

## OFFICER REPORT FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

**APPLICATION NO:** P1237.25

**WARD:** Gooshays **Date Received:** 22nd September 2025

**ADDRESS:** 116 Petersfield Avenue  
Romford

**PROPOSAL:** Proposed change of use from Use Class Sui Generis to Use Class F1 for operation as a Guided Learning and Educational Centre.

**DRAWING NO(S):** PL-6334\_11  
PL-6334\_15  
PL-6334\_17

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that **planning permission be GRANTED** subject to the condition(s) given at the end of the report

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### SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises of a mid terrace commercial unit, within an existing parade which is designated as a Major Local Centre.

A planning application was approved in 2017 to change the use of the unit as a dog grooming salon (Sui Generis) (planning reference: P0638.17).

### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The application seeks consent for a proposed change of use from Use Class Sui Generis to Use Class F1 for operation as a Guided Learning and Educational Centre.

This application is a resubmission of a refused application (reference: P0806.25) which was refused for the following reason:

'The proposed change of use, based on the level of details submitted with the application, its lack of type, scale, nature and operational management, without which the proposals would be considered to result in an unsatisfactory use by way of noise, disturbance which would be to the detriment of the amenity of the existing neighbouring properties, future occupiers, and the continued operation of neighbouring occupiers. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policies 7 & 17 of the Local Plan 2021, Policy S3 of the London Plan 2021 and the NPPF'.

The refused application had:

- 3 full time staff and 2 part time.
- 2 classrooms with 10 seats in each.

- 20 children per hour aged 5 to 16.
- Opening hours of 3pm to 9pm Monday to Friday, 9 am to 6pm Saturdays and 10am to 4pm Sundays and Bank Holidays.

This current application has:

- 3 full time staff and 2 part time.
- 2 classrooms with 8 seats in each.
- 16 children per hour aged 5 to 16.
- Opening hours of 3pm to 8pm Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5pm Saturdays and 10am to 4pm Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- Lessons will be staggered by half an hour to avoid simultaneous arrivals and departures.
- Classrooms will be soundproofed.
- Staff will supervise entrance and exit to ensure minimal noise.

## RELEVANT HISTORY

|          |                                                                                                                              |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| P0806.25 | Proposed change of use from Use Class Sui Generis to Use Class F1 for operation as a Guided Learning and Educational Centre. |
|          | Refuse 03-09-2025                                                                                                            |
| P0638.17 | Change of Use from A1 to Dog Grooming Salon (Sui Generis)                                                                    |
|          | Apprv with cons 18-07-2017                                                                                                   |

## CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbour notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties. One comment was received in support.

Environmental Health - no comments recieved.

LBH Highway: no comments receieved.

## RELEVANT POLICIES

7 (Residential design and amenity), 12 (Healthy communities), 13 (Town centre development), 17 (Education), 19 (Business growth), 24 (Parking provision and design) and 35 (On-site waste management) of the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031).

Policies D11 (Safety, security and resilience to emergency), SD 6 (Town centres and high streets), T5 (Cycling), T6 (Car parking) and S3 (Education and childcare facilities) of the London Plan are relevant.

The National Planning Policy Framework is relevant 2024.

## MAYORAL CIL IMPLICATIONS

The proposal is for a change of use, so there is no increase in internal floorspace and therefore not liable for Mayoral or Havering CIL.

## STAFF COMMENTS

An in-person site visit was not considered necessary. Site photos were not provided by the agent in support of the application. In determining this application, Google Street View, aerial view images and submitted drawings were used to assess the site constraints.

The main issues in this case are the principle of the change of use, the impact of the proposal on the streetscene and on residential amenity, amenity of the users and any highway or parking issues.

## PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Policy 13 (Town centre development) of the Havering Local Plan states that: The Council will support development proposals within town centres that:

- i. Are appropriate to the scale and function of the town centre's position within the Town Centre Network (see Map 1 'Havering Town Centre Hierachy');
- ii. Does not harm the town centre's vitality and viability;
- iii. Promotes a wider retail offer and choice to consumers;
- iv. Enhances and diversifies the borough's hotel offer;
- v. Provides high quality shop front design and signage that enhances the character and appearance of the town centre;
- vi. Provides active frontages at ground floor level, supports street activity and generates pedestrian movement; and
- vii. Makes effective use of upper floors.

Although the changes to the Use Classes Order has to some extent presented some conflicts with the policy 13, as it refers to obsolete groupings the overall objective remains consistent in seeking to protect the vitality and viability of the centre. Where control can be had, limiting non-retail functionality and the proportion of this within the town centre/high street.

Policy 1 seeks additional school places in line with the Council's Commissioning Plan and Schools Expansion. Paragraph 6.1.22 states that Education provision is particularly challenging in Romford.

Policy 17 states that development proposals for childcare facilities, primary and secondary schools and further or higher education facilities will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- i. Contributes to the delivery the Council's agreed Commissioning Plan for Education Provision and the Schools Expansion Programme;
- ii. Is located within the community it is intended to serve and is accessible by public transport, walking and cycling;
- iii. Is of a high quality design and provides a safe environment; and
- iv. Provides, private, secure and safe outdoor amenity and playing space in line with Government building guidelines, which is located away from busy roads.

Annexe A.3.12 of the Local Plan states that there is a growing need for school places in the borough as the borough's population continues to grow and consequently, ensuring the needs of existing and future residents are met remains a key issue for the Council.

An educational use would be appropriate at this location.

## **DESIGN/IMPACT ON STREET/GARDEN SCENE**

The proposal does not involve any external changes to the building. According to the proposed plan. If minded to approve there will be a need for a separate application to be made for signage.

## **IMPACT ON AMENITY**

The application site is located within a mixed use (commercial and residential) block in a Romford Major Local Centre.. The area is characterised by commercial premises at the lower floor and residential above, where a certain level of activity and associated noise is to be expected. Officers are of the view that an educational facility use can be suitably located within a town centre location, than within a predominantly residential setting, where ambient noise levels are likely to be higher.

It is noted that the Sui Generis use (dog grooming salon) was approved in 2017 (planning reference: P0638.17) with opening hours of 08:30-18:00 Monday to Fridays, 08:30-17:00 Saturdays and closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays. The hours proposed in this current application are 3pm to 8pm Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5pm Saturdays and 10am to 4pm Sundays and Bank Holidays. The reduction in hours compared to the refused application (reference: P1159.25) as well as a reduction in the numbers of children at any one time from 20 to 16 and the staggering by half an hour to avoid simultaneous arrivals and departures would reduce the amenity concerns raised in the refused application.

There are many nearby units with Class E uses and late night and weekend opening hours and having regard to this and the character of the locality, which is a local shopping area, it is not considered the proposed use would give rise to unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance.

## **HIGHWAY/PARKING**

The site has a PTAL of 4, in close proximity to Romford station and to various bus routes, as well as parking bays in front of the shops, so there are no highway grounds for refusal.

## **KEY ISSUES/CONCLUSIONS**

Upon full assessment of the submitted material supporting the application, taking into account all material considerations, it is considered the objectives of the development plan have been met, and therefore the application is recommended for approval.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that **planning permission be GRANTED** subject to the following condition(s)

**1 SC4 (Time limit) 3yrs**

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 SC32 (Accordance with plans)**

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.

**3 SC27 (Hours of use)**

The premises shall not be used for the purposes hereby permitted other than between the hours of 3pm - 8pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm Saturdays and 10am-4pm on Sundays, Public or Bank Holidays, without the prior consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:-

To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control in the interests of amenity.

**4 SC28 (Number of children) ENTER DETAILS**

The number of children accommodated within the premises hereby approved shall not exceed 16 at any one time and the number of staff shall not exceed 5 at any one time.

Reason:-

To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control and to avoid disturbance to adjoining residents.

**5 SC19 (Restricted use) ENTER DETAILS**

The use hereby permitted shall be for a Children's Guided Learning and Educational Centre only and shall be used for no other purpose unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:-

To restrict the use of the premises to one compatible with the surrounding area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to exercise control over any future use not forming part of this application.

## INFORMATIVES

### 1 Non Standard Informative 1

This permission does not infer or grant approval for any alterations to the external appearance of the shop front or the introduction of changes to the advertisement arrangements. Such changes will require the submission of a further application for planning permission or advertisement consent, as appropriate.

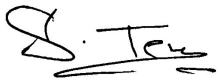
Reason:-

To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control in the interests of amenity.

### 2 Approval - No negotiation required

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 the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Authorising Officer:**



Suzanne Terry

2nd December 2025