

15/00284/FUL**12A PURDEYS WAY ROCHFORD****APPLICANT: VILLAGE BOUNCE LTD****ZONING: EXISTING EMPLOYMENT LAND****PARISH: ROCHFORD****WARD: ROCHFORD**

In accordance with the agreed procedure this item is reported to this meeting for consideration.

This application was included in Weekly List No. 1292 requiring notification of referrals to the Director by 1.00 pm on Wednesday, 15 July 2015 with any applications being referred to this meeting of the Committee. The item was referred by Cllrs Mrs H L A Glynn and K J Gordon.

The item that was referred is appended as it appeared in the Weekly List, together with a plan.

1 NOTES

PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- 1.1 This application relates to the use of a vacant unit at 12A Purdeys Way with Class B8 use. The proposed use is as a trampoline centre (Class D2). The site is designated as employment land.
- 1.2 The original planning approval for the building was to construct a Class A1 furniture retail store. Permission to divide the unit, then nearing completion, into two separate units contained within the area and volume of the existing approval was subsequently granted. Unit 12A was granted Class B2/B8 (general industrial, warehousing) use. The other unit with A1 use had remained vacant since completion prior to a planning consent for a D2 use being granted. This consent, 11/00174/COU, permitted the use of the building as an indoor roller skating rink - Rollacity.
- 1.3 The unit has an internal floor space of 900m² and includes a mezzanine floor. There would be a reception area and office space at the front of the building with the remaining area used for trampolines. The mezzanine floor would be used as café/waiting area with an adjacent room designated as a party room.

- 1.4 The proposed opening hours are 7am to 10pm daily. The application form states that there would be 12 full time employees although not all staff would be on site at one given time due to the shift pattern to cover the proposed opening hours. The unit has 20 existing parking spaces and it is proposed to add a further 20 to the rear of the building to be used as an overflow parking area during busy periods.
- 1.5 The applicant has stated that were the facility to be at capacity there would be a maximum of 30 children/users and that the trampoline centre would be used to provide a leisure facility for all ages (over 5 years old). The facilities will be available to local schools to hire during the day. It would also be used by those looking for an alternative to a traditional fitness studio. Sessions tailored for disabled people will be provided to allow them to feel safe within the facility.

2 PLANNING HISTORY (since the 1990s)

- 2.1 02/00865/OUT Outline Application to Erect Furniture Retail Store, Together with Car Parking Servicing Area and Access. Approved 16 September 2003.
- 2.2 04/00851/REM Retail Store with Car Parking and Service Area (Reserved Matters Following Outline Approval 02/00865/OUT). Approved 9 November 2004.
- 2.3 08/00014/FUL Revised Building to Provide Building Comprising Retail Unit and Warehousing Unit with Revised Car Parking Layout. Approved 18 March 2008.
- 2.4 08/00303/FUL Insert 5No. Windows to Front Elevation (2No. at Ground Floor and 3 No. at First Floor). Approved 5 June 2008.

3 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Policy ED3 - Existing Employment Land of the Core Strategy 2011 states that existing employment sites that are well used and sustainable will be protected from uses that would undermine their role as employment generators.
- 3.2 The site is within an area allocated as employment land on the Council's Allocation Plan (2014) where new employment development will be expected to be predominantly B1 (Business) and/or B2 (General Industrial) employment uses.
- 3.3 The site was originally intended to support a furniture retail store but was divided into two units. Unit 12A, the subject of this application, was occupied by Thermo Fisher Scientific but is now vacant. Unit 12 has been occupied by Rollacity since 2012.

- 3.4 Policy DM32 of the Development Management Plan 2014 provides for alternative uses to be considered within areas allocated as employment land having regard to:-
- i. The number of jobs likely to be provided;
 - ii. The viability of retaining B1 and B2 uses;
 - iii. The compatibility with existing uses;
 - iv. The impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the District's town centres;
 - v. The proportion of alternative uses present; and
 - vi. Wider sustainability issues.
- 3.5 The unit is currently vacant and has been marketed by a leading commercial agent within the area for over a year without attracting a Class B business use. Given that no suitable business use has been forthcoming, and the availability of other vacant units in the vicinity, including the former Homebase site opposite, it is considered reasonable to permit a leisure use on the site that would create 12 full time jobs. The leisure use would also be compatible with the existing D2 leisure use in the adjoining unit. It is not considered the proposed activity would conflict with the vitality and vibrancy of the District's centres as it would be a new leisure use that would not compete with the existing retail/leisure functions of the District's centres. Furthermore, the proposed development would not lead to an over concentration of non-business uses within the Purdeys Industrial Estate. As it would provide a leisure/ fitness use it would promote the health and social well being of the Rochford community and thus have social sustainability benefits, as well as providing an economic benefit through providing employment for 12 persons.

TRANSPORT

- 3.6 There are no parking restrictions in the locality.
- 3.7 The main access to the site will be the existing car park entrance on Purdeys Way, which is shared with Rollacity. Staff would use the rear entrance. At present there are 34 parking spaces in the car park at the front of the two units with 17 spaces formally allocated to each of the two units. There are an additional 3 spaces in the rear service yard. A parking layout has been submitted to provide an additional 20 spaces at the rear. The rear spaces would be used for staff and overspill parking during busy periods. The standard is for a preferred bay size of 5.5m x 2.9m with a minimum bay size (only used in exceptional circumstances) of 5.0m x 2.5m (Essex County Council - Parking Standards, September 2009). The additional bay sizes conform to the minimum size of 5m x 2.5m, whereas the existing bays on the site are of the previous standard of 4.8m x 2.4m.

- 3.8 The neighbouring unit, Rollacity, contends that the rear service yard is unsuitable for additional parking as their lease specifies unobstructed use of a turning circle for its goods vehicles which would be abrogated if permission were to be given for its use as car parking. This would require the landlord's consent, which it would be difficult to give, bearing in mind Rollacity's rights. Officers accept that the rear yard would not be suitable for visitor parking, which would then leave 17 spaces for parking at the front of the building. This provision is the same as that which is available for Rollacity and it is considered unreasonable to require a new leisure operation, occupying a smaller unit, to provide a higher level of parking spaces than that of the existing leisure use.
- 3.9 In terms of the number of spaces the standards for D2 use is a maximum standard. The development would have a public floor area of approximately 900m² and the maximum number of spaces required would be 90 spaces at the standard for swimming pools, gyms and sports halls of 1 space per 10m² of public area or 45 spaces at the standard for other D2 uses of 1 space per 20m². A total of 40 car parking spaces are proposed for the site. There is no minimum level of provision required.
- 3.10 There are no existing or proposed cycle spaces. The minimum standard is 10 spaces plus one space per 10 vehicle spaces, equating a total of 14 spaces. These spaces can be secured by a condition, were permission to be granted.

IMPACT ON ADJOINING PREMISES

- 3.11 The adjoining unit at 12A Purdeys Way has a permitted D2 use as a roller skating rink. It is considered that the function of the proposed trampoline centre and the existing roller skating rink are mutually compatible leisure uses and that there would be no adverse impacts on the adjoining unit. Notwithstanding this a representation has been made on behalf of Rollacity raising concerns about the operation of the unit, including any noise generation and concerns about parking provision.
- 3.12 The occupants of 8 and 9 Purdeys Way have also raised a concern about the potential for parking overspill onto the highway. It is nevertheless considered that the level of parking provision would be adequate for the site, given that the number of potential users, namely a capacity of thirty, and the likelihood that these would be children travelling as part of a group rather than individually.
- 3.13 The applicant considers that the unit's peak use will be outside of normal trading hours with the majority of the clientele using the facilities during evenings and weekends. It is not considered that the use of the leisure facility would conflict with the established business/industrial use of the Purdeys Industrial Estate.

CONCLUSION

- 3.14 The proposed use is considered to be a suitable re-use of the vacant building in accordance with local and national planning policy.

4 REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 ECC HIGHWAYS - From a highway and transportation perspective the Highway Authority has no comments to make on this proposal.
- 4.2 RDC ENGINEERS - No objections/observations.
- 4.3 NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS - The following representations have been received:-

8 Purdeys Way

- 4.4 Concerned that the application does not have sufficient safe car parking facilities for its potential customers, which in turn could put the safety of their customers at risk should they be forced to use the surrounding roads to park their vehicles.

9 Purdeys Way

- 4.5 We feel that unless the applicants have sufficient parking within their own boundary this would put additional pressure on an already busy thoroughfare.
- 4.6 At peak times the road adjacent to Rollacity, and indeed the Homebase car park, which is currently vacant, are used for parking as the parking at Rollacity (during peak times) is not sufficient for all of their customers. Therefore allowing another facility with insufficient parking would only add to the problem and could create safety issues. There are always large goods vehicles delivering to the estate and pedestrians having to cross the estate roads and car parks to gain access to these facilities may create health and safety issues.

12 Purdeys Way

- 4.7 Lack of information about the operators and how the facility will be run/managed.
- 4.8 Loss of the dedicated service area at the rear of the premises.
- 4.9 The possibility of overspill parking on surrounding streets.
- 4.10 Possible noise intrusion.
- 4.11 The principal concern relates to car parking as there are only 16 spaces available in front of the unit and spaces in the rear yard are not available as Rollacity's lease allows them use of this area to turn vehicles. Traffic and

acoustic studies should, at least, be completed before the application is considered, as well as a working methodology about operation of the unit to ensure that the two leisure facilities can co-exist without detriment to the wider environment.

5 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That the application be approved, subject to the following conditions:-

- (1) SC4B Time Limits Full - Standard
- (2) The development shall only be used as a trampoline centre and for no other purpose, including any use otherwise permitted within Class D2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (including any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), or such uses ordinarily incidental to the use hereby permitted.
- (3) Prior to occupation of the facility a minimum of twelve secure cycle parking spaces shall be provided on the site.



Shaun Scrutton

Director

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals

Core Strategy 2011- Policies ED3, T8

Development Management Plan 2014 - DM30, DM32

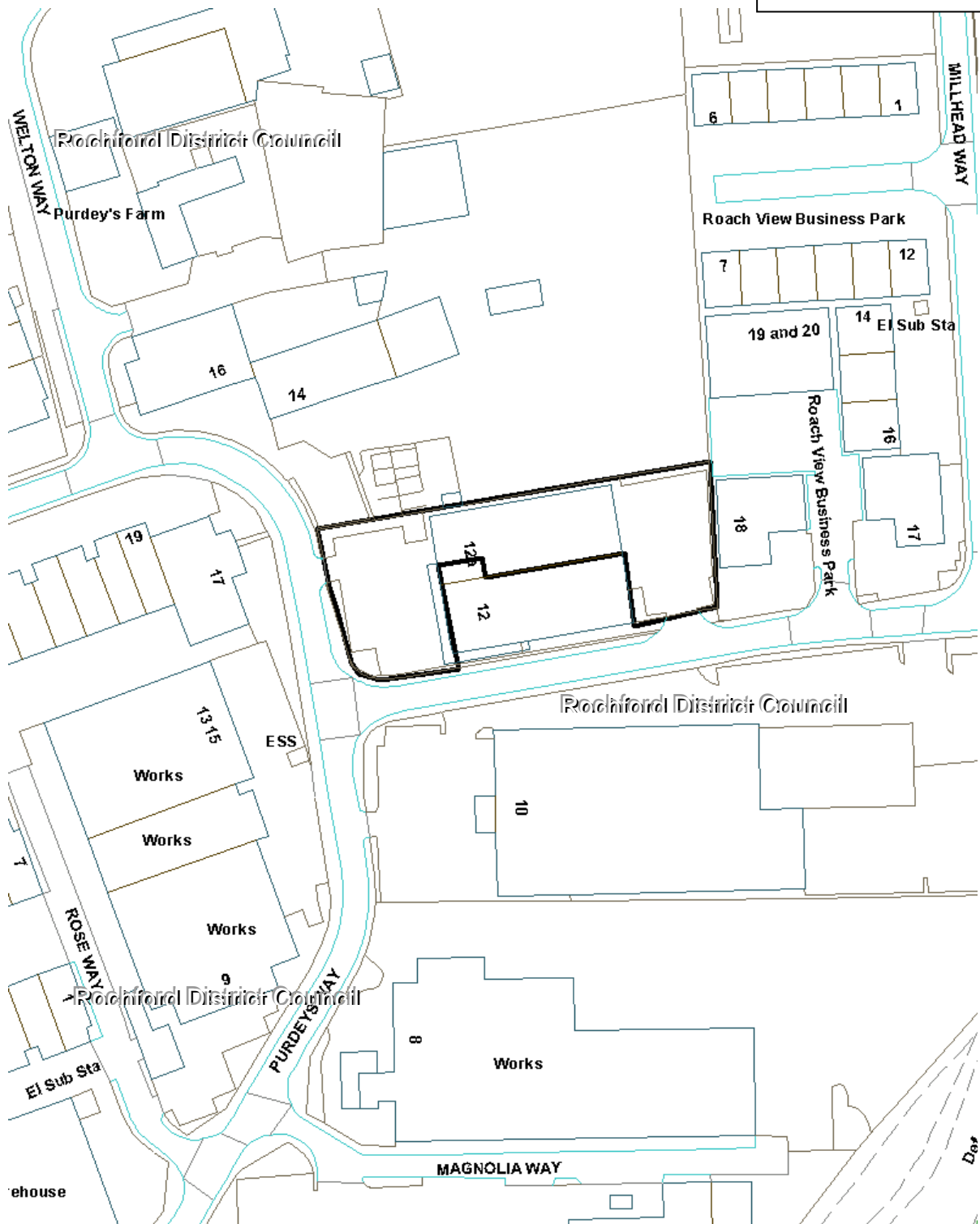
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