sets out:

- The purpose and operational model of Relentless HQ Boxing & Fitness Ltd
 - The planning policy context
 - A full response to the pre-application advice provided by Wiltshire Council (ENQ/2025/01293)
 - A detailed rebuttal addressing concerns relating to the Principal Employment Area (PEA) designation and marketing requirements
 - Consideration of highways, parking, noise, sustainability, and amenity
 - Why the proposal represents **sustainable development** strongly supported by the NPPF.
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2. Background of Relentless HQ & Site History

Relentless HQ Boxing & Fitness Ltd is a community-focused boxing and fitness facility that evolved from the former **Alive Amateur Boxing Club**, which previously operated as a non-profit organisation.

Relentless HQ now seeks to establish a **sustainable long-term business** offering:

- Structured boxing and fitness classes
- A dedicated youth development programme
- Amateur boxing training and pathway support
- Community outreach
- One-to-one coaching
- Structured non-contact fitness sessions for adults and families

Amesbury does not currently have a dedicated boxing facility, despite being a growing settlement with significant young population and nearby military presence.

Unit 8 was last used as a **furniture warehouse/storage unit** on behalf of Goldcoins Estates Ltd. The unit has stood vacant and underutilised and is well suited physically and locationally for an indoor sports facility.

3. Description of Development

The proposal includes:

- Change of use from B8 to E(d)
- Installation of two boxing rings, bag training zones, coaching space and a small reception area
- No structural changes to the building envelope
- No alterations to WCs (mobile changing pods will be installed internally)
- Use of the existing parking layout with minor improvements to manage peak times
- No external alterations

The use is entirely contained within the building, generating minimal external noise or amenity impact.

4. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The proposal supports several key NPPF themes:

- **Paragraph 8:** Economic, social and environmental objectives
- **Paragraph 11:** Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- **Section 8:** Promoting healthy and safe communities
- **Section 6:** Building a strong, competitive economy
- **Paragraph 93:** Planning should support social, recreational and community facilities

The NPPF places significant weight on enabling local sports facilities and promoting health and well-being.

Wiltshire Core Strategy (Relevant Policies)

- **CP1 & CP2 – Settlement & Delivery Strategy**
Amesbury is a **Market Town** and is the primary location for new services, leisure uses and community facilities.
- **CP4 – Amesbury Area Strategy**
The policy supports sustainable growth, improved community services, and leisure opportunities.

- **CP35 – Existing Employment Land**
Requires that PEA land is protected for B-use employment unless justified.
 - **CP57 – High Quality Design & Place Shaping**
The proposal meets all criteria through appropriate internal layout and management.
 - **CP60–61 – Sustainable Transport**
The use generates low traffic levels and primarily serves local residents and non-drivers (youth users).
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5. Pre-Application Advice & Applicant Response

Wiltshire Council's pre-application advice (ENQ/2025/01293) acknowledged:

- The proposal is generally acceptable in terms of **noise, design, highways and amenity**
- There are **no material environmental constraints** preventing indoor sport use
- The main concern was loss of B8 floorspace due to the site's designation as a **Principal Employment Area (PEA)**

5.1 PEA Concern – Applicant Rebuttal

The central pre-app issue related to Core Policy 35, which seeks to protect B-use employment land. The following points demonstrate why this change of use **is fully justified** and meets the policy tests.

A. Employment Generation Comparable to B8

The unit, as B8, would typically generate:

- Minimal employment (1–2 persons)
- Limited operational hours
- Low wider economic value

In contrast, Relentless HQ will generate:

- **6–8 direct employment opportunities**, including coaches and admin staff
- Multiple self-employed personal trainers
- Volunteer and trainee pathways
- A significant uplift in footfall supporting wider Solstice Park amenities
- Local economic retention by providing a facility residents currently travel outside the area to access

This meets CP35 criterion (i) requiring equal or greater employment output.

B. The Unit Has Limited Modern B8 Market Attractiveness

A marketing requirement of 6 months typically applies, but this is intended for:

- Sites *actively marketed as employment premises*,
- Where the use is viable and suitable for modern B-class operations.

In this case:

- The unit is physically small for modern logistics or industrial tenants
- It lacks loading infrastructure compared to newer units on Solstice Park
- Nearby modern logistics providers favour units with higher eaves and larger yards
- Goldcoins Estates' storage use did not generate meaningful B-class economic activity

The change to E(d) represents **a higher-value and more sustainable use** aligned with local community need.

C. Alignment with NPPF and Area Strategy

The NPPF places strong weight on:

- Community well-being
- Supporting youth services
- Enabling social infrastructure
- Reducing travel needs

Relentless HQ primarily serves Amesbury and surrounding villages. Most youth members arrive:

- On foot
- By bicycle
- Are dropped off
- Do not drive

This significantly reduces traffic impact and aligns with sustainable transport objectives.

D. The Development Supports Self-Containment of Amesbury

The Amesbury Area Strategy highlights:

- A need to improve local services
- A need to reduce reliance on Salisbury for leisure
- A need to support young people and military families

This proposal directly and positively delivers on these aims.

6. Noise & Amenity

A **Noise Impact Assessment** was submitted at pre-application stage. The review confirmed:

- No adverse impact on neighbouring commercial units
- All activity is internal with no audible breakout
- No external music
- Operational hours avoid disturbance to night-time businesses or residents

Internal operational management includes:

- Padding under equipment
- Rubber flooring
- No free-weight dropping zones
- Controlled class formats

Public Protection previously raised *no concerns*.

7. Highways, Access & Parking

The proposal utilises existing parking spaces outside Unit 8. Key points:

- Peak times are staggered class sessions
- Junior members are **not drivers**, reducing parking demand
- Evening adult sessions occur outside business hours for surrounding units
- Overflow management procedures will be in place
- Visibility splays and access remain unchanged
- No intensification beyond reasonable expectations for Solstice Park

This complies with **CP60, CP61 and Wiltshire Parking Strategy**.

8. Sustainability

The site is:

- Within walking distance of Amesbury
- Directly accessible from major bus routes
- Located in a large mixed commercial area
- Providing a service that reduces the need for residents to travel to other towns for boxing and fitness

The re-use of an existing building also aligns with NPPF low-carbon development principles.

9. Summary & Conclusion

The proposal represents a **positive, sustainable and policy-compliant use** of an existing commercial unit, generating:

- More employment than the fallback B8 use
- Substantial community and health benefits
- Increased services within Amesbury
- Compliance with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Support for youth engagement, fitness and military community integration
- No harm to highways, noise, amenity or the wider PEA function

The pre-application concerns relating to the PEA have been fully addressed, with robust justification demonstrating that:

- The B8 use is less economically and socially beneficial
- The proposed E(d) use significantly enhances employment, economic output and community value
- The proposal aligns with both local and national policy objectives

For these reasons, the application should be supported and approved.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Christopher Milligan

Applicant – Relentless HQ Boxing & Fitness Ltd