



14th August 2026

Eamonn O'Connor
Kingsway Nurseries
14 Kingsway
London
SW14 7HS

22-24 Sussex Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex – Application ref: DM/26/1779 - Query re: Design of Proposed Entrance via Timber Gate and Fence

Dear Eamonn,

Thanks for your query regarding the design of the proposed entrance to the Kingsway Nurseries site in Haywards Heath. We understand that during your recent site visit with the case officer for planning application ref: DM/26/1779 a query was raised as to whether we could reduce the depth of the proposed timber gate and fence such that they sit more flush with the front facade of the existing building.

We believe there are two areas of consideration here, the practical (functional) and the aesthetic (streetscene). We address both aspects below.

The practical purpose of the new gate and fence is to provide a secure area, with a single point of entry, from which the nursery rooms (i.e. baby rooms, toddler room and pre-school rooms) can be accessed. This feature is important from a safeguarding perspective. Considering the layout of the nursery rooms within the scheme, it is necessary for us to make use of the existing entrance door to the northeast corner of the building to provide access to the baby rooms and toddler room, and doors to the rear of the existing building to provide access to the pre-school rooms. As the baby and toddler access door sits within the front facade of the existing building, it is necessary for the secure enclosure to be forward of the front facade so that access to this door can be made from within the secure area.

With regards to the extent to which the timber gate and fence are proud of the front facade, this has been determined by what we consider to be a comfortable margin between the entrance door and timber fence. It may be possible for us to reduce this margin, however, in the interest of comfort, our preference would be to retain the space as currently drawn. It would not be possible to remove the parts of the timber gate and fence that sit proud of the front facade and preserve the proposed building layout, i.e. this change would require a significant redesign and would likely reduce efficiency of the plan with regards to providing the areas required for nursery rooms.

From an aesthetic consideration, it is recognised that the proposed timber gate and fence will be visually prominent due to being proud of the existing front facade, and as such they have been designed to read as an interesting and attractive addition to the streetscene.

We note that we already have a fixed masonry access feature on the current entrance to the site. This is to provide the necessary ramp for those with disabilities to the front entrance. Arguably, we are replacing this with a different form of access feature and this time in a "softer" and more replaceable material if required in the future. The materials and appearance of the timber gate and fence are distinct from those of the main building, so as not to read as an extension of the existing mass, hence they have been detailed with a more delicate and light-weight appearance.

We are aware of the "temporary" items on the site frontage next door. These include a mobile coffee vehicle and two tall heavy-duty planters each side of the site boundary, presumably to provide a sense of enclosure to outdoor seating. In practical terms, I suspect our outdoor entrance feature would be easier to move (either in the short or longer term) than those planters. In any event, we consider there to be a positive relationship between the proposed entrance and the neighbouring pavement coffee shop, as both form distinctive 'active' parts of the streetscene.

In policy terms, the street frontage in this area does not lie within a Conservation area or special character area, where it may be important to control building forms and settings. Instead, it is a recognised secondary shopping frontage which provides a range of important and valuable services to the community. In such areas it is normally important to generate footfall, with easy passage for pedestrians and to promote a sense of vitality and activity. In this respect, we note that all the other shop frontages (with the exception of our coffee shop neighbour) are protecting their frontage behind the pavement for offstreet customer parking. Whilst this may provide convenient parking for those fortunate to find a space, in our view it does not necessarily create an attractive or convenient streetscene for pedestrians and those with restricted mobility. Also, in visual terms, a line of parked cars is neither inherently attractive and also arguably obscures shop frontages.

Our proposal is very much based on attracting a particular client group into this frontage who will be accessing the nursery on foot and will need a secure and protected area to help access different parts of the building.

We do not offer these thoughts as a criticism of the rest of the Local shopping frontage but rather to offer an argument as to why conformity with the neighbouring building line may not necessarily be a good thing and that some variety may even add to the visitor attractiveness to the centre.

In summary, the proposed timber gate and fence are a necessary part of the current scheme and cannot be significantly altered without the need for nursery rooms to be redesigned in a manner that may harm efficiency. We recognise that the proposed entrance will be visually prominent and have sought to design the addition in a manner that is appropriate to this condition. We hope the above provides useful further information with regards to the proposals. If you have any further queries, please let us know.

Best regards,



Samuel Chisholm
Director