



TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

23 FARNCOMBE ROAD, WORTHING, BN11 2AY

**CHANGE OF USE FROM CLASS E(e) CLINIC TO CLASS
F1(a)**

PLANNING STATEMENT



1. Summary

This Planning Statement details the proposed change of use of 23 Farncombe Road from Class E (commercial, business and service) to Class F1(a) (education) to allow Cay College CIC to provide additional educational spaces for 10 to 14 year olds with special educational needs primarily from Worthing but also from Sussex.

It is proposed to accommodate a maximum of 15 students and 6 staff at the premises during normal education hours Monday to Friday following the West Sussex school calendar – 39 weeks per year.

The proposal supports Worthing Council policies and West Sussex County Council projections for need for additional special educational need places.

There will be no impact on the Farncombe Road conservation area as there are no changes to the outside of the building. There are also no proposed structural changes internally to the property from this change of use.

Overall transport impacts for the area as a result of this proposal will be lower than the previous use of the premises.

The proposal represents a sustainable, policy-compliant and locally beneficial change of use that delivers much-needed specialist SEND education places in Worthing. The proposed change of use should be supported and approved.

2. Introduction

2.1 Cay College is a not for profit community interest company (Registered Number 14962612) providing high quality education for students with special educational needs. Many of the young people have not attended school or college for long periods – Cay aim is to get them back into education, provide them with life skills and employment skills for them to be able to lead independent lives. With the majority of students we are achieving over 90% attendance. Our employment skills programme targets the type of employment most suited to our students, particularly modern skills such as pod casting and media editing, digital music production and will bring modern skills to Worthing.

2.2 Cay College commenced in 2024 and is based at Axtex House, IvyArch Road in Worthing. Worthing Council granted planning permission for the change of use at these premises to allow the college to be established.

2.3 West Sussex County Council stated in November 2025 they were expecting a 20% increase during 2026 in students with special educational needs requiring placement at independent providers such as Cay College. Axtex House is unable to accommodate more students. We have identified 23 Farncombe Road as a suitable property to expand our operations, specifically to house up to 15 students aged 10 to 14.

3. 23 Farncombe Road



- 3.1 The premises are a detached building previously used by Sussex Travel Clinic for travel related medical treatment such as vaccinations and is Use Class E. It is within the Farncombe Road conservation area. The premises are currently empty and unused.
- 3.2 To the north is the Red Cross centre and to the south an office block. At the front of the property is a drive with parking for 3 cars.
- 3.3 The premises are arranged over two floors comprising:
- Ground Floor: entrance lobby leading to a WC area on the left and a large office area on the right. Beyond this office is another lobby with a second external door, stairs to the first floor and access to another office area. These offices will be used as teaching areas and the toilet reserved for students.
 - First Floor: at top of stairs to left is another kitchen unit and toilet with an office area (this area will be used as a staff area), to the right is 2 more offices which will be used as teaching areas.
- 3.4 The building is fitted with modern fire and intruder detection systems and with modern electrical management. The landlord is currently renovating the interior of the building.
- 3.5 The proposed change of use of the premises from Class E to Class F1(a) (provision of education) will not require any changes to the outside of the building nor any structural changes within the building.

4. WORTHING PLANNING POLICIES

- 4.1 The development plan for the area is the Worthing Local Plan 2020 – 2036 (adopted March 2023). The site is to the east of the town centre, within the Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB), and the Farncombe Road Conservation Area.

4.2 Relevant policies in the Local Plan are:

- 4.2.1 SS1 Spatial strategy - The site is within the BUAB, where the spatial strategy permits new development, subject to compliance with other Plan policies.
- 4.2.2 SP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development supporting development within the Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB). NPPF paragraph 100 requires great weight to be given to the need to expand or alter schools. The Council has granted permission for the change of use of some premises from Use Class E to Use Class F1(a) but more capacity is required to meet needs.

The NPPF para 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. 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.”

- 4.2.3 DM8 Planning for sustainable communities and community facilities requiring new and enhanced education and community facilities in accessible locations where they meet local needs.



This proposal supports this policy by providing specialist SEND provision meeting an identified local requirement with no impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties.

4.2.4 DM11 Protecting and enhancing employment sites – the premises is currently empty providing no employment. The proposal will provide 6 additional teaching positions.

4.2.5 DM15 Sustainable travel – the proposal supports this policy, there are no material highway impacts and no mitigation is required. Specific details are:

- The previous tenant operated all day long throughout the year with staff present throughout and customers arriving all day requiring parking whilst awaiting treatment.
- The property has onsite car parking for 3 cars – this will be sufficient for the staff based at the premises fulltime. Other staff will be based at Ivyarch Road and use the parking there.
- Cay operating schedule is for students to arrive between 9.30 and 10am and leave around 2.30 to 3pm. This is outside of peak travel hours with those students travelling by car being dropped off requiring only temporary stops for the cars.
- Cay will operate the premises according to the West Sussex school calendar – 39 weeks per year. This means the building will have staff only present during the peak holiday periods.
- Cay policy is to encourage staff and students to use public transport or by walking / cycling. As part of this we provide cycle maintenance courses for our students.

4.2.6 DM24 Historic environment - there are no changes to the premises in this proposal meaning there will be no harmful effects on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy

5. Attachments to application

This Planning Statement

2026-01-22_title_plan_WSX16228_GOV.UK.pdf – street plan of premises

KD.1780_A.100_FARNCOMBE_EXISTINGPLANS.pdf – floor plan of premises

KD.1780_A.200_FARNCOMBE_EXISTINGELEVATIONS.pdf – external elevations of premises

Note – no plans for proposed plans and elevations have been included as there are no changes proposed from the existing.