



# REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

4 August 2016

# REPORT

**Subject Heading:**

P0800.16 - Broadford Primary School, Faringdon Avenue, Romford - Proposed erection of a 6m high rope climbing pyramid with a safety play surface below, on an area of the existing playing field. (received 16/5/16).

**Lead Officer:**

Helen Oakerbee  
Planning Manager

**Report Author and contact details:**

Adèle Hughes  
Senior Planner  
adele.hughes@havering.gov.uk  
01708 432727

**Ward**

Gooshays

**Policy context:**

Local Development Framework  
The London Plan  
National Planning Policy Framework

**Financial summary:**

None

**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

Havering will be clean and its environment will be cared for  
People will be safe, in their homes and in the community  
Residents will be proud to live in Havering

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## SUMMARY

This matter is brought before committee as the application site is Council owned. The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a 6m high rope climbing pyramid with a safety play surface below on an area of existing playing field. Staff consider the application to be acceptable and recommend approval subject to conditions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Time Limit - The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission.

**Reason:** To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans (as set out on page one of this decision notice).

**Reason:** The Local Planning Authority consider it essential that the whole of the development is carried out and that no departure whatsoever is made from the details approved, since the development would not necessarily be acceptable if partly carried out or carried out differently in any degree from the details submitted. Also, in order that the development accords with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

## INFORMATIVES

1. Statement Required by Article 35 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015: No significant problems were identified during the consideration of the application, and therefore it has been determined in accordance with paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

## REPORT DETAIL

### 1. **Site Description:**

- 1.1 The application site is Broadford Primary School, which is accessed from Faringdon Avenue and Chatteris Avenue. The site is bounded by residential properties with associated rear gardens. Ground levels increase from south west to north east across the site. The land to the rear of Broadford Primary School adjacent to the south western boundary of the site slopes downhill. The playing field also slopes downhill from north east to south west.

### 2. **Description of development:**

- 2.1 The application seeks permission for the erection of a 6m high rope climbing pyramid with a safety play surface below, on an area of the existing playing field. The pyramid would have a width and depth of 8.5 metres and would be sited between approximately 6 and 9 metres from the south western boundary of the site, which borders the rear gardens of neighbouring properties in Chatteris Avenue.

### 3. **Relevant History:**

- 3.1 There is extensive history, the most recent is listed as follows:

P1030.15 – Erection of a free standing canopy 20m by 11m over existing playground area – Approved.

P0174.14 – Single storey extensions – Approved.

P0852.12 – Infill flat roof extension and ramp – Approved.

P1014.11 – Single storey nursery extension to existing primary school – Approved.

### 4. **Consultations/Representations:**

- 4.1 The occupiers of 50 neighbouring properties were notified of this proposal. Two letters of objection were received with the following comments:

- The proposal should be sited closer to the school main building.
- There are existing wooden structures that overlook neighbouring gardens that were erected without the need for planning permission.
- Loss of privacy.
- Overlooking.
- There are too many slides and equipment in the school grounds that create a lot of noise.
- Noise.

- 4.2 Environmental Health - no objection to the proposal.

4.3 In response to the above, comments regarding existing wooden structures that were erected without the need for planning permission is not a material planning consideration. Each planning application is determined on its individual planning merits. The remaining issues are covered in the following sections of this report.

5. **Relevant policies:**

5.1 Policies CP17 (Design), DC29 (Educational Premises) and DC61 (Urban Design) of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document are material planning considerations. In addition, Policies 3.18 (Educational facilities) and 7.4 (Local character) of the London Plan and Chapters 7 (Requiring good design) and 8 (Promoting healthy communities) of the National Planning Policy Framework are relevant.

6. **Staff Comments**

6.1 This proposal is put before the Committee owing to the land being Council owned with two objections being received.

6.2 **Principle of Development**

6.2.1 The proposal is for a 6m high rope climbing pyramid with a safety play surface below, on an area of the existing playing field. The proposal is acceptable in principle and complies with LDF Policy DC29.

6.3 **Design and Visual Impact**

6.3.1 It is considered that a 6m high rope climbing pyramid with a safety play surface below, on an area of the existing playing field would not adversely affect the streetscene, as it would be located within the school grounds and would be sited to the rear of neighbouring properties in Chatteris Avenue.

6.4 **Impact on amenity**

6.4.1 When reviewing the merits of this application, consideration has been given to the impact of the proposal on the amenity of neighbouring properties that back onto the site in Chatteris Avenue and Cricklade Avenue. It is noted that two letters of objection have been received with concerns regarding the proposal in terms of noise, overlooking and loss of privacy. Staff consider that the proposal would not be unduly harmful to the residential properties in Cricklade Avenue, as there would be a separation distance of approximately 60 metres from the end of the rear garden of one of the nearest residential dwellings at No. 14 Cricklade Avenue and the climbing pyramid.

6.4.2 The climbing pyramid, given its height and siting, would be visible in the rear garden environment of dwellings in Chatteris Avenue and as a result, Staff consider that the proposal would result in some loss of amenity to these properties. Although, the climbing pyramid would be sited between

approximately 6 and 9 metres from the south western boundary of the site that abuts the rear gardens of neighbouring properties in Chatteris Avenue, which would help to mitigate its impact. Furthermore, it is noted that Nos 26-32 Chatteris Avenue have single storey outbuildings at the end of their rear gardens, which would help to provide some screening towards the base of the climbing pyramid. It is recognised that there would be some associated noise and disturbance arising from the use of the climbing pyramid, although this would be balanced against pupils utilising the whole of the school site and the existing playing field and other play equipment. In addition, the climbing pyramid would be utilised by pupils and therefore, would only be used during term time and would not be in constant use.

- 6.4.3 The issues in this case are finely balanced between the impact of the proposal on neighbouring amenity and the requirement for this climbing equipment for pupils. A supporting statement has been received from Broadford Primary School, which states as follows:

*“Currently large parts of the playing field are unusable for significant periods. The intention is to reclaim part of the play space as 'all year round' space. With a growing pupil population, the proposal seeks to add to the play space rather than convert existing play areas for another purpose. The siting of the climbing pyramid was chosen as the land there is mostly flat. The application site has significant gradient issues which complicate the installation of any play equipment. This area is the least affected by the gradient whilst maintaining a sizeable distance from neighbours' homes. The area adjacent to the proposed climbing pyramid is heavily overlooked by outbuildings from neighbouring gardens and this has the added benefit of screening them from view when the play equipment is in use. The proposal cannot be sited on the other side of the field, as access to the field has to be retained for the tractor and larger vehicles. If the climbing pyramid was to be placed on the playground side, it would not be possible to drive vehicles onto the field space for maintenance, summer fetes or other events”.*

- 6.4.4 Taking all the above factors into account, Staff judge that a 6m high rope climbing pyramid with a safety play surface below on an area of the existing playing field would not result in material harm to neighbouring amenity, although for reasons outlined in the report, this is a matter of judgement for Members.

## 6.5 Highway/parking issues

- 6.5.1 It is considered that the proposal would not create any highway or parking issues.

## 8. Conclusion

- 8.1 Staff are of the view that a 6m high rope climbing pyramid with a safety play surface below on an area of the existing playing field would not adversely impact on the streetscene. Overall, Staff judge that the proposal would not result in a significant loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers, although this is a matter of judgement for Members. It is considered that the proposal

would not create any highway or parking issues. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in all other respects and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

None.

### **Legal implications and risks:**

This application is considered on its own merits and independently from the Council's interest as owner of the site.

### **Human Resources implications and risks:**

None.

### **Equalities implications and risks:**

The Council's planning policies are implemented with regard to Equalities and Diversity.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Application forms and plans received 16/05/2016.