

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:P10/0357

Type of approval sought	Full Planning Permission
Ward	CASTLE & PRIORY
Applicant	Dudley MBC
Location:	THE SYCAMORE CENTRE, SYCAMORE GREEN, DUDLEY, DY1 3QE
Proposal	CONSTRUCTION OF 14.2M HIGH TIMBER PYRAMID PLAY TOWER WITH ASSOCIATED SLIDES AND BRIDGE LINK
Recommendation Summary:	APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

1. The application site measures 1.32 hectares and comprises the Sycamore Adventure Play Barn (D2), which is very near completion. Some works are also taking place within the grounds of the play barn in order to create a number of play features associated with the adventure playground. The Play Barn is a unique building with timber cladding and recessed rear elevation. It is set within the grounds of the former Sycamore Green Primary School which closed in 2006 and is now used to house various education administration departments and a pupil referral unit. Local Children's groups are also hosted through the Play Ranger Scheme. The main access to the site is from the eastern boundary off Sycamore Green. The site is elevated in relation to the highway and the access road rises from the road towards the school building.
2. The site is situated within a predominantly residential area characterised by terrace and semi-detached properties built during the 1960s. Sycamore Green loops round the application site with facing residential properties on all sides.

PROPOSAL

3. It is proposed to erect a timber pyramid play tower within the adventure playground. The timber structure would be 13m in height with a windmill attachment to the top

bringing the total height to 14.2m. Users would climb inside the tower via internal platforms and ladders starting at ground level with no opportunity to climb on the outside of the tower. The tower would also be linked to the rear of the play barn at 3m via a link bridge with covered cargo safety net. This would allow level access from the Play Barn for disabled users. A stainless steel tubular slide of 800mm in diameter would come off the tower at 4m high and a second slide would also be added at a later date at 8m high.

4. When completed, the Pathfinder facility would be a free managed service which would operate on a membership/appointment basis. Whilst the Pathfinder Programme is due to complete in April 2011, the long term intention is to retain the free service under The Directorate of Children's Services. The facility would link up with the existing pupil referral unit and the play ranger groups. The facility would be open to schools during the day between 9.30am to 3pm for full or half day sessions with a maximum capacity of 30 children at any one time. The facility would re-open at 4pm in order to cater for evening play sessions up until 7pm. Whilst these would be the generic opening hours, some activities would operate outside of these hours in order to provide occasional overnight stays and in order to host ad hoc evening events. The facility would be closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays however children staying overnight would be picked up on Sunday mornings.
5. Children would be transported to the site via mini bus or coach during the day. A new lay by is to be created to the western boundary in order to provide drop off zone and two parking bays and cycle parking would also be provided. Those being transported by parents during the evening session would be dropped off at 4pm and picked up at 7pm.
6. At the time of writing this report an application to discharge conditions on the previous approval for the Play Barn and associated works (P09/0892) is under consideration.
7. The application is accompanied by a Design & Access Statement.

HISTORY

8.

APPLICATION No.	PROPOSAL	DECISION	DATE
DY/58/92	Erection of new school dwelling house and library	Approved with Conditions	17/02/58
DB/71/8197	Erection of 1 classroom extension	Approved	13/07/71
94/50140	Erection of detached garage for use as a school store (Reg 3)	Approved with Conditions	10/03/94
99/51279	Erection of a 2.0 metre high palisade securing fence	Approved with Conditions	22/09/99
P06/1724	Change of use of a former primary school into a pupil referral unit, a therapeutic foster care service (Flipside), a base for Education Welfare Officer's and a training facility for the Physical and Sensory Service.	Approved with Conditions	14/11/06
P09/0692	Prior approval under Part 31 for demolition of caretakers house	Prior approval not required	03/07/09
P09/0892	Change of use of land from D1 (school) to D2 to include construction of an adventure playground and Play Barn with associated upgrading of existing access routes.	Approved with Conditions	02/09/09

P09/0892/C1	Discharge of Conditions 2, 5, 6 and 7	Under consideration	
-------------	---------------------------------------	---------------------	--

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

9. Direct neighbour notification was carried out to surrounding properties and at the time of writing this report two letters of objection have been received which raise the following material planning matters;

- That the tower would be excessively high and detrimental to visual amenity.

OTHER CONSULTATION

10. **Head of Environmental Health & Trading Standards;** No objection

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- Adopted Unitary Development Plan (2005)
- DD4 Development in Residential Areas
- S1 Social Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Social Wellbeing

ASSESSMENT

11. Key Issues

- Visual Amenity
- Residential Amenity

Visual Amenity

12. The proposed pyramid tower would be a prominent structure that would appear higher than the Play Barn itself and the adjacent school buildings. Whilst it would be prominent in scale, it would be a largely timber construction with a natural finish that would sit comfortably within an adventure playground. The use of the site as an adventure playground has been established by the previously approved application and a variety of play features will feature in the completed project. The tower would be sited to the rear of the existing Play Barn which is the most suitable place within the site. The proposed tower would provide a unique play facility which would be accessible to disabled children and would form an important feature of the pathfinder facility. Given

the benefits of the facility on balance the proposal is therefore considered acceptable and compliant with Policy DD4 – Development in Residential Areas and S1 - Social Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Social Wellbeing of the Adopted Dudley UDP (2005).

Residential Amenity

13. The site is surrounded by residential properties on all sides and the proposed tower would be visible from all aspects. Those properties which front the Play Barn to the west are on a higher ground level and the tower would only be visible above and behind the existing building. Properties which front the site to the north would have a fuller view of the proposed tower and are on a lower ground level. However, these neighbouring properties are approximately 83m away from the proposed siting and would suffer no loss of outlook, privacy or light as a result of the proposal. Properties to the east are also significantly far away from the proposed siting at approximately 55m. These neighbouring properties are on a significantly lower ground level and the tower would appear higher from this aspect. The tower would however be viewed against the backdrop of the Play Barn which would lessen its impact. The original proposal for the facility also incorporated planting on the periphery of the site, subject to the approval of a suitable landscaping scheme, which would provide some screening to neighbouring properties. The tower would be located within the main play space which would be secured by fencing and locking gates to deter anti-social behaviour. Evidence has been provided that a public consultation exercise was carried out in the early stages and throughout the pathfinder facility which received largely positive feedback. It is therefore considered that there would be no demonstrable harm to neighbouring amenity and given the benefits of the pathfinder facility the proposal is therefore considered acceptable and compliant with Policy DD4 – Development in Residential Areas and S1 - Social Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Social Wellbeing of the Adopted Dudley UDP (2005).

CONCLUSION

14. Whilst the proposed pyramid play tower would be high, set within a residential area, gely timber construction and would be partially screened by the Play Barn itself and perimeter planting. The feature would be an important aspect of the pathfinder facility and would sit comfortably within the adventure playground which was established in principle by the original approval. The tower would be a unique piece of play equipment that would be accessible to disabled users. Evidence also suggests that public consultation has taken place throughout conception of the pathfinder facility with a largely positive response. Given the overall benefits of the pathfinder facility, the proposal therefore, complies with the following Council policies; DD4 – Development in Residential Areas and S1 - Social Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Social Wellbeing of the Adopted Unitary Development Plan (2005).

RECOMMENDATION

15. It is recommended that the application be approved subject to the following conditions;

Reason for The Grant of Planning Permission

Whilst the proposed pyramid play tower would be high, set within a residential area, it would be a largely timber construction and would be partially screened by the Play Barn itself and perimeter planting. The feature would be an important aspect of the pathfinder facility and would sit comfortably within the adventure playground which was established in principle by the original approval. The tower would be a unique piece of play equipment that would be accessible to disabled users. Evidence also suggests that public consultation has taken place throughout conception of the pathfinder facility with a largely positive response. Given the overall benefits of the pathfinder facility, the proposal therefore, complies with the following Council policies; DD4 – Development in Residential Areas and S1 - Social Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Social Wellbeing of the Adopted Unitary Development Plan (2005).

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken with regard to the policies and proposals in the Dudley Unitary Development Plan and to all relevant material considerations including Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The above is intended as a summary of reasons for the grant of planning permission for further detail please see the application report.

Note for Applicant

The development hereby approved shall be built in accordance with the approved drawings referenced DWG No: 001, TB1 and MPT1 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Informative

Notwithstanding the submitted drawings this permission relates to the pyramid tower, link bridge, slides and windmill top only.

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. No materials or finishes other than those indicated on the approved plans shall be used without the approval in writing of the local planning authority.

Site layout

70/0357

CAI



Dudley
 Directorate of the Urban Environment
 Landscape Architects
 May Sycamore Park
 Bourneville
 Birmingham B29 7AA
 Tel: 0121 8414125
 Fax: 0121 8417011
 Email: landscape@dpd.dudley.gov.uk



Job:	Sycamore Green Adventure Centre
Drawing:	Master Plan
Job No:	M010
Drawing No:	MPT1
Revision:	
Scale:	1:200 @ A1
Date:	March 2010
Drawn:	NC
Checked:	

RECEIVED
 15 MAR 2010

Based upon the Ordnance Survey map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction in any form without the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
 Dudley M.E.C.
 100019566
 2005

Path Link to Lower embankment to be confirmed on-site by LA.

Path Link to Lower embankment to be confirmed on-site by LA.

Screen/Forestry planting along boundary. (Ref. Planting Plan for details)

'Butterfly Walk & opportunities for Nature conservation Trail/Stop off points/ Quiet areas; (wheelchair friendly) Also gives opportunity to plant up boundary and make site less bleak.'

Open Recreation Space Football Pitch. Flying/Kite Boarding/Frisbee/Rounders + Informal Games/Formal Games

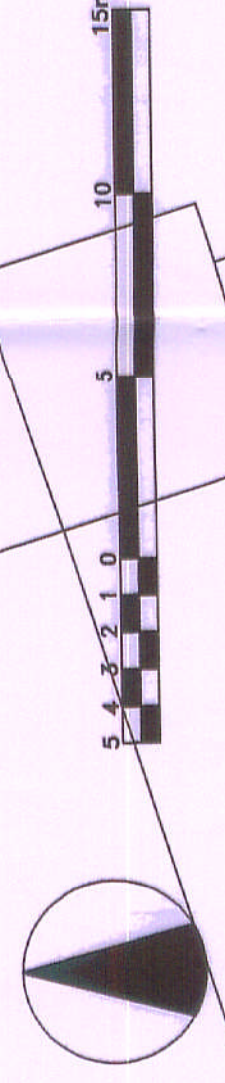
Free Play Area e.g. 'Daisy Chains'/ Informal Picnic./ inc. Tree trunks in sand etc (Recycle trees cut down elsewhere?)
 3m High Mount & Labyrinth Path
 (inc. Wheelchair Ramp)
 Column T. Play (Relocate Time capsule to centre too?)

Path Total 1.8m x 349 = 628.2m2
 Fence Total 112m

Maintenance/Emergency Access to Field etc. To-use gates relocated from basketball area

Path Link to Mount pending exact positions of Mount paths.TBC.

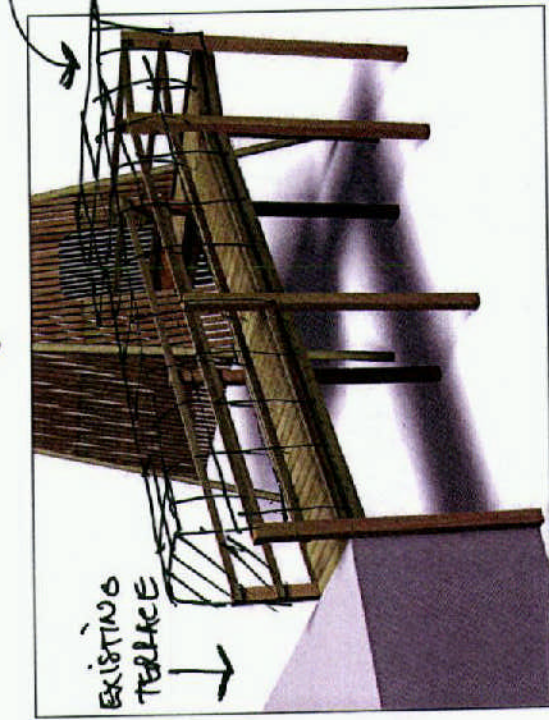
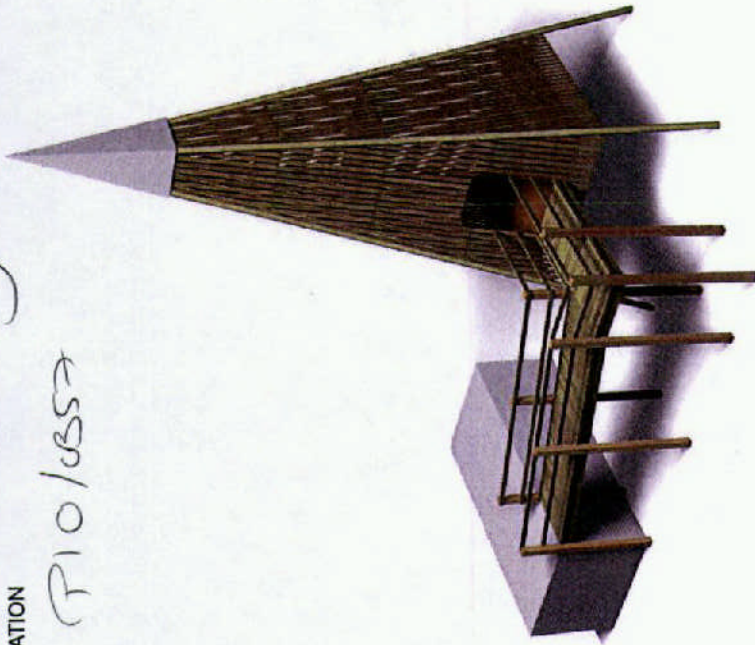
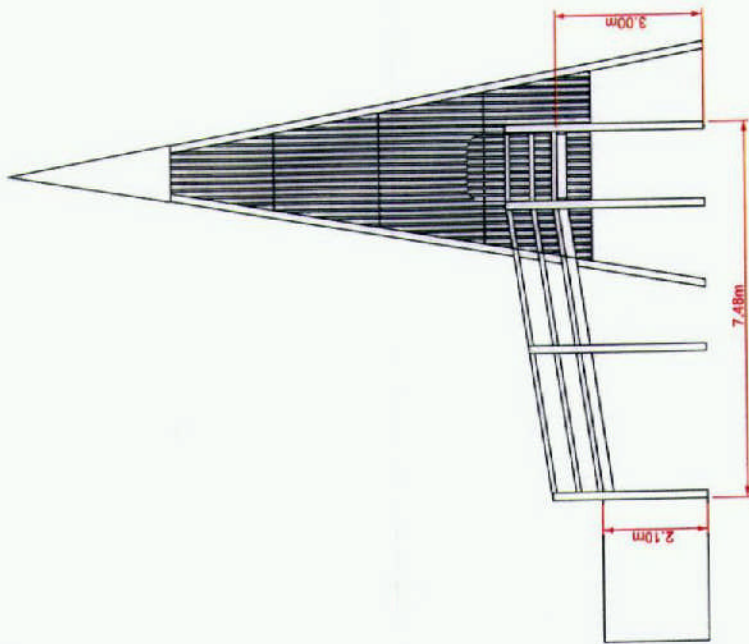
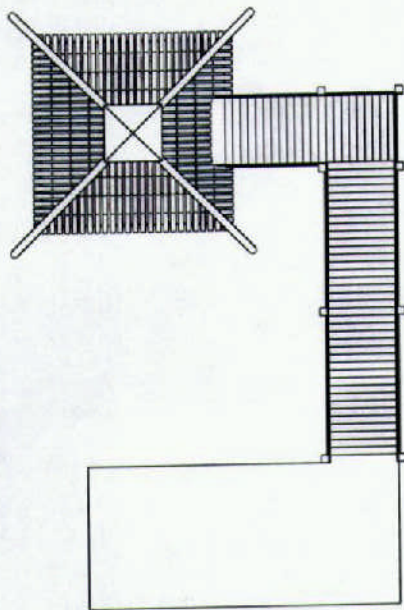
Planning Application site for Pyramid Play Tower (inc. Slides & Bridge Connection)



Design of tower

P10/0557

PRODUCT ILLUSTRATION



BRIDGE
D13



Schoolscapes Limited
1, Dunwell Business Park
Walsbridge
Cornwall
PL27 7FE
T: 01208 616620
F: 01208 616642
sales@schoolscapes.co.uk

Client:
Sycamore Green Play Area

Drawing Title and Description:
Bridge Design 2

Revisions:

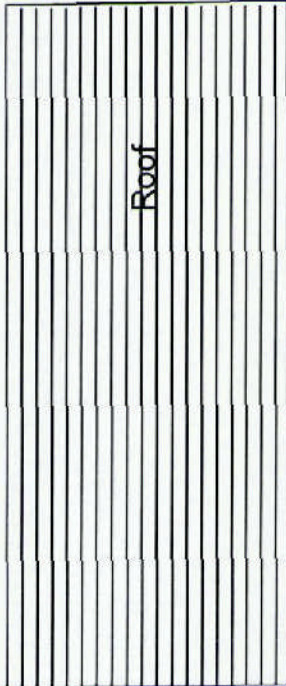
Scale: 1 : 100 @ A3
DWG No: 001
Date: 27/11/20
Drawn: JE
Dimensions in metres unless stated otherwise

This is a design representation do not scale from this drawing. All dimensions must be checked on site by the contractor.

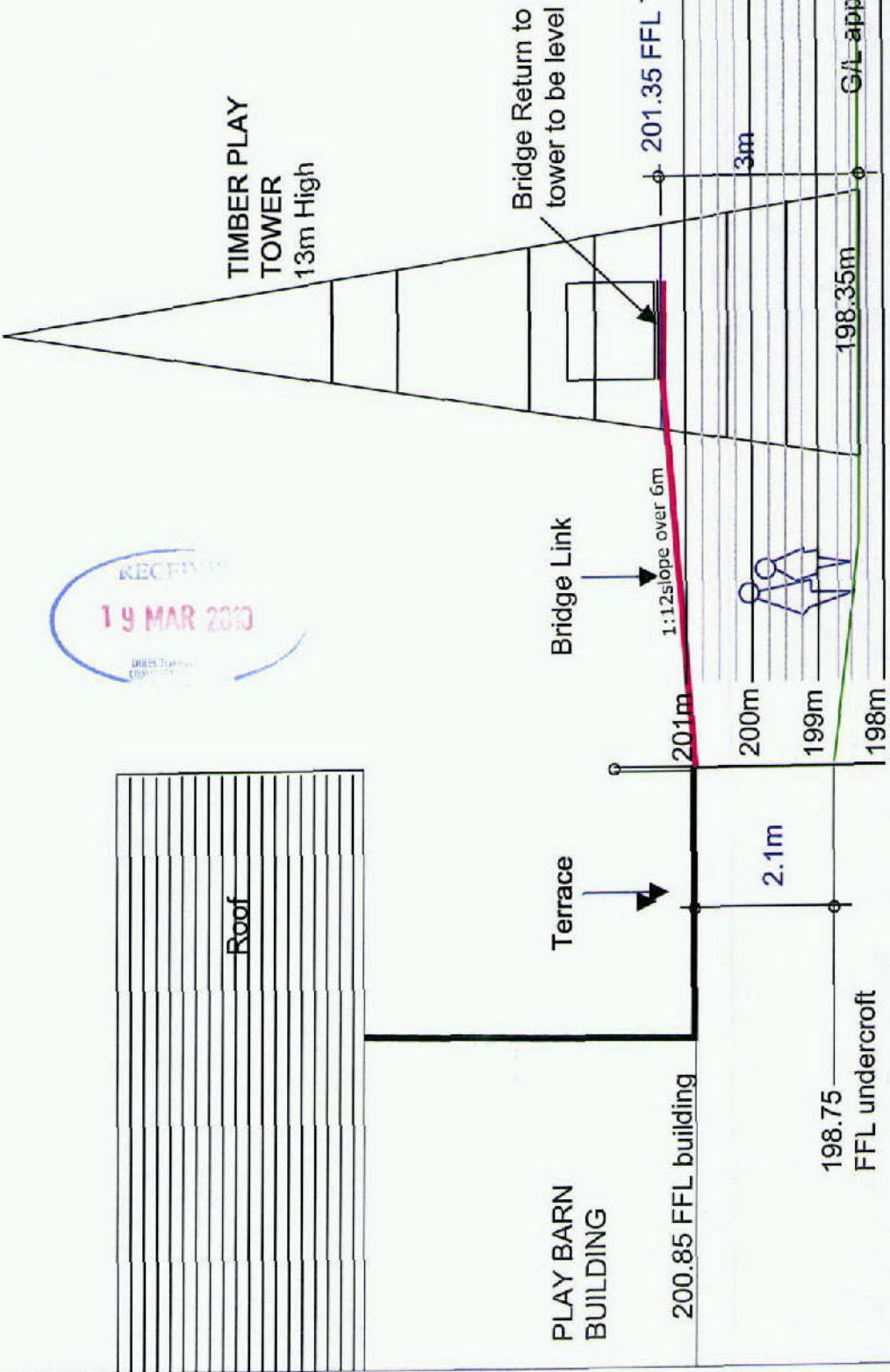


The information and images contained within this document are the copyright and intellectual property of Schoolscapes Ltd and are not to be copied or disclosed to any third party without express written permission of Schoolscapes Ltd.

Section drawing
Pic/0357



RECEIVED
 19 MAR 2010
 URBAN DESIGN GROUP



Dudley
 Landscape Architects

Directorate of the Urban Environment
 Council House
 May Stevens Park
 Southridge
 West Midlands
 B78 2QA
 Tel: 01284 814105
 Fax: 01284 817011
 Email: landscape.design@dudley.gov.uk

Job:	Sycamore Grm Adv. Play Area
Drawing:	X Section Tower - Bridge
Job No:	MO10
Drawing No:	TB1
Revision:	
Scale:	1:100 @A4
Date:	Nov 09
Drawn:	NC
Checked:	

X Section: Terrace-Tower