

The information, recommendations and advice contained in this report are correct as at the date of preparation, which is more than two weeks in advance of the Committee meeting. Because of these time constraints some reports may have been prepared in advance of the final date given for consultee responses or neighbour comment. Any changes or necessary updates to the report will be made orally at the Committee meeting.

Case Officer	Katie Ingram
Application No.	20/00441/RBCRG3
Date Valid	13th August 2020
Expiry date of consultations	15th September 2020
Proposal	Erection of 'Big Rig' outdoor gym frame near playground
Address	King George V Playing Field Sycamore Road Farnborough Hampshire
Ward	Knellwood
Applicant	Martin Sterio, Democracy and Community, Rushmoor Borough Council
Recommendation	GRANT

Description

George V Playing Fields is an area of open space and playing fields measuring 7 hectares located on the south western side of Sycamore Road. It is bound by railings along Sycamore Road and mature trees along the southern and western boundaries. The land rises up in level from east to north west. Facilities comprise the grass pitches, the pavilion, a car park, a pond, and a children's playground in the northern corner close to the main pedestrian entrance on Sycamore Road. The opposite side of Sycamore Road is characterised by houses facing the park.

The application proposes to install a 'Big Rig' multi-gym frame which would have a height of 2.75m and a footprint of 5.8m x 7.3m 8 metres south of the playground on level land. It has 7 pieces of fixed equipment around a central monkey bar frame, including, for example a sit up bench, a leg lift and a leg press. Materials would comprise a steel green and grey frame and permeable astro turfing for surface treatment.

The frame provides the opportunity for outdoor exercise comprising body workouts using own body weight for resistance, and is intended to attract all users of the park including young people and parents and carers of children using the playground.

Consultee Responses

Environmental Health	No objection
----------------------	--------------

Sport England No objection

HCC Highways Development No objection
Planning

Neighbours notified

In addition to posting two site notices 180 letters of notification were sent to properties adjoining the park.

Neighbour comments

Eight letters of objection from residents in Canterbury Court, The Grove, Sycamore Road, Andrewartha Road have been received objecting on the following grounds:

- The car park is already often overflowing from exercise groups and cars park on the verge and the pavement. There are often 100 or more people using the car park
- There is already a lot of noise, misuse of equipment and anti-social behaviour around the playground especially in summer evenings and this will make it worse.
- The equipment should be moved to be nearer the car park to reduce noise and those using it will need to park anyway
- This will encourage more anti-social behaviour from young people congregating in the park
- At night time the park is part disco, part race track, park night club.
- The proposal will increase incidents of litter dropping. After football matches litter is not picked up till the day after. The park is already overcrowded and mismanaged
- The Council have recognised that this new equipment will cause problems, as in the application for Manor Park it states that 'the equipment is a significant distance way from residential houses on Church Hill removing the issue of noise' so why is this one so close to residential properties
- Why pay for one dedicated path to the facility when it is well known that people walking to or from a facility will take the easiest route blithely ignoring any path
- Who will be liable for injury?

One letter was received in support of the application stating that it will be good for local residents.

Policy and determining issues

King George V Playing Fields is located in the built-up area of Farnborough and is designated as Open Space and Playing Fields in the Local Plan Policies Map. Therefore Policies SS2 (Spatial Strategy), IN1 (Infrastructure and Community Facilities), IN2 (Transport), DE1 (Design in the Built Environment), DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation), DE7 (Playing Fields and Ancillary Facilities), DE10 (Pollution), NE2 (Green Infrastructure), NE3 (Trees and Landscaping) and NE4 (Biodiversity) of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019) are relevant to this application, as well as National policy published in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (NPPF)

The main determining issues are the principle of development, impact on the character and appearance of the area, impact on neighbouring amenity, highways and parking considerations and impact on trees.

Commentary

Principle of the development -

King George V Playing Fields is designated as an area of Open Space and Playing Fields in the Local Plan (2019) and Policies DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) and DE7 (Playing Fields and Ancillary Facilities) apply.

Policies DE6 and DE7 state that development will not be permitted on areas of open space or playing field sites unless the development is for sports and recreation provision, the need for which clearly outweighs any loss. Paragraph 96 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (NPPF) states that 'access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Information gained from assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed'.

Policy IN1 (Infrastructure and Community Facilities) states that development should maximise the efficiency of existing infrastructure and be accessible to all and compatible with the character and needs of the local community.

The Rushmoor Borough Council Healthy Weights Audit (2018) identified the importance of infrastructure in creating healthy communities and the installation of this unit is aligned to the outcomes of that audit.

The Design and Access Statement states that the gym-frame is a versatile piece of equipment which can provide creative all-body workouts for beginners and advanced users alike. It will be located on level land close to the playground, park entrance and perimeter footpaths, and away from any pitch or spectator area. It is hoped that it will encourage young people as well as parents and carers while supervising their children in the playground to participate.

Sport England are a statutory consultee to this application and they have raised no objection, stating that the frame will not prejudice the use of the sports pitches and will provide benefits for community sport and physical activity.

The need for the facility in the community has been identified for this area of open space, it is located in an accessible location and it will not encroach on the playing fields and therefore accords with the provisions of Policies DE6, DE7 and IN1 of the Local Plan (2019) and the principle of development in this location is found to be acceptable.

Impact on character and appearance of the area -

The frame will be clustered together with the playground and will not be in the middle of the open space. The scale of the frame is modest and it will be no higher than the existing playground equipment. Views of the equipment from Sycamore Road will be screened by the playground. A light green and grey painted frame and surface treatment of green astro turfing are not considered to detract from the character of the park.

Located behind a small stand of conifer trees it will be sufficiently separated from the play area.

It is considered that proposal would have an acceptable appearance and impact on the character of the park and surrounding area and complies with Policy DE1 of the Local Plan (2019) in this regard.

Impact on neighbouring amenity -

The gym frame has 7 fixed stations and can be used by a maximum of 15 people at any one time. It is considered that the level of noise arising from its users would not be any higher than the noise created from the existing playground. The nearest residential receiver is 53m from the site on Sycamore Road and it is considered that the impact on amenity by way of noise and activity generated would not be harmful. Noise from users to surrounding properties would be buffered by the trees and the road. The Council's environmental health officer has raised no objection to the application.

The Council is aware that there are currently problems in the park associated with loud music played during outdoor exercise classes and anti-social behaviour happening at night in the car park. The gym frame is located some distance from the car park and playing fields area and it is reasonably considered that it would not contribute to these problems, which are currently being looked into by the Council and the Police. Furthermore, proximity to the public highway and the playground would provide casual surveillance mitigating incidents involving anti-social behaviour. The public benefit of enhanced recreation provision is considered to outweigh any potential harm in this regard.

The development would have an acceptable impact on neighbouring amenity by way of noise and disturbance and in this regard the application complies with Policies DE1 and DE10 of the Local Plan (2019).

Highways and Parking Considerations

The King George V Playing Fields car park has 68 marked spaces. Parking on Sycamore Road is mostly restricted by double yellow lines although there is the opportunity for limited street parking. Most users of the frame will be visitors to the park or locals who will run, walk and cycle and it is considered that the proposed development will not generate significant vehicle movements above the existing park facilities in order to warrant additional spaces. The County Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposal based on highway safety grounds.

The application would have an acceptable impact on pedestrian and highway safety and would comply with Policy IN2 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019) and the provision of the adopted Car and Cycle Parking Standards.

Impact on trees

The proposed development will not be located near any trees.

Conclusions –

The principle of the proposed development, which provides enhanced opportunities for physical exercise in the designated area of open space and playing without prejudicing any sports pitch, is acceptable. The proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character

and appearance of the park, on neighbouring amenity by way of noise and disturbance, and on highway safety. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Policies IN1, IN2, DE1, DE6, DE7, NE2 and NE3 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019), the adopted Car and Cycle Parking Standards and the relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

Full Recommendation –

GRANT planning permission subject to the following conditions and informatives:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason - As required by 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 permission hereby granted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:

Location Plan scale 1:1250 Block Plan scale 1:500 HK 8716 00 Elevation Plan
HK 8716 01 Elevation Plan

Reason - To ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the permission granted

- 3 External materials of the frame will be in accordance with the details submitted in the Design and Access Statement.

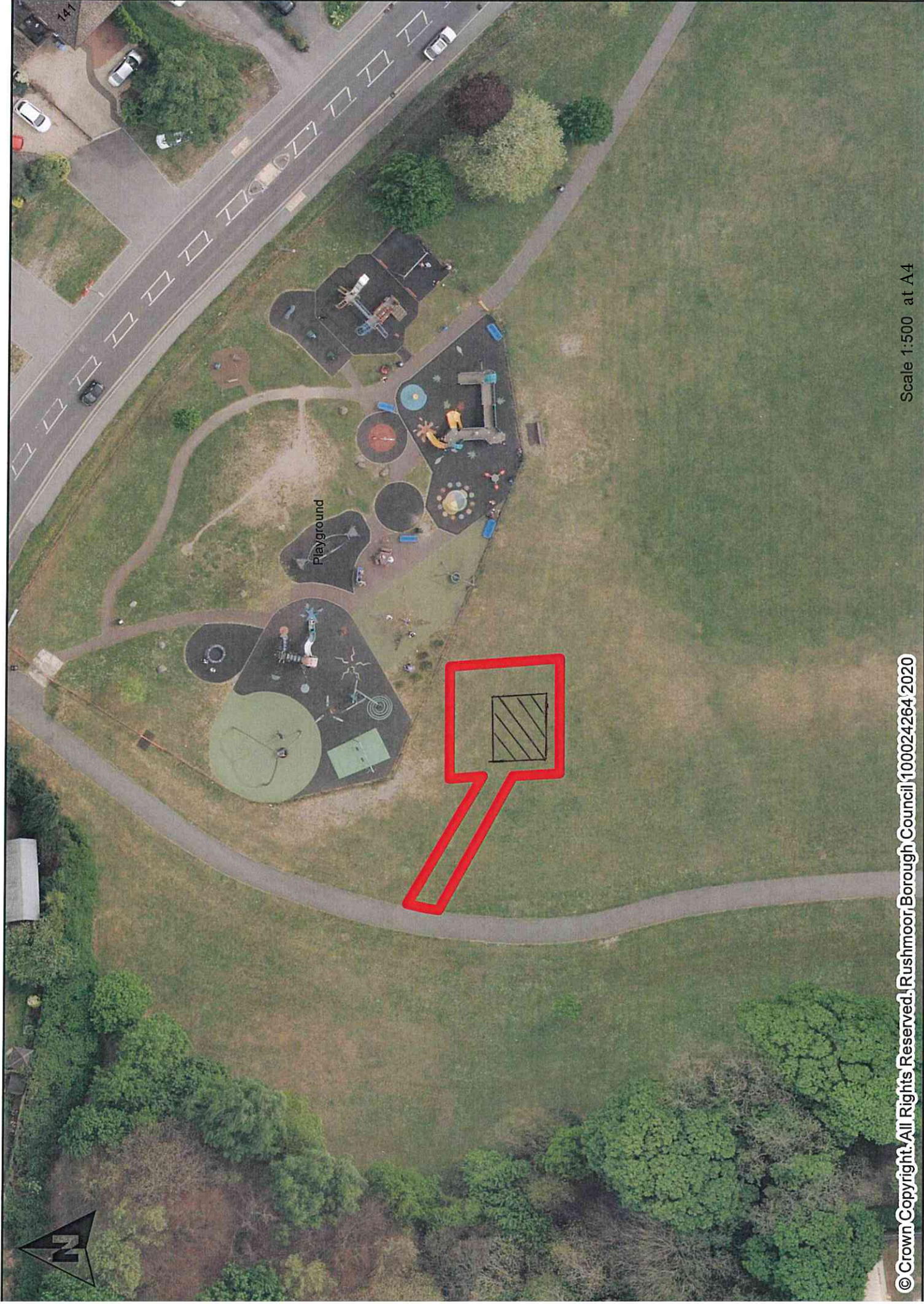
Reason - To ensure satisfactory external appearance.

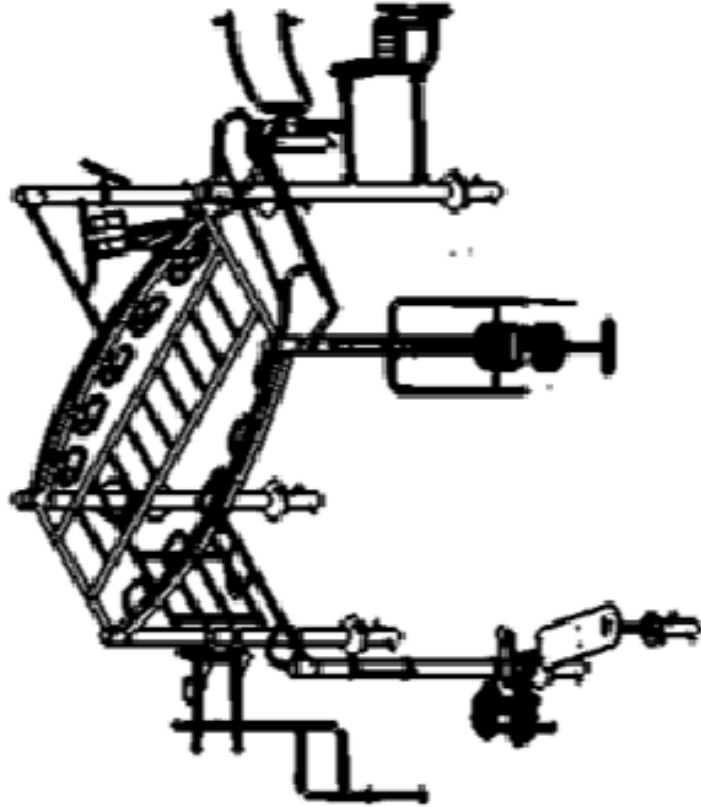
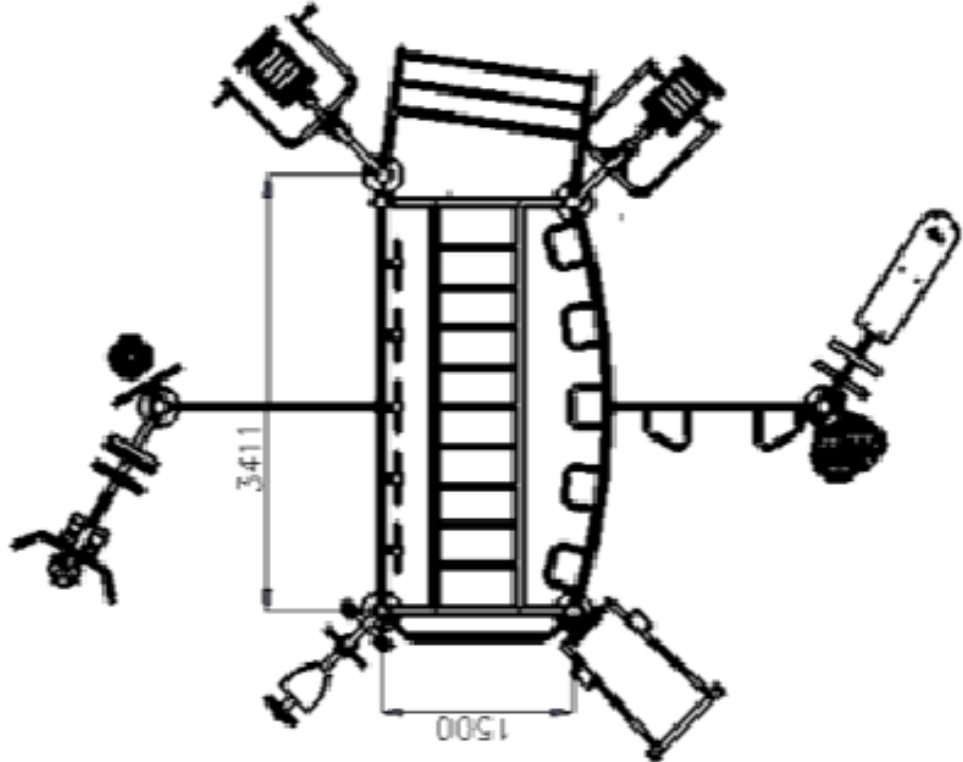
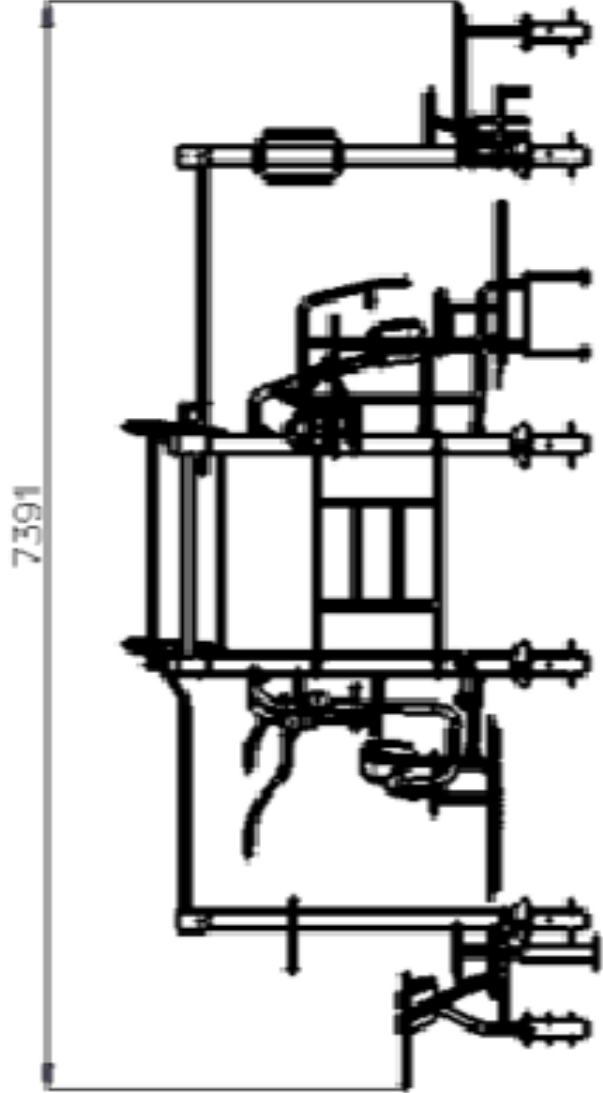
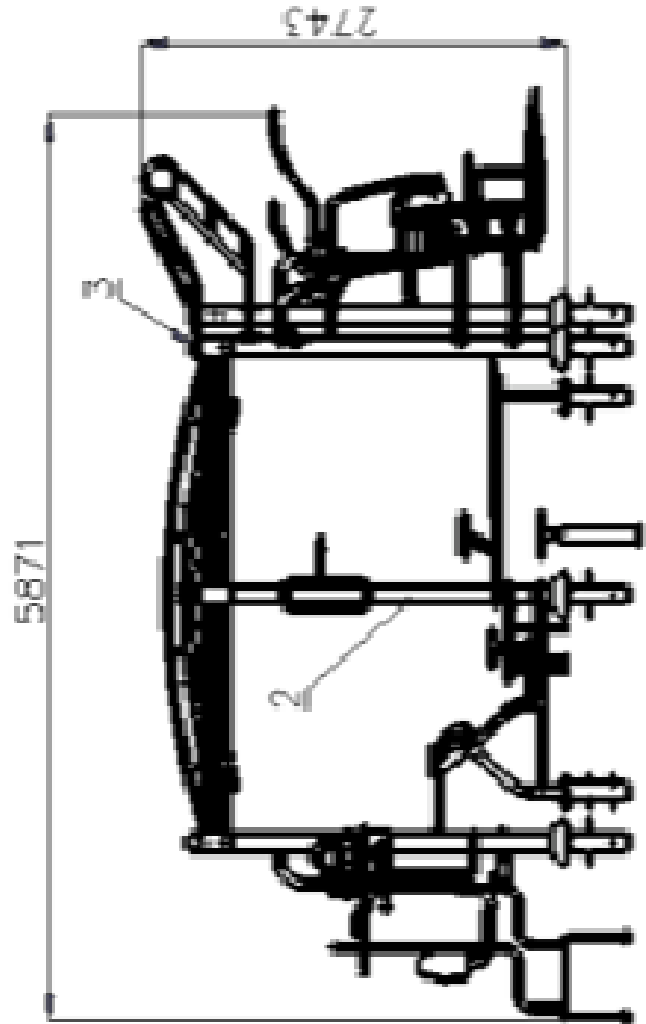
INFORMATIVES

- 1 **INFORMATIVE - REASONS FOR APPROVAL-** The Council has granted permission because the principle of the proposed development, which provides enhanced opportunities for physical exercise is acceptable with regard to impact on open space and playing fields, and it would also have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the park, on neighbouring amenity and highway safety. As such it would accord with Policies IN1, IN2, DE1, DE6, NE2 and NE3 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019), the adopted Car and Cycle Parking Standards and the relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

It is therefore considered that subject to compliance with the attached conditions, and taking into account all other material planning considerations, including the provisions of the development plan, the proposal would be acceptable. This also includes a consideration of whether the decision to grant permission is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

- 2 **INFORMATIVE –** The Local Planning Authority's commitment to working with the applicants in a positive and proactive way is demonstrated by its offer of pre-application discussion to all, and assistance in the validation and determination of applications through the provision of clear guidance regarding necessary supporting information or amendments both before and after submission, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.





Big Rig	
Plans	
DRWG	HK-8716-00
REV	2