



www.Glebekids.co.uk

Glebe Kids Nursery, 30 Glebe Road, Letchworth SG6 1DR

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Planning Department

North Hertfordshire District Council

Subject: Change of Use Application for 30 Glebe Road, Letchworth Garden City

I am submitting this cover letter alongside my application for Full Planning Permission to change the use of 30 Glebe Road, Letchworth Garden City, from residential (C3) to nursery use (E(f)). This application, supported by extensive documentation, aims to align the property's designation with its long-standing function as Glebe Kids Nursery. We have operated at this address for 20 years, providing high-quality early years education and care to local families. My goal with this change of use is to formally recognise the property's use as a nursery, allowing me to secure a commercial mortgage and maintain the nursery's future within the community.

Context and Timeline

Since its purchase by Glebe Kids Ltd in 2004, 30 Glebe Road has primarily functioned as a nursery while retaining the main house as a residential structure. Below is a timeline outlining key developments in the property's use, providing clarity on its evolution and rationale for the change of use:

2004: The property was purchased by Glebe Kids Ltd with a commercial mortgage using the outbuildings as nursery spaces while I lived in the main house with my family. Only the office was located within the house itself, while nursery operations were centred in the garden outbuildings.

2005: Due to my residence at the property, I transferred the title to my personal name to secure a residential mortgage at a more affordable rate.

2006: With council approval, we expanded the nursery by converting the dairy coach house to accommodate two-year-old children, increasing our capacity to serve local families while preserving the property's residential character.

2017: My family outgrew the property, and we moved out, but the main house remained structurally intact and was rented by the nursery manager until 2022. Nursery operations continued unchanged in the outbuildings, maintaining the residential nature of the main house.

September 2022: Following the manager's departure, the main house became vacant. We made the decision to move some nursery operations into the main house, such as relocating the office and using the family room, kitchen, and lounge for specific nursery activities. This adjustment provided additional space for staff and children without increasing our capacity or altering the property's residential appearance. While some administrative and specific nursery activities were relocated to the main house in September 2022, the primary nursery operations, such as the use of dedicated rooms for different age groups, have remained consistent. However, with no one now residing at the property, a commercial mortgage is required, making a formal change of use necessary.

Current Use and Nursery Operations

At present, Glebe Kids Nursery operates across the main house and the garden outbuildings. Our Ofsted-rated "Outstanding" nursery is registered to accommodate up to 60 children, divided as follows:

Three and Four-Year-Old Room: Located in an outbuilding, this room serves up to 30 children, staffed by at least four team members.

Two-Year-Old Room: Housed in a separate outbuilding at the rear, accommodating up to 30 children, supported by five staff members.

In the main house, the additional rooms now serve specific functions that support the nursery's operations:

Nursery Office: Used for administrative tasks and management.

Staff Room: Provides a dedicated space for staff breaks and meetings.

Kitchen: Utilised by staff and shared with children for baking activities, such as cupcake projects for Mother's Day.

Family Room and Lounge: Used for quiet sessions and small group activities, particularly benefiting children with special educational needs.

Despite utilising additional space in the main house, the nursery's capacity remains unchanged at 60 children, with 16 part-time staff working in staggered shifts, ensuring a maximum of nine staff members on-site at any given time.

Commitment to Maintaining Residential Character

Throughout the years, we have remained committed to preserving the residential character of 30 Glebe Road. The property's structure has not been altered to suit business needs, and its external appearance is consistent with neighbouring homes. Our signage is minimal and only displayed during term times, preserving the

neighbourhood's aesthetic. The change of use will not affect the external appearance, and the property will continue to blend harmoniously into Glebe Road's residential landscape.

Parking and Traffic Management Policy

We understand the importance of minimising any impact on local amenities, particularly regarding parking and traffic. In 2016, I collaborated with the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation (LGCHF) to establish a robust parking and traffic management policy, which prioritises responsible parking and aims to prevent disruption to the neighbourhood. Our policy includes the following measures:

Parent Awareness and Agreement: Upon enrolment, each parent is briefed on the parking policy by the manager. This includes a detailed explanation of the policy, a leaflet, and a Responsible Parking Declaration signed by parents, committing them to adhere to our guidelines.

Neighbour and Community Communication: Our parking policy is publicly available on our website, and we encourage neighbours to report any issues, which we can cross-reference with our record of parent vehicle details. Neighbours are welcome to provide evidence, such as licence plates or photos, to help us address any concerns swiftly and transparently.

Enforcement Procedures: We operate a structured protocol for managing parking violations. For a first infraction, parents receive a verbal reminder. A second infraction results in a formal written warning, and further breaches lead to the parent being asked to park in the nearby swimming pool car park, a five-minute walk away. In extreme cases, we reserve the right to review the child's place if parking issues persist. This approach has proven effective, as only three written warnings have been issued in the past eight years, with no parent requiring further action.

Active Supervision: Two staff members monitor parking at drop-off and pick-up times, reinforcing responsible behaviour. Signs are displayed outside the nursery and on our parent boards, ensuring constant awareness of the parking policy.

Regular Reminders: We send periodic email reminders to parents to reinforce our parking policy, particularly at the start of each term, further supporting a culture of compliance and respect for our neighbours.

Staff Parking: We have a maximum of nine staff members on-site at any one time. The nursery provides six designated parking spaces, meaning a maximum of three staff members park off-site. In practice, however, this is rarely the case, as three of our teachers walk to work, and two others car-share. This arrangement effectively minimises the nursery's impact on street parking in the area.

Supporting Documentation

To provide a complete and transparent record of the nursery's history, lawful use, and our commitment to the community, I am submitting the following documents:

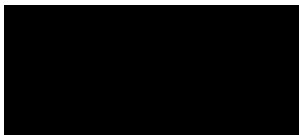
- Title Deeds (2004 and 2005)
- Historical Planning Permissions (1989 and 2005)
- Ofsted Reports (2005–2023)
- LGCHF Business Licences and Correspondence
- Valuation Office Agency Documentation (2009)
- Site Plan
- Travel Plan: Traffic Management and Parking Policy Documentation
- Community and Parent Testimonials
- Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) Application (Ref: PP-13533910)

Conclusion

This application for Change of Use seeks to formalise 30 Glebe Road's designation as a nursery, aligning with its established function and securing necessary commercial financing. The documentation provided covers every aspect of our operations, our commitment to preserving the residential character of the property, and our proactive measures to ensure minimal disruption to the community.

I am available to provide any further information as needed, and I appreciate your consideration of this application.

Yours sincerely,



Kent Atkinson
Director

Glebe Kids

"All children benefit exceptionally well from attending this caring and nurturing setting."

Ofsted report July 2023

