DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	**H09-0498-26**	**Applicant:**	**Country Kids Day Nursery**
Proposal:	Proposed extensions and alterations to children's day nursery to provide additional nursery accommodation, staff facilities, associated parking formalisation, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements		
Location:	Country Kids Day Nursery Main Road Holbeach Drove		
Terminal Date:	27th July 2026		

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

01	Spatial Strategy
02	Development Management
03	Design of New Development
05	Meeting Physical Infrastructure and Service Needs
29	The Historic Environment
32	Community, Health and Well-being
33	Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network
36	Vehicle and Cycle Parking
APPENDIX 6	Parking Standards

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy
Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities
Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
SOUTH HOLLAND	0	0	0	1

INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD				
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	1	0
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	2

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Description of Proposal

This a full planning application for a series of extensions and alterations to a children's day nursery to provide additional nursery accommodation and staff facilities amongst other alterations to the site. The extension can be broadly broken into a two storey side extension, a pitched front extension, and a flat roof side and rear extension. All extensions would be rendered and painted to match the colour of the existing building. In total, these extensions would take the floor area of the building from 195.6sqm to 385.6sqm.

The two storey extension would project from the west elevation. It would measure 4.1m (width) by 6m (depth). The eaves height and ridge height would align with the existing extension on this side, at approximately 4m and 6.2m respectively. Concrete tiles to match the host are proposed.

The front element would measure 19.1m (width) by 3.5m (depth) with an east-west gable roof (ridge height approximately 3m).

The flat roof element would wrap around the east side and the rear. It would measure between approximately 5.6m (side element) and 19.1m (total width), with a depth of between approximately 5.8m (rear element) and 15.3m (total depth). The flat roof would be set at approximately 2.7m at its highest.

Site Description

The site is within the settlement boundaries of Holbeach Drove, as outlined within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019. The site is located fairly centrally within the settlement. St Polycarp's Church, listed as a non-designated heritage asset within the Historic Environment Record (HER), is located 50m to the east. The site is within Flood Zone 1.

The site is a former public house, turned nursery. The use has been in place since approximately 2014. The existing building features an unusual arrangement of extensions, featuring differing materials, heights and proportions.

Relevant History

H09-1243-07 - Full - Change of use from public house to residential - Refused 15-11-07

H09-0958-08 - Full - Change of use from public house to residential - Refused 28-10-08

H09-0636-13 - Full - Change of use of public house to D1 use for childrens nursery school and day centre - Approved 01-10-13

H09-0141-14 - Condition Discharge - Details of staff parking and provision for dropping off and picking up of children (Condition 4 of H09-0636-13). - Approved 07-04-14

Consultation Responses

The responses received from consultees during the initial consultation exercises, which can be viewed in their entirety through the South Holland website, can be summarised as follows:

SELCP Ecologist

Summary: There has been sufficient evidence provided to determine this application, and we are confident that 10% net gain will be achieved onsite for this application. We will require a biodiversity gain plan to be provided pre-commencement.
Documents reviewed:
·BNG Metric
·BNG assessment
·Design and Access statement including BNG details

Comments
Ecological Considerations:
·We have no significant concerns regarding the ecological impacts of this proposal. We recommend that the applicant remains ecologically mindful, and that all works cease if there is any risk of impacting nesting birds or protected species, with advice sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. We also recommend the inclusion of ecological enhancements on site, such as bird and/or bat boxes, either integrated into the building fabric or installed as wall-, pole-, or tree-mounted features.

BNG Comments and Notes to applicant
·Overall, the biodiversity assessment and metric calculations appear rigorous, and we can have confidence in their conclusions. In this case the metric indicates that 10% mandatory net gain can be achieved on-site with a predicted overall gain of 19.66% in Habitat units and 48.25% gain in hedgerow units.
Specific BNG condition request
·We will require a biodiversity gain plan to be provided pre-commencement.

Conclusion: There has been sufficient evidence provided to determine this application, and we are confident that 10% net gain will be achieved onsite for this application. We will require a biodiversity gain plan to be provided pre-commencement.

Conservation Officer

In close proximity to the site is the non-designated heritage asset of St Polycarp Church. The proposal involves the demolition of existing extensions and the construction of new extensions to the building. The proposed two-storey side extension is located to the left of the building when viewed from the principal elevation and represents the point furthest from the non-designated heritage asset.

The extensions most likely to be visible from the non-designated heritage asset are limited to single-storey elements and are therefore not considered to be visually dominant. The site is separated from St Polycarp Church by an intervening building and areas of established vegetation, which together are likely to significantly limit intervisibility between the two sites.

However, to ensure that the impact of the proposal on the setting of the non-designated heritage asset is fully understood, confirmation of the extent of this intervening screening would be helpful (NPPF 208)

Environmental Protection

No observations

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority

Initial comments, dated 11/06/26

Additional information required:
"Notwithstanding the formalisation of on-site parking, the information submitted does not demonstrate that the level of parking provision is sufficient to accommodate the proposed increase in children (30) and staff (+10). To enable a full assessment, the applicant is requested to provide a simple Transport Statement with the following information:
-A comparison of existing and proposed staff;

-Details of staff working patterns and parking requirements;
-A comparison of existing and proposed child numbers;
-A drop-off and pick-up assessment, including peak times; and
-A parking layout demonstrating how vehicles will manoeuvre at drop-off and be accommodated on-site.
In the absence of this information, it cannot be concluded that the proposal is acceptable in highway safety terms."

Further comments following receipt of transport statement, dated 30/06/26

The proposal seeks extensions and alterations to an existing children's day nursery, including the formalisation of parking provision. The existing vehicular access from Main Road is to be retained and no alterations are proposed to the point of access or its operation.

Following the Highway Authority's interim response, the applicant has submitted a Transport Statement (TS) addressing existing and proposed staffing levels, child numbers, operational arrangements, parking demand, and drop-off/pick-up activity. The TS demonstrates that arrivals and departures are distributed across extended periods rather than occurring during a concentrated peak period. Parent dwell times are typically short, averaging approximately 3- 4 minutes. Parking provision is justified and the nursery will continue to manage parking through staff parking allocation, staggered staff shifts, encouragement of car sharing, and operational management of drop-off and collection activity.

Whilst the proposal will increase nursery capacity, the additional demand is not anticipated to result in a severe impact on the local highway network. The use remains a nursery, access arrangements remain unchanged, and the proposed parking layout represents an improvement over the existing situation through the provision of defined parking spaces and improved parking management. Therefore, it is considered that the proposals would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

As Lead Local Flood Authority, Lincolnshire County Council is required to provide a statutory planning consultation response with regard to drainage and surface water flood risk on all Major applications. This application is classified as a Minor Application and it is therefore the duty of the Local Planning Authority to consider the surface water flood risk and drainage proposals for this planning application."

Public Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance, no letters of representation have been received.

Key Planning Considerations

Evaluation

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019 (SELLP), is the development plan for the district, and is the basis for decision making in South Holland. The relevant development plan policies are detailed within the report above.

The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, 2024 (NPPF) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Principle of Development

Policy Context

Spatial Strategy

Policy 1 of the SELLP sets out the settlement hierarchy in respect of delivering sustainable development, which meets the social and economic needs of the area whilst protecting and enhancing the environment; in order to provide enough choice of land for housing to satisfy local need, whilst making more sustainable use of land, and to minimise the loss of high-quality agricultural plots by developing in sustainable locations and at appropriate densities.

Policy 1 expresses this sustainable hierarchy of settlements, ranking the settlements deemed to be most sustainable in descending order. The most sustainable locations for development are situated within the 'Sub-Regional Centres', followed by 'Main Service Centres'. Lower down the hierarchy are areas of limited development opportunity including Minor Service Centres, with areas of development constraint comprising 'Other Service Centres and Settlements'. The countryside is at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy and represents the least sustainable location.

The site is within the settlement of Holbeach Drove which is classed as an "other service centre" within Policy 1. As such development will be permitted that supports Holbeach Drove's role as a service centre, helps sustain existing facilities or helps meet the service needs of other local communities.

Community Facilities and Need for Childcare

Several national and local policies relate, in part, to the addition of childcare facilities. These include Policies 5 and 32 of the SELLP and Section 8 of the NPPF.

Policy 5 of the SELLP, "Meeting Physical Infrastructure and Service Needs", acknowledges that residential growth throughout the Local Plan period would require necessitate proportionate growth of local services. Policy 5 acknowledges that there is additional need for education facilities throughout the District. While Policy 5 principally concerns primary and secondary education, the broad thrust of the policy can be extended to early years facilities. Therefore, weight should be given in favour of the proposal under Policy 5.

Section 8 of the NPPF concerns "promoting healthy and safe communities". Paragraph 100 states: "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". This is expanded upon later in the same paragraph stating that Planning Authorities 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". To this end, significant weight should be given in favour of this application.

Finally, Policy 32 of the SELLP concerns the proposals relating to community facilities. Whilst the policy is not explicit in stating the need for early years provisions, it does broadly outline that educational facilities will be required due to the residential expansion throughout the District. To this end, whilst there is no point within the policy which explicitly concerns the extension of an existing community facility, there is an underlying presumption in favour of such development within the policy.

Assessment

As the site is within Holbeach Drove, development within this location is considered appropriate. The proposal would support the settlement's role as a service centre and make a positive to local childcare facilities. In any event, the proposal relates to the extension of an established use, and therefore the principle of development would be acceptable.

The proposal would result in an additional 30 early years place, thereby meeting the aims of Policies 5 and 32 of the SELLP and Section 8 of the NPPF, as outlined above. Significant weight should be given in favour of the development as a result, with this being particularly acute in light of the existing over subscription of the nursery.

Layout, Design, Scale and Consideration of the Character of the Area

Section 12 of the NPPF, "Achieving well-designed places", states that the "creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve" and as such, it is generally accepted that good design plays a key role towards sustainable development.

Paragraph 135, contained within Section 12 of the NPPF, states that new development should

function well and add to the overall quality of the area (including beyond the short term) and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. This goes on to establish that it is important that new development should be of the highest quality, to enhance and reinforce good design characteristics, and that decisions must have regard towards the impact that the proposed development would have on local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting such as topography, street patterns, building lines, boundary treatment and through scale and massing. Developments should create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, among other considerations.

Likewise, Policy 2 of the SELLP outlines sustainable development considerations for proposals; providing a framework for an operational policy to be used in assessing the sustainable development attributes of all development proposals. Furthermore, Policy 3 of the SELLP requires development to comprise good design; identifying issues that should be considered when preparing schemes so that development sits comfortably with, and adds positively to, its historically designated or undesignated townscape or landscape surroundings.

These policies accord with the provisions of the NPPF and require that design which is inappropriate to the local area, or which fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area, will not be acceptable. Proposals for new development would therefore require the aforementioned considerations to be adequately assessed and designed, including the siting, design, and scale to be respectful of surrounding development and ensure that the character of the area is not compromised.

The proposed two storey element represents a continuation of the existing built form. Whilst it would increase the bulk of the building, the continuation of proportions would help to naturalise the proposal and make it appear as a more natural addition.

The proposed extensions, taken as a whole, would significantly increase the size of the building. That being said, the plot the nursery sits within is very large. The surrounding built form is not strictly characterised by its openness or use of space. A significant distance to the east and west boundaries would be maintained, retaining some of the openness currently in place. As such, the extensions are considered to be commensurate to the scale of the plot, and would not result in overdevelopment.

The single storey wrap around extensions are unusual. There are no comparable features in the area. Whilst it is recognised that the front element would be an extension of an existing feature, the relationship to the first floor windows is somewhat awkward, with the extension rising to the very bottom of the windowsill, when viewed from the road. Likewise, the eastern elevation would appear somewhat awkward, with the melding of pitched and flat roof elements. On balance, it is considered that these elements would not enhance the appearance of the building or wider area.

That being said, the rear elements would be largely hidden from the public realm, bar a small section of road to the west. The eastern element would also be hidden behind existing boundary treatments, reducing their impacts upon the area. Moreover, whilst the frontage elements are not overly well integrated into the host, they are not so incongruous as to be harmful to the appearance of the area.

Moreover, the existing unusual extension arrangements on the property mean that the existing building is not of significant architectural merit which requires particular protection.

On balance, whilst the design is not of high quality, and it is considered that the overarching aesthetic impacts of development would be negative, the tangible level of harm to the character of the area would be low.

Impacts Upon Resident Amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that development should create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policies 2 and 3 of SELLP sets out that residential amenity and the relationship to existing development and land uses is a main consideration when making planning decisions. Policy 30 relates to pollution, including noise disturbance.

The proposal would result in maximum of 30 extra children on the site. Details of existing admissions have not been provided and so a comprehensive comparison of impacts cannot be made. That being said, these 30 additional children may not be present on site simultaneously. In any event, such a significant increase in admissions would result in some level of increased noise impact.

The hours of opening proposed are 8:00 till 18:00. These hours are less than those permitted under H09-0636-13. These hours coincide with "working hours" and, whilst it is acknowledged that a rise in home working may result in local residents being at home during these hours, these hours are considered to be the least sensitive to noise disturbance. As such, whilst it is accepted that there would be some detrimental impact, this would not be so significant, due to the hours restrictions, as to cause significant harm to residential amenity. Hours of use were secured under H09-0636-13, and therefore, there is no strict need for their duplication here.

Adequate distance has been maintained to prevent overshadowing. Whilst the distance to the northern boundary is minor, the height of the rear extension is low enough as to prevent a harmful impact.

Three new north facing first floor windows are proposed. These would all face towards 10 Polycarp's Drive. Two of these windows which connect to the corridor, would replace existing bathroom windows, and the third would be in the staff kitchen. It should be noted that the existing bathroom windows were not conditioned to be obscure glazed, and, as internal alterations do not constitute development under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, the owners would be entitled to place a staff room or comparable feature which utilises these existing windows. Therefore, in light of this fallback position, the actual level of overlooking would not be substantial, as a comparable effect could occur regardless of this permission.

As detailed above, the scale and design of the proposal is considered to have no significant or unacceptable impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of adjacent properties or land users, when also taking account of the conditions recommended. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Section 12 of the NPPF and Policies 2 and 3 of the Local Plan in terms of impact upon residential amenity.

Highway Safety and Parking

Section 9 of the NPPF is titled 'Promoting sustainable transport'. Within this, Paragraph 116 advises that "development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios".

In respect of highway matters, Policy 2 details that proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to access and vehicle generation. Policy 3 details that development proposals will demonstrate how accessibility by a choice of travel modes including the provision of public transport, public rights of way and cycle ways will be secured, where they are relevant to the proposal. Policy 33 further reinforces the need for developments to be accessible via sustainable modes of transport.

Policy 36 of the SELLP, in conjunction with Appendix 6, sets out minimum vehicle parking standards and requires at least one space for every two staff members. No levels of parking for pupil drop off is provided in the SELLP.

It is considered that adequate parking for the needs of the business has been provided. Sufficient staff parking has been provided, in light of the shift patterns outlined in the submitted transport statement. The use of staggered drop off/ collection times would prevent an overly significant concentration of traffic at any one given time, thereby preventing significant highway implications.

The proposal would therefore be acceptable and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety in accordance with Policies 2, 3, 33 and 36 of the SELLP, as well as Section 9 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) requires developers to deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain using standardized biodiversity units measured by statutory biodiversity metrics. This is often referred to as the mandatory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.

"Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits".

The biodiversity gain condition is a pre-commencement condition. This relates to a condition that seeks, once planning permission has been granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and approved by the planning authority before commencement of the development, alongside the need to submit a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

The effect of Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition". The effect of this "biodiversity gain condition" is that development granted by this notice must not begin unless:
(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
(b) the planning authority has approved the plan, or
(c) the development is exempt from the biodiversity gain condition.

It has been demonstrated that net gain can be achieved on site. The comments of the SELCP ecologist have confirmed that the proposed methods are acceptable in principle.

Economic Sustainability

Paragraph 85 of the NPPF, contained within Section 6, states:
"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 88 of the NPPF expands upon this, in relation to the rural economy, stating:
"Planning policies and decisions should enable:
a)the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas (Ã??¢?¦)
d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities"

It has been stated on the application form that the proposal would support 10 additional full time roles. Regardless of the community benefits previously discussed, at its core the proposal would support the expansion of an existing business.

On that basis, significant weight is given in favour of the proposal under Section 6 of the NPPF.

Heritage and Conservation

The site is within approximately 50m of the Church of St Polycarp. This is listed in the HER, under reference MLI125591, and can be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset as a result.

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states: "The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."

The proposal is considered to have no significant detrimental impact upon the Church. The comments of the Conservation Officer are noted with regards to screening; however, two large hedges and a bungalow are present and this is considered to be sufficient screening. The two read as entirely separate units and the impacts of this development upon the church or its setting are negligible.

Planning Balance

As detailed above, Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposed design is awkward and lacks total integration; however, given the existing built form the effect would not be overly significant. That being said, significant weight should be given in favour of the expansion of an existing business and community facility, in line with the NPPF and SELLP.

Additional Considerations

Public Sector Equality Duty

In making this decision the Authority must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act. This means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to:
A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may include removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the special needs of those with a protected characteristic; encouraging participation in public life (or other areas where they are underrepresented) of people with a protected characteristic(s).
C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The PSED must be considered as a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s.149. It is only one factor that needs to be considered, and may be balanced against other relevant factors.

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case will have a disproportionately adverse impact on a protected characteristic.

Human Rights

In making a decision, the Authority should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as South Holland District Council to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Authority is referred specifically to Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property).

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case interferes with local residents' right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general public interest and the recommendation is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Conclusion

Taking these factors into consideration, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies 1, 2, 3, 5, 29, 32, 33 and 36 of the SELLP, as well as Sections 6, 8, 9, 12, and 16 of the NPPF. There are no significant factors in this case that would outweigh the benefits of the proposal; therefore, the planning balance is in favour of the proposal.

Recommendation

Based on the assessment detailed above, it is recommended that the proposal should be approved under Delegated Authority.