

Planning Application Reference: APP/26/00284

Description: Change of use from residential dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to Day Nursery (Use Class E), including alterations to the kerb to enable an "in and out" system.

Location: 102 Bedhampton Road, Havant, PO9 3EZ

The TPX Planning Agent's response letter has been reviewed.

The content does not demonstrate that the site is suitable for the proposed use.

The existing noise sources in the area identified in the letter are not comparable to noise generated by use of the external area for children playing.

The commercial premises mentioned are all over 100m from the site and are significantly further removed from neighbouring residential receptors than the proposed outdoor play area and therefore are not considered directly comparable.

A children's play area presents a potentially highly variable noise source which is difficult to control. Regular incidents of raised children's voices through excitement at play or episodes of crying and screaming are not uncommon. The impact from this type of noise source is not comparable to road traffic noise, which is generally a constant noise source with relatively minor variability.

There are adjacent residential premises immediately to the rear of the development site and, as such, the site is not considered suitable for the proposed use.

The proposed staggered usage and restriction of number of children allowed at any one time would not overcome concerns regarding impacts on the amenity of neighbouring residents. Similarly, the provision of off-site activities does not remove the provision of outdoor play.

Submission of a Noise Impact Assessment is not considered to be a viable solution in this case as whilst the provision of acoustic fencing enclosing the play area and implementation of administrative controls may indicate that noise levels (dB) could be controlled to some degree, there is no widely accepted assessment methodology that can reliably demonstrate the acceptability of nursery playground noise in this context. Noise mitigation measures would be of limited effect to protect residential amenity, given the character of the area and proximity of residents.

Should the development proceed and adverse noise impacts arise, there would be limited scope to implement further effective mitigation measures due to the nature of the activity and the proximity of neighbouring residential properties.

Environmental Health (pollution) recommends that the application is refused on noise grounds as the site is not considered suitable for the proposed use involving regular outdoor play activity.

Kind regards,

Craig Milligan

Environmental Health Officer