

Planning Statement

Application: Change of Use from Public House (Use Class Sui Generis) to Children's Day Nursery (Use Class E(f))

Site: The Silent Woman, Nabbs Lane, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5AU

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of The Silent Woman, Nabbs Lane, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5AU, from a public house (Sui Generis) to a children's day nursery (Use Class E(f)).

The proposal seeks to bring an existing building back into active and beneficial use by providing high-quality childcare facilities to serve Slaithwaite and the surrounding communities. The development represents sustainable development by reusing an existing building within an established settlement and will contribute to the social infrastructure of the local area.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises the former Silent Woman public house located on Nabbs Lane within the settlement of Slaithwaite.

The property occupies a sustainable location within walking distance of established residential areas, local schools, public car parking, public transport services, shops and community facilities. The site benefits from existing vehicular access and external areas capable of accommodating outdoor play and associated operational requirements.

The building is a substantial stone-built property that forms part of the established built form of the area and is well suited to adaptation for community use.

3. The Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the existing building to operate as a children's day nursery.

The proposal includes:

Conversion of the existing internal accommodation to provide childcare rooms, staff facilities, kitchen and ancillary accommodation.

Use of external areas as secure outdoor play space.

Associated servicing, parking, drop off and access arrangements.

4. Planning Policy Context

The application has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) together with the adopted Kirklees Local Plan.

The NPPF places significant weight on supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring sufficient provision of community facilities, including education and childcare. It also encourages the effective reuse of existing buildings and supports sustainable patterns of development.

The proposal aligns with these objectives by:

1. Providing additional childcare places within the community;
2. Supporting working families through accessible childcare provision;
3. Reusing an existing building;
4. Reducing the likelihood of a vacant building deteriorating;
5. Supporting local employment.

The proposal is also consistent with the objectives of the Kirklees Local Plan in promoting sustainable development, supporting community infrastructure and encouraging development in accessible locations.

5. Principle of Development

The change of use represents an appropriate and sustainable form of development.

Whilst the existing lawful use is as a public house, the pub has been closed for the last nine months and only open for six months in the last three years due to complaints and revoked license.

The proposed nursery will continue to provide a community-focused service that benefits local residents. The proposal will diversify local community facilities and contribute positively towards meeting increasing demand for childcare provision within the area.

The site is located within an established settlement where residents can access the nursery on foot, by bicycle or via public transport, reducing reliance on the private cars.

6. Design and Appearance

The proposal seeks to retain the character of the existing building.

External alterations are limited to the landscaping of the rear outdoor area and will be sympathetic to the appearance of the property.

External play equipment will be appropriate in scale and screened where necessary.

7. Residential Amenity

The proposed nursery use is compatible with surrounding land uses.

Operating hours are expected to be limited to normal daytime weekday periods, substantially reducing activity during evenings and late nights when compared with the lawful public house use.

The proposal is therefore expected to reduce late evening noise and disturbance associated with licensed premises.

Outdoor play will be managed through appropriate operational procedures and is typical of nursery environments.

Overall, the proposal is considered to provide an improvement in neighbouring residential amenity compared with the current lawful use.

8. Highways and Parking

The site benefits from existing vehicular access from Nabbs Lane.

Vehicle movements associated with the nursery will predominantly occur during morning and afternoon drop-off and collection periods.

Nursery staff and parents will be encouraged to walk, cycle take public transport or car share.

Subject to the proposed parking arrangements shown on the submitted plans, the development is not expected to result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

9. Economic and Social Benefits

The proposal will deliver a range of public benefits including:

Provision of additional childcare places.

Creation of local employment opportunities.

Support for working parents.

Continued occupation and maintenance of an existing building.

Increased daytime activity supporting the local economy.

Investment in an existing property.

These benefits attract significant weight in favour of the proposal.

10. Planning Balance

The proposal represents sustainable development that makes efficient use of an existing building in an accessible location. It delivers clear social and economic benefits whilst maintaining the character of the area and safeguarding residential amenity.

Compared with the lawful public house use, the nursery is anticipated to generate less evening activity, less alcohol-related disturbance and a more family-oriented community use.

Any impacts associated with traffic or outdoor play can be appropriately managed through planning conditions where necessary.

11. Conclusion

The proposed change of use from a public house to a children's day nursery represents an improvement in the current public house situation and an appropriate, sustainable and policy-compliant form of development.

The proposal will deliver an important community facility, support local families, create employment opportunities and secure the long-term beneficial use of an existing building.

The development accords with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted Kirklees Local Plan and there are no material planning considerations that indicate planning permission should be withheld.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.