

## **PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:P06/1599**

Type of approval sought	Full Planning Permission
Ward	Castle & Priory
Applicant	Priory Amateur Boxing Club
Location:	<b>PRIORY BOXING CLUB, PRIORY PARK, PRIORY ROAD, DUDLEY, WEST MIDLANDS</b>
Proposal	<b>EXTENSION TO EXISTING BOXING CLUB WITH ENTRANCE RAMPS AND NEW ENTRANCE LOBBY</b>
Recommendation Summary:	<b>APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS</b>

### **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

1. The site comprises part of the Council's DSO depot in Priory Park which is sub-let to the applicants, Priory Boxing Club. It is located at the edge of the park to the south of the tennis courts with its end (western) elevation bounding the footway in Priory Road close to the Hazel Road junction.
2. The building is single storey consisting of red facing brick elevations and a slated, pitched roof with hipped end. At the rear of the building is the open yard of the depot which is enclosed behind an old iron railing bordered on the tennis court and Priory Road sides by conifer trees and laurel bushes. The footway in Priory Road is set at a lower level so the railing along this side sits on top of a brick retaining wall.
3. The depot is situated immediately to the west of the car park to Priory Hall, a listed building used by the Council as a training and conference centre and registry office. Both buildings are surrounded by the park. Across Priory Road are residential properties which face the depot and park.

## PROPOSAL

4. It is proposed to erect an extension to the boxing club building on the open yard area on its northern side. The building would be of similar design and appearance to the existing building and would extend upto the laurel bushes along the northern boundary and the conifers along the western boundary. Both the conifers and the laurels would be removed. The extension would be 14m long and 5.5m wide.
5. The extension would provide two boxing rings, a mirrored shadow box area, 11 punch bags/speed balls, and changing/toilet facilities including disabled persons facilities. The existing building, which is very cramped, would contain a multi-gym area, a matted area, rest room and office. The proposed extension would increase the floorspace for the club from 24sq. m to 96sq. metres.

## HISTORY

6. None.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

7. The application has been publicised through a site notice, newspaper advertisement and direct notification of the residents living opposite the site. One letter has been received from a local resident querying where the additional parking requirement the extension is likely to generate would be provided. The writer also states that the boxing club has never given rise to any complaints and that the additional facilities would be an asset to the area.
8. A letter of support has been received from the local MP, Ian Austin, in which he states that the boxing club has an excellent reputation for training and motivating youngsters from the Castle & Priory Ward, one of the most economically deprived in the borough. The club provides training for around 50 local youngsters and has a

long waiting list for new members. Unfortunately, due to a lack of space at their current facilities the club can no longer take on new members, hence the need for the proposed extension.

9. The application also has the support of the Friends of Priory Park.

## OTHER CONSULTATION

10. **Group Engineer (development):** raises concerns about the absence of any parking facilities and considers that 9 spaces should be provided. As things stand, car-borne users of the building would have to park at the roadside in Priory Road. Over the past five years, there have been 11 injury accidents at the Priory Road – Hazel Road junction. Development that would result in on-street parking which may exacerbate the problem is a cause for concern and could not be supported. Accordingly, it is recommended that, without some off-street parking provision, the application should be refused.
11. **The Head of Public Protection:** raise no objections  
**Access Officer:** raise no objections

## RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

12. Adopted UDP (2005)

S1 - Social Inclusion, Equal Opportunitites and Social Wellbeing.

S15 - Sport, Leisure and Recreation.

S16 - Access and Movement.

DD4 - Development in Residential Areas

AM14 - Parking

S06 - Parks

## ASSESSMENT

13. Although the site is close to the listed Priory Hall, it is sufficiently detached for the proposed building not to have any demonstrable, detrimental impact upon its setting. The curtilage of the listed building does not include the application site and the adjacent buildings comprising the Council depot have little architectural merit. The proposed extension has been designed to be deliberately low-key and simple in style in keeping with the existing structure, which is a very simple built form with little or no embellishment. Notwithstanding this, the proposed building is well designed with a full pitched, tiled roof and detailing typical of buildings of the period.
14. The loss of the conifers and the laurels would not be significant given the number of trees and shrubs in this part of Priory Park and in the vicinity of the hall. There are also mature street trees in the adjacent footway. The existing retaining wall and railing along the boundary with Priory Road would be retained. It is not considered that the building would adversely affect the street scene or the residents' amenity opposite.
15. Window openings have been designed to be small and at high level to provide natural light and ventilation but also to maximise security and minimise the potential for disturbance to nearby residents. It is not considered that the intensification of the existing boxing club use would adversely affect local residents, and no objections have been received to the use.
16. With regard to the issue of parking. The boxing club currently lease the building from the Council. The remainder of the buildings in this area are used by the Council's parks department as a depot which is accessed from a wide, hardsurfaced drive from Priory Road running directly in front of the boxing club building and from which access to the building is gained. This is a one-way drive and appears to be used by the organisers of the club for parking as it is wide enough to permit parking along one side and is generally not used in the evenings

when the boxing club meets. However, it is not an official parking area and is not marked out.

17. Discussions have taken place over whether the club's use of the training centre car park at Priory Hall, which is only 40m away, would be acceptable. The Chief Executive's office, which controls the Priory Hall Training and Conference Centre, have indicated that their car park may be used after the end of the normal working day by the boxing club, subject to suitable arrangements being agreed. Accordingly, a report will be submitted to the North Dudley Area committee seeking approval for the granting of a lease to the club in respect of the extra land required for the new building and a licence to use the Priory Hall car park.
18. Although a licence may not provide a solution to the parking issue in the longer term and could potentially leave the enlarged boxing club with no parking facilities if it had to be terminated, there are other factors which are of relevance to the matter, including that the use currently does not benefit from any off-street parking provision.
19. Firstly, the club is predominantly attended by young people who do not have cars or are not eligible to drive. Priory Road is a bus route and there are bus stops in close proximity to the premises.
20. Secondly, following recent traffic management works to Priory Road, a lay by has been created along virtually the full length of the park's frontage to Priory Road which is available for unrestricted public parking throughout the day and has been provided for users of the park; for example those wishing to play tennis on the refurbished tennis courts. This lay by which is within walking distance of the club building, would be available for those attending the boxing club or being dropped off.
21. Thirdly, although the Group Engineer considers 9 parking spaces to be necessary, the draft Supplementary Planning Document on Parking Standards and Travel Plans recommends a standard of one parking space per 22-25 sq. metres for small

'sports halls'. On this basis, there would be a need for 4 spaces for the overall boxing club building i.e. existing plus proposed floorspace, an increase of 3 over the requirement under the current for the existing unit.

22. In the light of the above, it is considered that the lack of a dedicated car park for the enlarged boxing club building would not be prejudicial to highway safety and the development would not adversely affect local residents.

## CONCLUSION

23. The Priory Boxing Club operate from a very small building which is cramped and a major obstacle to their expansion. The proposed extension, on part of the adjacent Council depot yard, would enable the club to take youngsters currently on their extensive waiting list. The building has been well designed to complement the existing building and would not be detrimental to the setting of Priory Hall, a Grade II listed building. There would be no adverse effect on local residents or the street scene.
24. The Group Engineer (Development) is concerned about highway safety because of a lack of parking facilities for the building and has pointed out that there have been a number of accidents in the vicinity of the nearby Priory Road – Hazel Road junction. However, the club could apply to use the nearby car park at the Priory Hall Training & Conference Centre after normal working hours. The Area committee will be requested to grant a licence shortly. Given that the club meets in the evenings, that the majority of its members do not have cars, and that unrestricted layby parking is available nearby in Priory Road, it is not considered that the enlarged facility would detrimentally affect highway safety.

## RECOMMENDATION

25. It is recommended that the application is approved subject to the following conditions:-

## **Reason for the grant of planning permission**

The Priory Boxing Club operate from a very small building which is cramped and a major obstacle to their expansion. The proposed extension, on part of the adjacent Council depot yard, would enable the club to take youngsters currently on their extensive waiting list. The building has been well designed to complement the existing building and would not be detrimental to the setting of Priory Hall, a Grade II listed building. There would be no adverse effect on local residents or the street scene.

The Group Engineer (Development) is concerned about highway safety because of a lack of parking facilities for the building and has pointed out that there have been a number of accidents in the vicinity of the nearby Priory Road – Hazel Road junction. However, agreement has been reached at officer level for the club to use the nearby car park at the Priory Hall Training & Conference Centre after normal working hours. The Area committee will be requested to grant a licence shortly. Given that the club meets in the evenings, that the majority of its members do not have cars, and that unrestricted layby parking is available nearby in Priory Road, it is not considered that the enlarged facility would detrimentally affect highway safety.

The decision takes account of the following policies in the adopted Dudley UDP-  
S1 Social inclusion, equal opportunities and social wellbeing.

S15 sport, leisure and recreation.

S16 Access and movement.

DD4 Development in residential areas.

AM14 Parking.

SO6 Parks.

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. Development shall not begin until details of the type, texture and colour of the brickwork to be used in the construction of the external walls, and the roofing tiles have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Such materials shall, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority, closely match in type, texture and colour those of the existing building.
3. Before the development is commenced, details of the foundation design shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA. Construction shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.
4. Prior to the commencement of development, details of any parking agreement reached shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall proceed in accordance with the agreed details, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
5. Prior to the commencement of development signage strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed signage shall be installed prior to the occupation and commencement of use of the unit hereby permitted, and thereafter maintained for the lifetime of the development unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.