

44 St Peters Street
Canterbury
Kent CT1 2BG
Tel: 01227 456633

e-mail: hannah.curtis@jtspartnership.co.uk

Our ref: HC/RLD/9722

20 February 2026

Planning Department
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 1SS

Dear Sir or Madam

**Proposed replacement timber shelter
Bluebell Barn Nursery, North End, London Road, East Grinstead RH19 1QQ**

On behalf of our client, Mr Nick Porter, we hereby submit an application for a proposed replacement timber shelter at Bluebell Barn Nursery. The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal under reference PP-14716457. The application comprises the following: -

- This supporting statement.
- Application form and ownership certificate A.
- Existing Site Plan; Drawing No. SK-000.
- Existing Roof Plan; Drawing No. SK-003.
- Existing and Proposed Elevations; Drawing No. SK-004.
- Proposed Site Plan; Drawing No. SK-005.
- Proposed Elevations, Roof Plan, and Section; Drawing No. VO-002209.

THE SITE

Bluebell Barn Nursery lies on the south side of London Road within North End, to the north-west of East Grinstead. The site is within the built-up area boundary, as defined on the Local Plan Proposals Map. The property is not statutorily or locally listed, is not adjacent to a listed building, and is not within a Conservation Area. There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on, or adjacent to, the site.

The nursery is set back in its plot with a car park to the front and a play area to the rear. There are two buildings within the site – Bluebell Barn and The Nest. There is an access down both sides of the main building.

The site was originally used as North End School until 1955. Its most recent use was as Fledglings Day Nursery & Pre-School until its closure in December 2023 due to the condition and layout of the building no longer being fit for purpose. The main building (now called Bluebell Barn) continues to be vacant

whilst refurbishment works are undertaken to bring it up to standard and is expected to reopen in Spring 2026. The Nest has been operating since January 2024 as a children’s day care nursery.

To the east and west are residential properties. To the south is an allotment. To the north, on the opposite side of London Road, is Tiny Tigers, a children’s day nursery. All other surrounding properties are residential.

PLANNING HISTORY

The planning history for the site, as it is available on the Council’s website, is set out below.

Application Reference	Description	Decision
GR/233/90	Outline application – construction of 4 self-contained flats	Approved 23 October 1990
GR/105/92	Change of use to B1	Approved 03 July 1992
02/01298/FUL	Replacement of first floor window by a door. New external stairs to this door (on the secondary smaller building on the site)	Approved 18 October 2002
05/00044/FUL	Erection of a single storey rear extension to provide new kitchen	Approved 11 February 2005
11/03054/FUL	Covered area and new mezzanine floor in existing hall	Approved 18 November 2011
DM/25/1394	Proposed single storey extension and porch	Approved 03 October 2025

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a replacement timber structure to the rear of Bluebell Barn, adjacent to the western boundary of the site. The structure would be 5m to the roof pitch and would measure 4m in depth and 7m in width. A 375mm high brickwork plinth is proposed with larch weatherboarding walls to the sides and rear, an open front, and a clay tile roof (refer to drawing VO-002209).

The structure replaces one of the same size formerly located against the rear elevation of Bluebell Barn, as shown in Figures 1-3. During the current renovation works, it became apparent that the previous structure was of poor construction, in a state of disrepair and needed to be removed for health and safety reasons.

The structure is a like-for-like replacement in terms of its size but in an alternative location and with side and rear walls. The walls will act to contain some of the noise arising from its use and reduce the noise impact on neighbours. The previous location of the structure obscured the rear elevation of the building and blocked daylight from entering the windows.

The proposed structure will continue to provide outdoor all-weather learning and play space whilst improving the appearance of the site and increasing the amount of daylight into the nursery.

PLANNING POLICY

The key planning policy documents are the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024), the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (2018), the draft District Plan Review (submission version, 2023) and the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (2016).

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

The NPPF sets out that the planning system has three overarching objectives (economic, social, and environmental) and requires planning applications to be assessed against these (para. 8). At the heart of the Framework is the “*presumption in favour of sustainable development*” (para.11) which, for decision taking, means:

- c) *approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date plan without delay; or*
- d) *where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application area out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - i) *the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii) *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework as a whole”*

Paragraph 85 states that “*planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development...*”.

Paragraph 98(d) states that, to provide the services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should “*ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community*”.

Paragraph 100a states that “*It is important that a sufficient choice of early years, school and post-16 places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter early years, schools and post-16 facilities through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications*”.



Figure 3 - Previous structure (now demolished)



Figure 3 - Previous structure roof (now demolished)



Figure 3 - Proposed location of new shelter (structure demolished)

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (2018)

Policy DP6 (Settlement Hierarchy) defines East Grinstead as a Category 1 settlement; a settlement with a comprehensive range of services and facilities and benefitting from good public transport provision. The policy states that development will be permitted within defined built-up area boundaries.

Policy DP25 (Community Facilities and Local Services) states that *“the provision or improvement of community facilities and local services that contribute to creating sustainable communities will be supported”*.

Policy DP26 (Character and Design) requires all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the area. The policy also seeks to ensure that development does not cause significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Draft District Plan Review (Submission Version, 2023)

Policy DPB1 (Character and Design) requires all new development to be of a high quality and respond appropriately to its context, be inclusive and prioritise sustainability.

Policy DPE1 (Sustainable Economic Development) states that *“sustainable economic development will be achieved by supporting existing businesses and allowing them room to expand”*.

East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (2016)

Policy EG3 (Promoting Good Design) states that planning permission will normally be granted where the form of the proposed development is proportionate and in keeping with the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the surrounding area.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key planning considerations are:

- Principle of development.
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- Amenity.
- Trees/ecology.
- Biodiversity net gain.

Principle of Development

The site is an established early years day care centre. However, since January 2024, only The Nest has been operating as a nursery with the main building, Bluebell Barn, closed due to not being fit for purpose. The replacement structure is proposed as part of refurbishment works to bring Bluebell Barn up to modern standards and back into use.

These types of structures are common in educational settings as they provide a covered outdoor area to enable outdoor play and learning in all weather conditions.

Informal discussions with the Case Officer for planning consent DM/25/1394 confirmed there were no issues with the previous structure shown in Figure 3 (which did not have consent from previous ownership and has since been removed).

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

The site is located within the built-up area and has an established use as a nursery. The proposed structure is to the rear of the site, has a small footprint, is single storey, and respects the existing form and appearance of the building. The proposal will create an attractive, functional addition to the nursery whilst remaining subservient.

Amenity

The structure is proposed to the south of the main building and would be screened from London Road by Bluebell Barn and from the neighbour to the west (No.7) by The Nest. Given the modest nature of the proposal, the separation distance from the rear elevation of 7 London Road (approx. 22 metres) and the intervening built form of The Nest, it is not considered that the proposal would be harmful to neighbouring residential amenity.

Trees/Ecology/Biodiversity Net Gain

There is no habitat on the site. To the front of the building is a tarmac car park. To the rear of the building is a children's outdoor play area which comprises tarmac and artificial grass (see Figures 4 & 5).



Figures 4 & 5 – Sealed surfaces to the front and rear of the building. No habitat is present on site.

In accordance with Schedule 7A of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by The Environment Act 2021), from 02 April 2024, all developments, subject to some exemptions, are required to provide biodiversity net gain of at least 10%.

The biodiversity net gain regulations include a 'de minimis' exemption. In order for this exemption to apply, the following conditions must be met:

- The development must not impact on any onsite priority habitat; and
- If there is an impact on other onsite habitat, that impact must be on less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero and on less than 5 metres of onsite linear habitat.

The red line application site is a wholly sealed surface which is classified as developed land with a biodiversity value of zero under the statutory biodiversity metric. There is no onsite priority, or other, habitat. The proposed scheme meets the de minimis exemption and is exempt from providing biodiversity net gain.

Other Considerations

Flood Risk: The site is within Flood Zone 1, where there is a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. The site area is below 1ha and a flood risk assessment is not required.

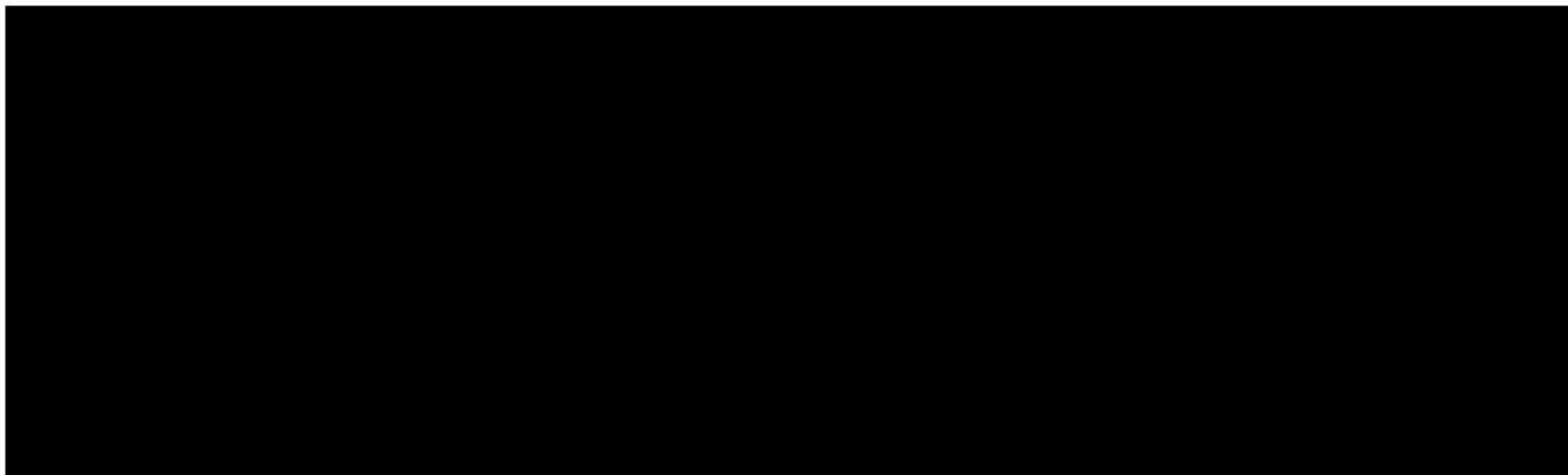
Highways and Parking: The proposal will not affect the existing access or parking arrangements.

CONCLUSION

It is proposed to replace the existing timber shelter with a like-for-like replacement in an alternative location at Bluebell Barn Nursery. The replacement structure is proposed as part of refurbishment works to bring Bluebell Barn up to modern standards and back into use. The proposal is compliant with relevant national and local policies.

The statutory planning application fee amounts to £298 and this has been paid online via the Planning Portal. Please contact me should you require any further information.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Hannah Curtis.

Hannah Curtis BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI
For and on behalf of The JTS Partnership LLP