

CH/2018/0247/FA

Case Officer:	Emma Showan	Decide by Date:	11.06.2018
Date Received:	12.02.2018	Ward:	Ashley Green Latimer And Chenies
Parish:	Latimer & Ley Hill		
App Type:	Full Application		
Proposal:	Change of use to a nursery (Use Class D1)		
Location:	The Great Barn Blackwell Hall Lane Latimer Buckinghamshire HP5 1TN		
Applicant:	Ashridge Care Ltd		

SITE CONSTRAINTS

Article 4 Direction
 Area Special Advertisement Control
 Within Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas
 Bovingdon Technical Radar Zone
 Critical Drainage Area
 Within Green Belt other than GB4 GB5
 Listed Building
 Within 500m of Site of Importance for Nature Conservation NC1

CALL IN

Councillor Garth has requested that this application be determined by the Planning Committee if the Officer's recommendation is for approval.

SITE LOCATION

This application relates to The Great Barn at Blackwell Farm. Blackwell Farm is located in the open Green Belt and Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty outside of Latimer. The Great Barn forms part of the farm complex but was converted to office use (Use Class B1) in 2003 and has remained in this use since then, although the premises are currently vacant. The complex is accessed off Blackwell Hall Lane which serves a number of other farms and barns, in addition to some residential dwellings. The Barn is also a Grade II Listed Building.

THE APPLICATION

This application proposes the change of use of the existing barn from an office (Use Class B1) to a nursery (Use Class D1).

No external changes are proposed.

A supporting statement has been submitted by the applicant in response to neighbouring concerns. It is summarised as follows:

- The proposed nursery will allow for 40 children to attend between the ages of 3 months to 5 years

- There is sufficient parking within the existing area allocated to The Great Barn and extensive hard standing surrounding the Barn to accommodate additional vehicles
- The traffic flow will be a one way system to prevent traffic from backing up onto Blackwell Lane
- The previous tenants had desk space for over 26 employees and over 800 visiting field based staff with no detrimental impact on parking or Blackwell Hall Lane
- There have been no reported traffic accidents in the last 5 years
- Old McDonalds Day Nursery in Latimer is located adjacent to an unclassified road and was granted planning for 60 children and 25 staff
- The arrival and departure times of parents dropping children will be staggered
- There is no application for the construction of a formal play area nor change of use of any of the agricultural land
- There are a number of day nurseries located within a farm setting; Old McDonalds Nursery, Bovingdon; Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery, Potten End; Mead Open Farm Day Nursery, Leighton Buzzard

A supporting statement has been submitted by the owner of The Great Barn which is summarised as follows:

- Since last July, there has been no interest, save from the current applicant, for use of the barn as an office
- The government is encouraging farm diversification and the generation of employment in rural areas and there is no other use for The Great Barn forthcoming
- The latest tenant was a care service provider with 26 permanent employees and 856 other employed members of staff. On the minimal assumption that these care service providers came to the office once a month, this would equate to 43 employee visits per day, so there would have been an average of nearly 70 employees coming to the Barn every day. The day nursery expects 35 cars dropping off and collecting children plus 14 staff, i.e. 84 visits per day which is an increase of 20%
- There are passing places and the increased vehicle capacity is within the capacity of the lane
- There have been no accidents along this stretch of Blackwell Hall Lane in the last 19 years
- There is extensive parking available around the Barn, with a possible layout of 24 parking spaces and 5 drop off spaces on existing hardstanding. These spaces confirm to the Council's standards
- The Great Barn is 90 metres away from Blackwell Hall and 120 metres from Higher Blackwell. Under application CH/2012/0832/FA for a similar proposal it was considered that the proposal would not result in undue disturbance to neighbours, even though a dwelling was only 34 metres away
- There are no plans to cease agricultural production on any land in connection with this application

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

CH/2003/2079/HB - Retention of internal alterations (amendment to Listed Building Consent 00/745/CH), unconditional consent).

CH/2000/0745/HB - Internal and external alterations to barn, conditional consent.

CH/2000/0744/FA - External alterations and change of use of barn to office, conditional permission.

PARISH COUNCIL

In respect of this particular application, Latimer and Ley Hill Parish Council would ask Chiltern District Council Planning Department to take account of the following comments which reflect concerns raised by local residents to the Parish Council:

- The proposed nursery will bring more traffic into the rural lanes of Latimer/Ley Hill which are already very busy
- The vast majority, if not all the clients will be from outside the Parish
- Latimer already has a nursery - Old MacDonald's Nursery

- The applicant needs to be able to demonstrate that the parking currently available is adequate for all traffic at peak times, i.e. dropping off and picking up. The Old MacDonald's Nursery at Latimer often has over 30 cars in the car park at peak times
- The approach via Blackwell Hall Lane is narrow, especially from Ley Hill and not really suited for increased traffic. Can we suggest no right turn out of the entrance to try and prevent traffic going up Blackwell Hall Lane towards Ley Hill?
- The junction of Blackwell Hall Lane and Latimer Road is not suited to increased traffic. The Latimer Road is very busy at peak times which is going to coincide very much with the peak times with the nursery. Visibility from Blackwell Hall Lane when turning onto the Latimer Road is poor from the right (from Chesham) and will be an accident waiting to happen
- As most of the clients will come from Chesham, it would be better for a site in Chesham to be found. This would help to reduce the amount of traffic on already overcrowded lanes in the surrounding Parishes

REPRESENTATIONS

Nine letters of objection from four parties have been received which have been summarised as follows:

- No information is provided as to the proposed number of children
- Blackwell Hall Lane is not a sustainable location; there is no pavement access
- It is stated that there are 15 parking spaces but there is no plan to show these and the barn currently only has planning permission for 8 spaces
- The parking arrangements are ill thought out and under provided
- Visibility is deficient in both directions
- Concerns about the accesses onto Blackwell Hall Lane and Latimer Road
- National speed limit along Blackwell Hall Lane
- Concern over lack of passing places and intensification of traffic
- Increase in traffic to and from the site
- Change of use of surrounding land to accommodate outdoor play space
- Noise and disturbance and disruption
- Changes to the integrity of the Listed building
- Inappropriate development
- The location of a nursery adjacent to a cattle farm is not a suitable location for a nursery
- No internal/external changes are proposed but toilet facilities etc. would need to be accommodated
- There have been a number of accidents at the T-junction between Blackwell Hall Lane and Latimer Road
- The offices have been successfully rented out since being completed
- There have been two major incidents involving farm machinery catching fire
- The proposal will change the atmosphere of Blackwell Hall Lane completely
- There are many other sites available in the locality that are better suited and closer to where children live, rather than generating traffic movements/exhaust pollution/energy use
- Lack of notification
- A report undertaken by ADL Traffic Engineering Limited has also been submitted

CONSULTATIONS

Buckinghamshire County Highways Officer: 'I write further to my comments dated the 12th April 2018, in which the Highway Authority had recommended the refusal of the application on the basis of inadequate visibility splays and the unsustainable nature of the site. Since these comments were submitted to the Local Planning Authority, the applicant has engaged in further discussions in order to overcome these concerns. The following comments consider the additional information submitted and should be read in conjunction with my original comments.'

An amended site location plan has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority, which shows that the adjacent fields either side of the proposed access point are within the control of the applicant. Further to this, speed survey information has been submitted to the Highway Authority which demonstrates 85th percentile speeds of 31mph in both directions on Blackwell Hall Lane, which would equate to visibility splays of 2.4m x 45m in both directions. I am confident that these visibility splays are achievable from the proposed access point in correlation with the amended site location plan submitted by the applicant.

In terms of the access width, I note that at the junction with Blackwell Hall Lane, the access width would measure in excess of 4.8m, which I can confirm is acceptable and would allow for the simultaneous two-way flow of vehicles in this location. However, within the site, I note that the access would measure in the region of 2.4m - 3.2m. Whilst I note that the applicant proposes to utilise a one-way system for the development, the Highway Authority would require an access width of at least 3.2m for the entirety of the access to allow for vehicles to utilise the access road effectively. The Highway Authority would also require details of the enforcement of the one-way system to be submitted, which I note could be dealt with by way of condition.

From the submitted site plan, I note that 29 parking spaces are provided to serve the site, with 5 of these designated for use as a pick-up/drop-off area. You have informed me that this level of parking is sufficient; however I would have concerns with both the arrangement and dimensions of the parking spaces provided. An amended arrangement will need to be provided, however I am satisfied that this could be dealt with by way of condition.

Concerns remain however regarding the sustainability of the site. From the proposed nursery, it is in excess of 500m to the nearest bus stop. As the recommended maximum walking distance to a public transport access point is a 400m/5 minute walk, the development site is therefore considered to be in a comparatively unsustainable location from a public transport accessibility perspective. Proposals for development generally need to be well connected to non-car modes of travel in order to meet the overarching sustainable development principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. This particular site is detached from the existing urban areas and is in a location that does not have pedestrian footways, cycle or public transport access. Paragraph 35 of the NPPF states that "developments should be located... to... have access to high quality public transport facilities". A development which does not provide any pedestrian footway links, cycle links or access to public transport is therefore in direct contradiction to the aims of the NPPF.

Mindful of the above, I must recommend the refusal of this application.'

Historic Building Officer: Comments to be reported verbally at the Planning Committee meeting.

POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012.

Core Strategy for Chiltern District - Adopted November 2011: Policies CS4, CS16, CS19, CS20 and CS22.

The Chiltern District Local Plan Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) Consolidated 2007 & November 2011: Saved Policies GC1, GC3, GB2, GB22A, LSQ1, LB4, TR2, TR3, TR11 and TR16.

EVALUATION

Principle of development

1. The application site is located within the open Green Belt and within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Most development in the Green Belt is inappropriate and there is a general presumption against such development. However, in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy GB2,

certain forms of development may be considered acceptable and this includes the change of use of existing permanent and substantial buildings, in accordance with Policy GB29.

2. Policy GB29 sets out that the re-use of buildings in the Green Belt for commercial, industrial, recreational or other uses (except residential uses) will be permitted provided that: it does not result in employment generation on a significant scale; it does not conflict with Policy GB24 (concerning the loss of community facilities) or Policy H9 (concerning the loss of residential buildings and land); and it is not inappropriate development.

3. Based on the above, it is not considered that the proposal would result in employment generation on a significant scale. The existing use of The Great Barn is B1 offices and the previous tenant of the premises had desk space for over 26 permanent employees and over 800 visiting field based staff (who would also visit the premises on occasion). In contrast, the proposed nursery would employ 14 staff and would accommodate 40 children across the day. This is not considered to be employment generation on a significant scale. In addition, the proposed change of use would not concern the loss of a community facility and nor would it concern the loss of residential buildings or land.

4. In regards as to whether the proposal would constitute inappropriate development, a number of criteria must be complied with. In this instance, the building has been substantially complete and has existed for many years prior to this application being made. The building is of permanent and substantial construction and would not require new building work to make the building suitable for its new use. The building was renovated to accommodate the change of use to offices. Furthermore, it should be demonstrated that the proposed use would not have a materially greater impact than the existing use on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it. In this respect, no extensions are proposed or are required in connection with the proposed use, there is no outdoor playing areas/play equipment proposed so there is no requirement of the proposed use outside of the building and there is no proposal for additional parking areas or the creation of additional hardstanding. Accordingly, it is not considered that the change of use would result in a greater impact on the Green Belt than the existing use. Furthermore, it is noted that Core Strategy Policy CS19 states that the Council will seek to develop a sustainable rural economy by supporting proposals for agricultural diversification where this will benefit the local community and allowing existing, lawful, suitably constructed buildings in the Green Belt to be re-used for commercial purposes in cases where this complies with other policies. Although the proposed nursery is not in a sustainable location, away from public transport links and walking distance from only a very small number of dwellings, the building is existing and therefore the proposal would make use of previously developed land. As such, no objections are raised to the principle of the proposed change of use.

5. It is also noted that The Great Barn is a Listed Building and so, in accordance with Policy LB4, it must be demonstrated that the existing use cannot reasonably be continued and the change of use should also have no adverse impact on the special architectural or historic interest of the building.

6. The site is also located within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) so any development should conserve, and where considered appropriate and practicable, enhance the special landscape character and high scenic quality of the AONB.

Design/character & appearance

7. The proposed change of use would not require any external alterations to the existing building, and nor is any additional hardstanding or external play equipment proposed within this application. The change of use is not therefore considered to have a detrimental impact on the character of the area, beyond the existing use of the Barn as office space. Furthermore, Local Plan Policy LB4 states that the change of use should not be approved unless it can be reasonably demonstrated that the existing use cannot be continued. In this respect,

the submitted supporting statement made by the owner of the premises states that The Great Barn has remained vacant since June 2017, when the previous tenant went into administration. Since then, estate agents have been appointed but there has been no interest from any prospective tenant for use of the premises as an office. This is supported by a statement from commercial property consultants Chandler Garvey who have confirmed that of two interested parties (a children's nursery operator and office users), only the nursery operator has remained interested as the office users withdrew their interest as the broadband was not sufficient for their needs. The consultant is also of the opinion that the premises are not suitable for office use for a number of reasons, including; economic uncertainty; broadband speed; no shops or local facilities; no public transport; and the open plan layout is not ideal for a lot of office users. Alongside this, as no internal or external alterations are proposed as part of the change of use, it is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character of the Listed Building and would comply with the provisions of Local Plan Policy LB4.

Residential amenity

8. The nearest dwelling is Blackwell Hall, opposite the application site, however approximately 85 metres separate The Great Barn from this property. Other residential properties are located at a greater distance from the farm. Subject to a condition restricting operation to the hours set out on the application form (0700-1900 Monday to Friday, closed Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays), it is considered that the proposal would not result in undue disturbance to neighbouring residents.

Parking/Highway implications

9. The Council's parking standards for a nursery school are one space per classroom, plus provision for delivering and collecting children by car. The transport statement states that the number of on-site parking spaces would be 24 spaces, plus 5 drop off spaces, although this is disputed by residents as being too high. Nonetheless, supporting information and a parking plan from the applicant (which has been assessed by the Highways Authority) has confirmed that the existing area of hardstanding outside of The Great Barn can accommodate these parking spaces and there is additional parking provision within the farm that can be utilised. As the proposed nursery will have 5 separate spaces/play areas within the building, the parking requirement for the building would be 5 spaces, in addition to providing adequate space for parents delivering and collecting their children. As in excess of 20 spaces are to be provided, this is considered to be sufficient to meet the needs of the staff and of parents, in line with Development Plan Policy TR16.

10. The County Highways Officer has also assessed the proposal in relation to the visibility splays, the width of the access and the impact of the proposal on the local highway network. The Officer is confident that the required visibility splays can be achieved while the provision of further details of the enforcement of the one way system and the layout of the parking area can be secured by way of condition. Although the Highways Officer has raised concern in regards to the sustainability of the location, given that the premises are already in office use (and not in agricultural use), and have been for a period in excess of 17 years, it is considered that a reason for refusal based on the lack of sustainability could not be substantiated at appeal.

Conclusions

11. The application site consists of a Grade II Listed barn which is currently in office use (Use Class B1). It is proposed to change the use to a nursery. The barn has already been renovated and would not require any external alterations in order to accommodate the change of use. In addition, no other extensions, change of use of agricultural land or additional hardstanding etc. are proposed and so it is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact on either the openness of the Green Belt, the setting of the Listed Building or the character of the area. The Highways Authority has assessed the proposal and has confirmed that both the access to the site and the proposed parking provision is adequate, subject to conditions. Meanwhile, given the history of the building and the fact that it has not been in agricultural use for a period of

17 years, it is not considered that a refusal based on lack of sustainability could be substantiated at appeal. Accordingly, the application is recommended for conditional approval.

Working with the applicant

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council, in dealing with this application, has worked in a positive and proactive way with the Applicant / Agent and has focused on seeking solutions to the issues arising from the development proposal.

Chiltern District Council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service,
- updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application as appropriate and, where possible and appropriate, suggesting solutions.

In this case, Chiltern District Council has considered the details as submitted which were considered acceptable.

Human Rights

The following recommendation is made having regard to the above and also to the content of the Human Rights Act 1998.

RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Permission

Subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 C108A General Time Limit
- 2 The use of the nursery building hereby permitted shall only take place only between the hours of 7:00am and 19:00pm on Monday to Friday, and at no time during weekends or bank holidays.
Reason: To protect the amenities of neighbouring properties.
- 3 No external lighting shall be fixed to the buildings or installed within or around the site unless first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: In order to maintain the rural character of the locality.
- 4 The Nursery building hereby permitted shall only be used for nursery purposes and for no other purpose(s) [including any other purpose in Class D1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification].
Reason: Other uses would have different operational and parking requirements and would need to be assessed in terms of preserving the character and appearance of the area and any impact on highway safety.
- 5 No playing of musical instruments or operation of sound amplification equipment for the playing of live or recorded music shall take place at any time within the nursery building hereby permitted or within its curtilage.
Reason: To safeguard the amenities and quiet enjoyment of neighbouring properties.
- 6 No part of the development shall be occupied until an amended scheme for parking and manoeuvring has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority following consultation with the Highway Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to occupation of the development and shall thereafter be permanently maintained.
Reason: To enable vehicles to draw off, park and turn clear of the highway to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the adjoining highway.

7 No other part of the development shall begin until visibility splays have been provided on both sides of the access between a point 2.4 metres along the centre line of the access measured from the back line of footway and a point 45 metres along the back line of footway measured from the intersection of the centre line of the access. The area contained within the splays shall be kept free of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height above the nearside channel level of the carriageway.

Reason: To provide adequate intervisibility between the access and the existing public footway for the safety and convenience of pedestrians and users of the access.

8 Prior to commencement of the development a scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority following consultation with the Highway Authority for a one-way system to include signage, lining and details of enforcement. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to occupation of the development and shall thereafter be permanently maintained.

Reason: To minimise danger and inconvenience to users of the accesses and the adjoining highway.

9 Prior to occupation of the development a Travel Plan Statement shall be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Travel Plan Statement shall be implemented upon first occupation of the development.

Reason: In order to influence modal choice and to reduce single occupancy private car journeys and comply with National and local transport policy.

10 AP01 Approved Plans

From: Higgs, Tristan [mailto:thiggs@buckscc.gov.uk]
Sent: 18 June 2018 10:31
To: Emma Showan
Cc: Hemmings, Claire
Subject: RE: CH/2018/0247/FA - The Great Barn, Blackwell Hall Lane, Latimer [OFFICIAL]

Hi Emma,

Thanks for the email below.

With regard to the visibility at the access point, as part of the proposals, the Highway Authority had asked for an amended location plan to show the extent of land under the ownership of the applicant, and for a speed survey to be undertaken to show the true speed of vehicles travelling along Blackwell Hall Lane. This information was submitted to the Highway Authority, which demonstrated that the applicant has ownership of adjoining fields along Blackwell Hall Lane and that 85th percentile speeds of 31mph take place along Blackwell Hall Lane. As this is the case, visibility splays of 2.4m x 45m are applicable in both directions onto Blackwell Hall Lane, commensurate with current Manual for Streets guidance. These splays are achievable in both directions from the proposed access point due to the extent of land under the ownership of the applicant on either side of the access point. Further to this, the access point serving the site would measure 4.8m, which I can confirm is acceptable, and would allow for the simultaneous two-way flow of vehicles in this location.

Within my original consultation response, I had outlined the trip generation that both the existing and proposed uses would have the potential to generate, using data obtained from the TRICS® database. The existing office would have the potential to generate in the region of 38 vehicular movements (two-way) per day, with the proposed nursery having the potential to generate in the region of 97 vehicular movements (two-way) per day, resulting in an increase of 59 movements per day. As you will be aware, the Highway Authority have to assess planning applications with a view to the requirements of the NPPF. Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that *'development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impact of the development is severe.'* I do not consider that the increase in movements associated with this particular site to result in a severe impact when taking into consideration the requirements of the NPPF.

I trust that this information has been of assistance, however if you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks,

Tristan Higgs
Highways Development Management Officer
Transport Economy Environment

Tel: 01494 586620

E-mail: thiggs@buckscc.gov.uk

Buckinghamshire County Council, County Hall, Walton Street, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1UA

Visit our Website: www.buckscc.gov.uk

From: Higgs, Tristan [mailto:thiggs@buckscc.gov.uk]
Sent: 27 June 2018 13:55
To: Emma Showan
Subject: RE: CH/2018/0247/FA - The Great Barn, Blackwell Hall Lane, Latimer [OFFICIAL]

Hi Emma,

Apologies for the delay.

Having assessed the proposals, I can confirm that adequate visibility splays are achievable from the junction of Latimer Road/Blackwell Hall Lane. Having reviewed the accident records for this stretch of road, I can also confirm that there have been no collisions recorded at the junction.

Hope this helps,

Tristan Higgs
Highways Development Management Officer
Transport Economy Environment

Tel: 01494 586620

E-mail: thiggs@buckscc.gov.uk

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From:Terry, Alison
Sent:15 Jun 2018 15:07:08 +0100
To:Emma Showan
Cc:Ames, Dinah;Perry, Clare
Subject:FW: Nursery outdoor space requirements [OFFICIAL]

Good afternoon Emma

Steve has forwarded your e mail to me for a response.

Whilst there is rule about internal space within a nursery which relates to the number of children which can be accommodated in an given premises, there are no specific regulations relating to outside space. That said there is an expectation that the children are able to 'free flow' between the inside and outside space with an emphasis on spending as much time outside as possible. The space requirements therefore should be sufficient, as far as possible, to enable a significant number of the children on site at any one time to be outside. This will obviously depend also on the ages of the children as if there were to be a lot of babies this might reduce the space necessary to meet this recommendation. Technically Ofsted would register a provider who did not have their own outside space providing they could evidence how the children could 'access the outdoor environment' but as a local authority we would not recommend it.

If you have any further queries please come back to me.

Kind regards

Ali

Alison (Ali) Terry

Early Years Commissioning Manager

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From: Chainani, Stephen
Sent: 15 June 2018 12:33
To: Ames, Dinah; Terry, Alison
Cc: Campbell-Balcombe, Paula
Subject: FW: Nursery outdoor space requirements [OFFICIAL]

Hi Di/Ali

Any comments on the email below?

Kind Regards

Steve

From: Emma Showan [mailto:eshowan@chiltern.gov.uk]
Sent: 15 June 2018 11:45
To: Chainani, Stephen
Subject: Nursery outdoor space requirements [OFFICIAL]

Morning Stephen,

Ben Robinson has passed on your email address as someone who might know the answer or who might know who the best person at Bucks Education is to contact. We have a planning application (CH/2018/0247/FA) for the conversion of a barn (currently in office use but located on a farm) to a nursery. Are there standards for the amount of outdoor space that needs to be provided for a nursery? Is there even a requirement for outdoor space to be provided? If you/someone at Bucks ed. could confirm that'd be great. It's something that are Councillors are asking us about!

Many thanks for your help,

Best wishes, Emma

Emma Showan

Senior Planning Officer

Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils

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From:chris
Sent:18 Jun 2018 13:48:43 +0100
To:Emma Showan
Cc:DBriggs [REDACTED]
Subject:Re: Nursery outdoor space requirements [OFFICIAL]
Importance:Normal

Hi Emma,

That is good news from Tristan . I have attached below my original response to the question of outside space raised by Mr & Mrs Rubens consultant.

Response – The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage provides the following guidance

“Providers must provide access to an outdoor play area or, if that is not possible, ensure that outdoor activities are planned and taken on a daily basis (unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example unsafe weather conditions).”

The great barn is surrounded by over 200 acres of pasture land and the children will have the opportunity to undertake “outdoor activities” exploring their natural surroundings under supervision. The farm setting provides an ideal location for the children to connect with the countryside and explore nature without having to resort to formal play areas.

As stated Ofsted do not require formal outside space set aside for the sole use of the nursery. One of the prime reasons we are interested in the Barn is the location that allows access to the fields surrounding it. The children are supervised to explore the fields, woods and river area when the cattle are not in residence . We do not operate a free flow system within our existing nursery nor will we propose this at The Barn. It is not an Ofsted requirement.

A large number of nurserys take their children on regular "outings" to explore the local parks, woods etc, this is exactly how we will approach it at The Great Barn , only all of that will be on our doorstep and directly accessible .

I hope this answers the question, but please don't hesitate to ask if you need further clarification .

Kind Regards

Chris

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

From: Emma Showan

Date: 18/06/2018 12:51 (GMT+00:00)

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: "DBriggs [REDACTED]"

Subject: Nursery outdoor space requirements [OFFICIAL]

Hello Chris and David,

In light of the additional info requested by the Planning Committee, Tristan has come back from highways with support in terms of the impact of the proposal on the highway which is good news. Please see attached.

In terms of the Cllr's other area of concern regarding nursery outdoor space requirements, I've received the following response from Ali at Bucks Education:

Whilst there is rule about internal space within a nursery which relates to the number of children which can be accommodated in an given premises, there are no specific regulations relating to outside space. That said there is an expectation that the children are able to 'free flow' between the inside and outside space with an emphasis on spending as much time outside as possible. The space requirements therefore should be sufficient, as far as possible, to enable a significant number of the children on site at any one time to be outside. This will obviously depend also on the ages of the children as if there were to be a lot of babies this might reduce the space necessary to meet this recommendation. Technically Ofsted would register a provider who did not have their own outside space providing they could evidence how the children could 'access the outdoor environment' but as a local authority we would not recommend it.

With this in mind, would you be able to provide some info as to whether you are planning to utilise any outdoor space as part of the nursery, and if so, where would this be/how would this work/would you be fencing off an area?

If you could confirm, that'd be great.

Best wishes, Emma

Emma Showan

Senior Planning Officer

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