

Planning Statement

Retrospective Application for a Garden Outbuilding

Pumpkin Patch Nursery, 40 Crescent Road, Worthing, BN11 1RQ

Local Planning Authority: Adur & Worthing Councils





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1.0 Introduction

This Planning Statement accompanies a retrospective application for full planning permission in respect of a small timber outbuilding situated within the rear garden of Pumpkin Patch Nursery, 40 Crescent Road, Worthing. The application is made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The application relates solely to the garden outbuilding. It does not seek any change to the established Class E(f) day nursery use of the site, which was previously approved by Adur & Worthing Councils, nor to the host building or any other element of the site.

This statement should be read alongside the following accompanying drawings:

- CCG 1000 Rev 00 – Location Plan (existing site location plan and proposed site block plan, scales 1:1250 and 1:500)
- CCG 2000 Rev 00 – Plans and Elevations (proposed floor plan and four elevations of the outbuilding, scales 1:100 and 1:50)

Site photographs and photos showing nearby buildings within the local streetscene are embedded within this statement at the relevant sections to support the assessment.

2.0 Site and Surroundings

The application site is a corner plot at the junction of Crescent Road and Westbrooke, located within central Worthing. The host building is a detached Victorian property which has operated as a children's day centre or day nursery on this site for approximately twenty years. The current use, Pumpkin Patch Nursery, falls within Use Class E(f) (provision for the care of children).

The site is bounded by Crescent Road to the west and Westbrooke to the south. As a corner plot, there are no immediately adjoining residential occupiers to the south or west; the nearest residential neighbours are Westbrooke Court (a block of flats) to the north and No. 1 Westbrooke (a detached residential property) to the east. Permitted operating hours for the nursery are 08:00–18:00 Monday to Friday, with garden use restricted to 09:00–17:00.

The rear garden is enclosed by a substantial mature evergreen (laurel) hedge of approximately 2 metres in height along the southern and western boundaries, set above a traditional flint and brick boundary wall facing the public highway. A 2.4-metre timber fence runs along the western boundary, installed in connection with the previously approved variation increasing the nursery's child capacity from 34 to 60.

The garden is laid out as a high-quality early years outdoor learning environment in accordance with the approved Management Plan, with zoned activity areas, sun shades, a mud kitchen, a quiet area and a free-flow relationship with the host nursery building.



Figure 1. Wider rear garden environment showing the established outdoor learning provision, shade sails and zoned activity areas.

3.0 The Proposed Development

The application seeks retrospective planning permission for a single-storey timber outbuilding located in the south-western corner of the rear garden. The outbuilding was completed in early 2026 and has the following characteristics:

- Footprint of approximately 4.5 metres × 4.5 metres (approximately 20 square metres).
- Overall height of approximately 2.7 metres.
- Single-storey with a flat felt-finish roof.
- External walls finished in treated timber weatherboarding.
- Doors and windows finished in dark grey uPVC.
- Surrounding context of stained timber fencing and existing high-level evergreen vegetation of approximately 2 metres.
- Mains electricity supply only; the building is not heated.
- Constructed on a concrete base; no trees were removed in connection with the works.



Figure 2. The outbuilding as viewed from the garden with doors open, showing scale, materials and relationship to the surrounding play environment.



Figure 3. The outbuilding shown alongside the existing mud kitchen and garden play features.



The outbuilding forms part of the nursery's outdoor provision and is used solely as ancillary covered outdoor space for children attending the nursery. It functions as a quiet and sensory space within the garden, providing children with shelter during inclement weather, remaining as part of the outdoor learning environment. Hours of use mirror the established nursery garden hours of 09:00–17:00, Monday to Friday.

It is important to note that the outbuilding is not an extension of the host nursery building and does not function as additional internal teaching space. It is a garden shelter, accessed only from the garden, and used in conjunction with the wider outdoor activities of the nursery. Children use the outbuilding while playing and learning in the garden, in the same way they might use the existing sun shades, mud kitchen or other garden features. As an ancillary structure within the established Class E(f) curtilage, the outbuilding does not constitute a change of use. It is purely physical, operational development supporting the lawful outdoor use of the site.

4.0 Planning History and Site Context

The site benefits from a long-established lawful day nursery use. The most recent material planning permission granted by Adur & Worthing Councils permitted the variation of condition to increase the maximum child capacity from 34 to 60 places. That application was supported by:

- A Management Plan setting out garden zoning, noise mitigation and outdoor pedagogical strategy;
- A Travel Plan;
- A Transport Statement and an independent Transport Report prepared by Reeves Transport Planning, both of which were accepted by the Local Planning Authority.

It is also relevant to note that there was previously a small timber hut in the south-western corner of the rear garden, dating from the period when the site was operated as a children's day centre by West Sussex County Council. The previous structure is visible in historic Google Street View imagery (referenced in correspondence with the LPA's Planning Enforcement officer). The applicant proceeded with the new outbuilding on the understanding that it represented a replacement of the previous garden structure. The applicant accepts the LPA's view, communicated in correspondence dated 22 April 2026 (case reference AWEN/0053/26), that the new building is not strictly a like-for-like replacement and that planning permission is therefore required.

In addition, the previously approved Management Plan included a structure described as a "Pergola with outside table and Art Studio" in the same south-western corner of the rear garden. The principle of a small built structure supporting outdoor early years activity in this corner of the garden was therefore contemplated and accepted at the time of the previous decision. The current outbuilding fulfils a comparable function, providing sheltered outdoor space and a quiet/sensory area within the garden.



5.0 Reason for Retrospective Submission

This application is made retrospectively at the prompting of the Local Planning Authority following correspondence from the Planning Enforcement team (case reference AWEN/0053/26). The applicant did not appreciate that planning permission was required at the time the works were undertaken: a timber hut had previously existed in the same corner of the garden during the site's earlier use as a West Sussex County Council children's day centre, and the applicant proceeded on the understanding that the new outbuilding was a replacement of that pre-existing structure.

Following a site visit by the LPA's Enforcement Officer on 15 April 2026, the LPA confirmed by email of 22 April 2026 that planning permission would be required as the new structure had not replaced the previous one on a strictly like-for-like basis. The applicant accepts the LPA's position, has cooperated fully throughout, and submits this application in good faith and within the 28-day period indicated by the LPA.

It is respectfully submitted that, in line with national Planning Practice Guidance, the application falls to be determined on its planning merits in the same way as any other application for planning permission, and that the retrospective nature of the submission should not in itself weigh against the proposal.

6.0 Planning Policy Context

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Of particular relevance here:

- Paragraph 8 – the three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental) of sustainable development.
 - Paragraph 85 – significant weight is to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, including in the local economy and through services that meet community needs.
 - Paragraphs 95–96 – the importance of providing a sufficient choice of school and early years places and the requirement to take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to applications for new and expanded provision.
 - Paragraphs 130 and 135 – good design and well-designed places that respond to local character and context.
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The proposal accords with these policies. It supports an established early years provider that delivers a vital community service; it is modest in scale and well screened; and it is of a reasonable design quality, using natural timber finishes that sit comfortably within the garden setting.

6.2 Worthing Local Plan (2023)

The application falls within the administrative area of Worthing Borough and is therefore considered against the policies of the adopted Worthing Local Plan (2023). The most relevant policies are:

- Policy SP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.
- Policy SP3 – Healthy Communities.
- Policy DM5 – Quality of the Built Environment (design).
- Policy DM6 – Public Realm.
- Policy DM8 – Planning for Sustainable Communities / Community Facilities.
- Policy DM15 – Sustainable Transport & Active Travel.
- Policy DM18 – Biodiversity, and Policy DM19 – Trees.

The proposal is consistent with these policies for the reasons set out at Section 7 below.

7.0 Planning Assessment

7.1 Principle of Development

The principle of a children's day nursery on this site is firmly established and was most recently confirmed by the LPA when granting the variation to increase the registered child capacity to 60. The application before the LPA does not propose any change of use; it concerns only a small ancillary outbuilding within the garden of an established Class E(f) facility. Pumpkin Patch Nursery is a valued community facility in central Worthing, and Policy SP3 (Healthy Communities) and Policy DM8 (Planning for Sustainable Communities / Community Facilities) of the Worthing Local Plan support the retention and enhancement of such facilities. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.

7.2 Design, Scale and Appearance

The outbuilding is a modest single-storey structure with a flat roof, a footprint of approximately 4.5 metres × 4.5 metres (around 20 square metres), and an overall height of approximately 2.7 metres. It is finished in treated timber weatherboarding with dark grey window and door frames, materials which are sympathetic to a garden setting and consistent with the timber boundary fencing already present.

The flat roof keeps the overall height of the structure to a minimum, and the building reads as a piece of considered garden architecture rather than a generic shed.

The scale, massing and detailing of the outbuilding are appropriate to its garden context and to its ancillary function. The development is consistent with the design objectives of Policy DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment) of the Worthing Local Plan and causes no harm to the character or appearance of the host building or the wider area.

7.3 Visual Impact and Streetscene

The application site is bounded along Crescent Road and Westbrooke by a traditional flint-and-brick boundary wall, above which a mature evergreen (laurel) hedge of approximately 2 metres provides a continuous, dense visual screen. The outbuilding is not visible from any public vantage point: the hedge extends well above the roof line of the outbuilding when viewed from either Crescent Road or Westbrooke, as illustrated in Figures 4 and 5 below.



Figure 4. View at the corner of Westbrooke to junction with Crescent Road, showing complete visual screening of the outbuilding by the mature laurel hedge above the flint boundary wall.



Figure 5. Long elevation along Crescent Road, showing the continuous evergreen screening above the boundary wall along the western edge of the site.

The development therefore has no adverse impact on the character or appearance of the streetscene or on views from the public realm, and accords with Policy DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment) and Policy DM6 (Public Realm) of the Worthing Local Plan. This is a particularly important consideration in this heavily screened, leafy residential context.

It is further noted that the introduction of ancillary single-storey structures behind traditional flint boundary walls is an established part of the local character. Our Lady of Sion School, a nearby educational institution operating in a comparable residential context on Crescent Road and Richmond Road, has several street-facing ancillary buildings of similar or greater height visible above its boundary wall (Figures 6 to 9 below). Those structures form part of the everyday streetscene of this area without harm to its character. The Pumpkin Patch outbuilding, which is fully concealed by the existing 2-metre evergreen hedge above the boundary wall, is consistent with, and considerably less visually prominent than, these established local examples.

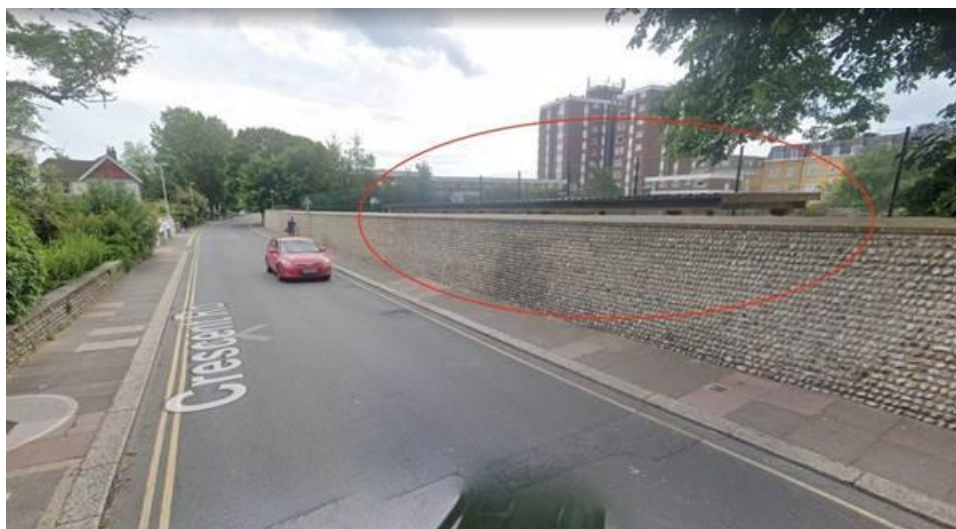


Figure 6. Our Lady of Sion School, Crescent Road: Street-facing ancillary structure visible above the boundary wall (highlighted).



Figure 7. Our Lady of Sion School, Crescent Road: Pitched-roof ancillary buildings sitting directly above the flint boundary (highlighted).



Figure 8. Our Lady of Sion School, Richmond Road: Single-storey ancillary structure visible above the flint and timber boundary (highlighted).



Figure 9. Our Lady of Sion School, Richmond Road: Another perspective of ancillary structure.

7.4 Residential Amenity

The site benefits from an unusually advantageous relationship with neighbouring properties: as a corner plot, there are no immediately adjoining residential occupiers to the south or west. The two relevant neighbours are:

- Westbrooke Court (block of flats) to the north — separated from the outbuilding by the nursery garden, the nursery building, the on-site parking and intervening garden.
- No. 1 Westbrooke (detached dwelling) to the east — separated from the outbuilding by the full length of garden and timber fencing.



Figure 10. View toward the western boundary, showing concealment by timber fencing and planting.

The outbuilding is single-storey with a flat roof and is set tightly into the south-west corner of the site, screened on its south, west and northern sides by the existing 2-metre evergreen hedge and the timber fence respectively. There is no opportunity for overlooking of neighbouring residential property: the windows face inwards into the nursery garden, not outwards toward neighbours.

It is also confirmed that the outbuilding does not give rise to any intensification of the use of the site. The applicant does not seek any increase in the registered child capacity of the nursery, and the agreed maximum of 34 children using the garden at any one time, secured under the previous Management Plan, remains unchanged and continues to apply.

In terms of noise, the outbuilding is used solely during the established and previously approved garden operating hours of 09:00–17:00, Monday to Friday. By its nature as a quiet and sensory covered space, the outbuilding is associated with calmer activities than open garden play, and it provides additional acoustic separation between children and the eastern boundary. The provision of a sheltered covered



space within the garden therefore reduces, rather than increases, any potential noise impact compared with the equivalent activity taking place in the open. The mitigation measures already secured under the previous permission (acoustic fencing, zoned activities, capped numbers in the garden, trained Outdoor Pedagogical Leader) remain in place and continue to apply.

The development therefore causes no material harm to the amenity of any neighbouring occupier and accords with the amenity considerations within Policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan.

7.5 Safeguarding and Suitability for Use by Children

The outbuilding has been designed with the welfare of children using the space firmly in mind. It is fully enclosed within the secure nursery garden and is overlooked by nursery staff at all times during use, in accordance with the nursery's established Management Plan and EYFS supervision standards. The combination of the existing 2-metre evergreen hedging, the boundary wall and the fencing prevents external overlooking of the children using the space. The outbuilding has no heating, only an electrical supply for lighting, and is suitable for the type of low-key, supervised quiet and sensory activity for which it is used.

The provision of sheltered outdoor space is widely recognised within early years pedagogy as a valuable element of provision: it enables outdoor play and activity to continue in inclement weather, supporting the EYFS emphasis on children having daily access to outdoor experiences. The outbuilding therefore supports, rather than diminishes, the quality of the outdoor offer at the nursery.

7.6 Highways, Parking and Access

The outbuilding generates no additional traffic, parking demand or access requirement. It is wholly ancillary to the established nursery use and is used by children already on-site during the approved operating hours. The Transport Report previously accepted by the LPA in connection with the 60-place capacity remains the relevant assessment of highways impact, and that assessment is unaffected by the addition of this small ancillary structure. The proposal accords with Policy DM15 (Sustainable Transport & Active Travel) of the Worthing Local Plan.

7.7 Trees, Biodiversity and Drainage

No trees were removed in connection with the construction of the outbuilding. The mature evergreen boundary hedging is retained intact and continues to function as a substantial visual and acoustic screen and as habitat. The outbuilding is constructed on a concrete base of minimal extent and does not give rise to any material increase in surface water run-off in the context of the wider garden. There are no biodiversity or geological designations affecting the site. The proposal is consistent with the objectives of Policy DM18 (Biodiversity) and Policy DM19 (Trees) of the Worthing Local Plan.



8.0 Conclusion

The development as highlighted in this retrospective application is a small, modestly designed timber outbuilding situated in the south-west corner of the garden of an established and previously approved Class E(f) children's day nursery. It is fully ancillary to the existing lawful use, does not involve any change of use, and forms part of the nursery's outdoor provision as a sheltered, quiet and sensory space used by children during the previously approved garden hours.

For the reasons set out above, the development:

- is consistent with national policy and the relevant policies of the Worthing Local Plan (2023);
- is of an appropriate scale, design and appearance for its garden setting;
- has no adverse impact on the streetscene, being entirely screened from the public realm by mature boundary planting;
- causes no material harm to the amenity of any neighbouring occupier, particularly given the corner-plot context, established acoustic mitigation and the calm nature of the use;
- does not seek any increase in nursery capacity and does not intensify the use of the garden, with the agreed maximum of 34 children in the garden remaining unchanged;
- supports a long-established community facility and the high-quality early years provision it offers; and
- generates no additional traffic, parking or environmental impact.

The applicant respectfully requests that retrospective planning permission be granted.
