



**CRICKET - PROPOSED PLAY AREA SAFETY INSPECTION
REPORT**

For

THURROCK COUNCIL

At

ORSETT RECREATION GROUND

Undertaken on

5 March 2009

RoSPA inspections are an independent safety assessment of the playing field and equipment and are produced for RoSPA by

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INTRODUCTION

The owners or operators of playing fields and sports facilities have a duty of care to the users of their facilities. In preparing this risk assessment due consideration has been given to the location, probable intensity of use and resources likely to be available to ensure adequate maintenance and upkeep of the facilities.

Any RoSPA guidance contained within this report should be programmed into future budgets and programmes for risk reduction as appropriate.

It would not normally be necessary for RoSPA to review the area concerned for approximately five years unless any major alterations have taken place in the intervening years. However the operator should review the report on a routine basis

When determining the risk of various facilities due account is made of the activities likely to take place on the site. For example participants in body contact sports such as football or rugby by their very nature are at a greater risk of injury than grass tennis court players.

Likewise with the playing of hard ball sports such as cricket and hockey a player, spectator or possibly other users of the area are at risk of being hit by the ball particularly if the pitch surface is uneven and gives an unpredictable bounce or if there is insufficient space for a suitable boundary.

Other circumstances which can all have an effect on the risk factor are those that persons/children would not necessarily have any control over, but that can all effect the use and risk of a facility and those identified in particular relating to this site are as follows:

- 1 Ability of the bowler
- 2 Ability of the batsman
- 3 Condition of the pitch in use
- 4 Type of ball used
- 5 Type of bat used (graphite Bats outlawed in 2008 although if used prior to this date can be used for the life of the bat)
- 6 Weather and wind direction

It is of course understood that there are numerous shots available to a good cricketer and again the ability of the bowler and type of shot selection will have a bearing on the direction and distance the ball will travel.



Plate 1 Overview of Cricket Field

INVESTIGATION METHODS & INTERPRETATION

The safety assessment was undertaken using the following procedure:

1/a meeting was held with Mrs A Winterflood and another member of Thurrock Council to clarify the report structure and discuss the current issues raised.

2/the inspector walked the outfield and discussed the location of the play equipment within the boundary of the cricket field.

3/measurement from the edge of the fenced square using a measuring wheel for 4 locations, these were the same as on the drawing sent to the author and indicate distance to,

- Approximate location of play equipment
- Approximate line of identified playing field boundaries

1/A severity and probability rating has been indicated for each distance identified on plate 3.

2/ the risks of the hazard are identified as Low, Moderate, High or Immediate. The meanings of each are identified under Risk Factor Table

3/RoSPA guidance is given where appropriate to aid in reducing and managing the risks indicated

PROPOSED PLAY AREA



Plate 2 Proposed location of play area (A)

Consultation

The play equipment which is proposed for installation would be used by toddlers through to the age of 13 years. The location we understand was agreed after local consultation. The areas concerned were originally identified as (A) and (B) with a consultation process being undertaken to gain local opinion on the favoured location of the play area. (A) Being the cricket outfield and (B) being the corner of the football area. Option 2 (plate 3) is we understand the favoured option spreading the play equipment between both fields (A) and (B) covering a triangular area of the cricket outfield and the corner of the football field. Another option was originally put forward spreading all the play equipment along area (A).

Location

We understand location (A, B) for the play equipment is the favoured option for the following reasons:

- Central for the village users.
- Close to the entrance, car park and accessible from the pathway.
- Overlooked by local houses across the road
- No other appropriate local location available
- This also retains the football pitch practise area & informal area behind the goal post which would stop possible use of cricket outfield for this purpose by the football club and other informal users.

Cricket Club issues with proposed play location

- Possibility of cricket balls accessing proposed play area
- School Lane (Road)



GOVERNING AND OTHER BODY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOUNDARY DISTANCES

The England and Wales cricket board (ECB) give a minimum distance of 45.72m and a maximum distance of 82.66m for a senior boundary distance. Although, boundary distances, are normally agreed by both captains prior to the start of the game (Rule 19).

The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) recommends a distance of 46m for senior players and 37m for junior players.

RISK ASSESSMENT RATING

Using the Governing body recommendations and if the game was to be played within the rules of the game RoSPA have calculated the following severity and probability ratings for the proposed play area location.

Arrow 70m Severity 3 x Probability 3 = 9 Moderate

This relate to children/persons approximately 70m – 80m away from the square playing in the proposed play area

Arrow 43m Severity 3 x Probability 2 = 6 Moderate

This relates to persons playing football on the adjacent field

Arrow 66m Severity 3 x Probability 2 = 6 Moderate

This relates to persons walking around the boundary of the cricket outfield

Arrow 50m Severity 3 x Probability 2 = 6 Moderate

This relates to persons walking to the pavilion from the car park.

It should be noted that the above is a subjective assessment due to the unknown circumstances as already indicated on page 3 of this report. These circumstances are very difficult to quantify and no research or data is available relating to these.

Another unknown factor is the amount of cricket balls accessing the proposed play area during a game although the cricket club have indicated both to RoSPA and Thurrock Council that "balls do enter these areas".



RoSPA GUIDANCE

The overall aspects of risk and hazard assessment is more concerned with identifying the risk or hazard and then managing that risk to try to bring the risk factor down to low, there being no such aspect as "No Risk".

Unfortunately nowadays recreation grounds and playing fields have to cater for a lot of different types of sports and recreational pursuits and this can normally only be achieved by compromise.

All parties involved with the location of the proposed play area will need to discuss the findings indicated in this report, at which point a suitable solution for both the cricket club and the council should be found. Especially as there appears to be no alternative area available and that the area discussed meets a lot of recommended criteria for location of play space. RoSPA therefore agree that location (option two) would be more favourable with the play equipment spread between both areas (A) and (B) and contained in the corner of the cricket outfield in the discussed location in a triangular fashion.

A form of barrier (fencing) should be installed especially between School Lane (Road) and the play area. The exact location and the extent of the barrier (fencing) will also need to be agreed. Signage at appropriate locations should also be installed both on the road and within the proposed play area as already indicated for both aspects within the report.

The most appropriate action to reduce the risk of cricket balls accessing the proposed play location would be to install ball stop netting at the edge of the proposed play area, although the cricket club have already indicated to the Council that this is not required due to the possibility that balls will go over the top of any netting this is of course understood, however netting is designed to stop most balls. Installation of ball stop netting has been found appropriate elsewhere in the country such as adjacent to children's play areas or at the boundaries of housing where cricket is played to reduce the overall risk factor.

Dependent upon the height and location of the netting deemed appropriate and agreement that the netting should be installed, the risk factor for the proposed play area could be reduced. Permanent netting may not be suitable for the location and perhaps mobile netting would be more suitable which is installed prior to cricket matches taking place discussions will need to be had to decide the most appropriate course of action and whether planning permission for more permanent netting is required if this is agreed as appropriate.



DISABILITY ACCESS

The proposed site will meet the accessibility requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Risk Factor Table

Risk factor (Severity multiplied by Probability)	Risk factor Description	Advised priority order of action
25, 20	Immediate – the risk is so severe that action needs to be taken straight away to prevent access or to repair, immobilise or remove the facility, surface or equipment or take appropriate action as indicated.	I (Immediate)
16, 15, 12	High – the risk is serious and although use may continue, the surface or equipment needs to be rectified as soon as reasonably practical. This is subject to the following : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 months is advised as the HSE expectation of reasonably practical, if this period of time is not, or proves not to be possible the level should be increased to immediate • No likelihood that the risk will become worse or • If the risk could increase, the item/issue needs to be checked daily until it has been rectified, • If the fault becomes worse or local knowledge requires a higher 'probability level' it may be necessary to increase the risk level to Immediate 	H (High)
10, 9, 8, 6	Moderate – use may continue, but the facility, surface or equipment needs to be programmed for repair, replacement or appropriate action and should be undertaken as finance is available. The risk needs to be reviewed annually.	M (Moderate)
5, 4, 3, 2, 1	Low – the risk is so low that 'No Action is Required' unless indicated.	L (Low)



REFERENCES

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(Crowood Press)

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Risk Assessment Criteria National Playing Fields Association
Technical Advice Notice 107