

Design & Access Statement

New Pre-School @ Walberton

1.0 Introduction:

Walberton Pre-School currently operates as a sessional pre-school, based in the Village Hall in the village of Walberton. The business is owned and managed by Helen Baxter and Mandy Foulds, who share management duties and also teach. The Business Partnership has been ongoing since 2003.

The pre-school opens on Monday to Friday mornings, for 36 weeks per year. We open for 15 hours per week for 3 and 4 year old children, and 12 ½ hours per week for younger children, from the age of 2. We are registered with OFSTED (reg. no. EY281732) and can take up to 42 children per morning.

The business employs 12 local people.

There is no other pre-school, or other nursery facility, in the Parish. Neither is there Aftercare or Breakfast Clubs, nor Holiday Clubs. For the children who attend the pre-school, we provide care and education, friendship and fun. Our curriculum follows the Government specified Early Years Foundation Stage. For the parents and carers we provide a safe, secure and trustworthy place for their children, and also, often much needed support and advice. We have a number of children with Special Educational Needs.

The pre-school is successful and popular, with an excellent local reputation. Some years ago, we expanded into two classes, in order to accommodate more children, and we now find ourselves full to capacity again, and sadly having to turn away prospective local children because of lack of places. There is no further opportunity for expansion to provide extra sessions in the Village Hall; it is hired to other local groups after our daily sessions. In 2010 we were awarded £400,000.00 Capital Grant monies from WSCC. It was the intention to build a purpose built eco-building to house the pre-school. The building was to have been built to the highest specifications and be a flagship of excellence in both it's construction, and the Early Years Education happening within it's walls. In September 2010, we found out that our Grant had been withdrawn, along with others, in the Government cutbacks.

It is now our intention to try to facilitate the new build, raising the monies independently. We are already fundraising to this end. We are also taking advice and exploring the possibility of adopting Charitable Status.

With exclusive use of a purpose built new building, we propose extending the childcare opportunities that are available locally. In addition to the sessional pre-school care, it is our intention to extend our opening hours and incorporate full day care too. We have undertaken some market research and this has shown that local parents would like to have a full day care facility in the village. In addition, there is also a requirement for an after school facility, breakfast club and holiday club. It would be our intention to eventually provide these services from our dedicated building.

The proposed new building planning application shows a building that would house our existing pre-school business, and enable us to open for longer hours. This would create extra places and enable us to accommodate children that we are currently turning away. We propose to add the 'wrap around care', ie. Breakfast and Afterschool Clubs, and Holiday Clubs, to what we already offer.

Our waiting list currently has 67 children on it, with an age span from 4 years to 3 weeks. The four year old children who have only recently been added to the list are very unlikely to ever get a place, as the class is full. This distressing situation happens frequently. We do not have a catchment area and are able to take children, provided we have space, from all the surrounding areas. We are therefore confident that there is a local need for the services that we propose to deliver.

Our funding comes from Government funded places, for 3 and 4 year old children, and from private fee income from parents. We are registered to receive various Voucher scheme payments, thus enabling parents to access Tax Credits. Our pricing policy is based on the staff:child ratio, our overheads and the need to remain sustainable. Currently, we are having to pay staff to set up and pack away our equipment daily, and this is not sustainable in the long term. In a new, dedicated, building, the classrooms would be set up permanently, and occupied, therefore staff time would be used more productively and profitably because the hours worked to hours earning ratio would be more favourable.

We are committed to providing quality childcare in our village. We are held in high regard by local parents, grandparents and carers. Our local school, Walberton and Binsted CE Primary support our plans for expansion, as do our Parish Council.

2.0 Assessment of Physical Context:



The proposed pre-school will be situated to the north of the existing village hall adjacent to the village recreation ground.

Access is via a footpath from the village hall car park, which the existing pre-school use. To the north is Walberton Primary school, to the east is the village recreation ground, to the south is the village hall. To the west, is currently the local pub & gardens which is subject to a current planning application for 9 Dwellings.

3.0 Social/Economic context + Planning Context:

The current pre-school is very busy, and as discussed previously, requires a dedicated facility as it currently shares the village hall. This means that the current pre-school lacks the facilities it would ideally require, it considerably lengthens the day for the staff as they have to clean the hall and pack away all the equipment used and are unable to personalise the spaces.

Before the scheme in its current form was finalised, two feasibility studies by WSCC, the pre-school staff and architects were carried out. The proposal are now being put forward by the Pre-School only.

Regarding the planning context, the following policies taken from the local plan were taken into account:-

Policy GEN 1 – sustainability – requires that any development must take into account the need to protect the environment, safeguard the needs of future generations and quality of life etc.

The proposal is a response to the current pre-school being very busy and the need to expand due to demand. The proposed building will be designed and constructed to a high standard and to exceed the current building regulations. Sustainable features will include:-

- ❖ A highly insulated building fabric to minimise heat loss from the building.
- ❖ All joints sealed for air tightness.
- ❖ Sustainably sourced FSC accredited Glulam timber frame with a low embodied energy.
- ❖ Large roof overhangs, shading the building & assisting in minimising solar gain in the summer. In winter low direct sun can penetrate through the large windows, helping to warm up the building.
- ❖ Window/door glazing to be double glazed with low 'e' coating to reduce heat loss.
- ❖ Underfloor heating system linked to air source heat pumps with exceptionally low energy demand.
- ❖ Intelligent lighting system.
- ❖ Rainwater butts for irrigation purposes.
- ❖ Passive ventilation systems.
- ❖ The wildflower meadow, to be planted on the roof, grown in topsoil from the buildings foundations, slows rainwater run-off, reduces noise & provides excellent thermal insulation.

The proposal therefore does not contradict this policy & we believe that the building will become an exemplar of its type.

Policy GEN 2 – built-up area boundary – deals with development within and outside development boundaries – although the site is outside the development boundary, the proposal is enclosed by Walberton school to the north, the village hall to the south, the recreation ground to the east and housing to the south and west and therefore feels part of the village.

We therefore feel that the proposal would make a positive contribution to the village. The proposal benefits the local community and is adjacent to the existing pre-school and parking.

Policy GEN 3 – protection of the countryside – Although as stated before that the proposal is outside the development boundary, there is a strong case for the pre-school to be sited where it is, as it keeps community services in one place and the proposal also meets the needs of the local community.

We therefore feel that the above are exceptional circumstances and therefore the proposal does not contradict this policy.

Policy Gen 4 – Location + Travel Demand – deals with the effect the proposal will have on travel demand and that it will not add to congestion and pollution and adversely increase demand.

The proposal is on land adjacent the village hall, which the pre-school currently uses, and which is adjacent to a public car park. The site is also reasonably centrally located and within walking/cycling distance for the majority of users.

Therefore, we feel that the proposal does not contradict this policy

Policy GEN 7 – The form of new development – permission will only be granted for schemes of high quality design and layout and which do not impact on adjacent properties, wildlife and travel etc.

The proposal has been sensitively designed to make a positive contribution to its environment, its position within the village and as stated before does not impact on adjacent properties or significantly effect travel demand.

An arboricultural and bio diversity report has been prepared and its recommendations followed.

We therefore feel that the proposal does not contradict this policy.

Policy GEN 8 – development and the provision of infrastructure – As stated before the proposal is adjacent to the pre-school current accommodation and parking. Community Services are sought as part of this policy.

Due to the proposal end use, the proposal does not contradict this policy.

Policy Gen 12/14/15 - Parking in new development/public transport/walking cycling - the proposal is adjacent to the village hall and public car park. The proposal is reasonably centrally located within the village and therefore within walking/cycling distance. Secure cycle/pram parking is provided within the development. The site is also close to a bus route

We therefore feel that the proposal does not contradict this policy.

Policy Gen 17 – Access people with disabilities – The building is designed to be fully accessible & will comply fully with Part M of the Building Regulations

Policy Gen 19 – Crime prevention – the proposal will be designed in accordance with Sussex Police 'Secure by Design commercial' policies

The proposal therefore does not contradict this policy.

Policies Gen 23 - 30 – Water environment and conservation of resources + Biodiversity and trees – the proposal is not near any rivers, ponds etc. and does not prevent access to these.

The proposal will be designed to all the current Building regulation standards.

The site has been subject to arboricultural and bio-diversity reports (see supporting details) & will comply fully with their recommendations.

We feel therefore does not contradict this policy.

Policy Gen 31 – Contaminated land – The plot for the proposal is not contaminated and therefore does not contradict this policy.

Policies Gen 32 - 34 – noise, air + light pollution – the proposal will not significantly increase these and therefore does not contradict these policies.

Policy Area 5 – Protection of open space – concerns the protection of private and open space and playing fields etc, exceptions being developments that provide a social need and where open space is not significantly reduced.

The proposal provides a social need and has been doing so for many years. Due to the pre-school sharing the village hall, it was felt a dedicated facility was required. A plot adjacent to the village hall, which is adjacent to the village recreation ground was 'ear marked'. This plot does not significantly reduce the open space and is also a small section of land in a corner of the recreation ground. We feel that on this basis the proposals do not contradict this policy.

Policy Area 11 – local gaps – are to be protected and maintained – The proposal does not affect this as it is positioned between the school and village hall, thereby maintaining this gap and therefore not contradicting this policy

4.0 Evaluation:

As stated before, the proposal is the culmination of previous feasibility studies. Because the plot is long and thin, a linear building was the only option. The positioning of the building was derived from discussions with the client and the position of surrounding trees

5.0 Design Principles:

The development will be used by Walberton Pre-School, which as stated before, currently shares the village hall. It was felt that keeping the pre-school in its current locale, and the adjacent plot was deemed the ideal solution

The building that forms this application is in response to queries raised by the Parish Council to our previous planning submission (planning ref: WA/12/11) which was withdrawn.

The applicant held discussions with the parish council, the outcome being a reduction in floor area of the building, a redrawing of the site boundary & the proposed meadow roof.

6.0 Amount:

The proposal is for the relocation of an existing pre-school from the village hall to a dedicated building of circa 193.5 sq.m gross internal area on adjacent land. The building is single storey with a curved roof and will have bin and bike/pram stores on site.

7.0 Layout:

The layout of the building allow access to be controlled from a central point, and with all of the main spaces accessible from this point, although the southern most play space can be accessed externally if required. The layout was derived from close consultation with all relevant parties.

8.0 Scale:

The proposal is for a single storey building adjacent to the village hall. The proposed building, although of different style to the village hall, is subservient in massing.

9.0 Landscaping:

Although some boundary trees will be removed (see drawing TSP356-25b proposed site plan) a new native species hedge will be planted (see supporting documentation)

10.0 Appearance:

In terms of form and massing, the proposal aims to reflect the architecture of the adjacent school.

The curved roof will be a meadow 'green' roof, with natural ventilation stacks and the walls will be softened by the use of timber boarding.

11.0 Access:

The site is flat and the access from the car park etc is flat. All of the door and door thresholds will be fully disabled compliant. The internal facilities will all be disabled accessible. The building will comply fully with the current Building Regulations.

APPENDIX A

Environment Agency Flood Map

