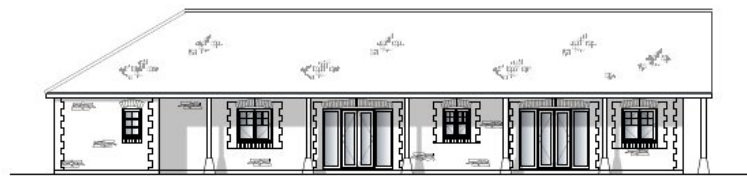


PLANNING STATEMENT

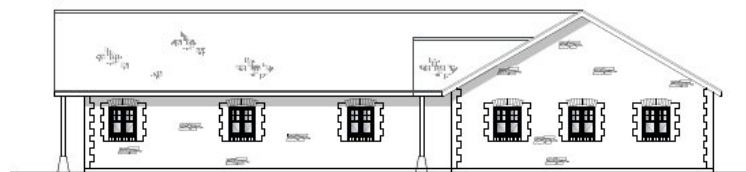
PROPOSED REPLACEMENT NURSERY BUILDING

BUTTERCUPS KINDERGARTEN, SPRAYS FARM, CALNE

FEBRUARY 2026



PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION
SCALE 1:100



PROPOSED EAST ELEVATION
SCALE 1:100

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

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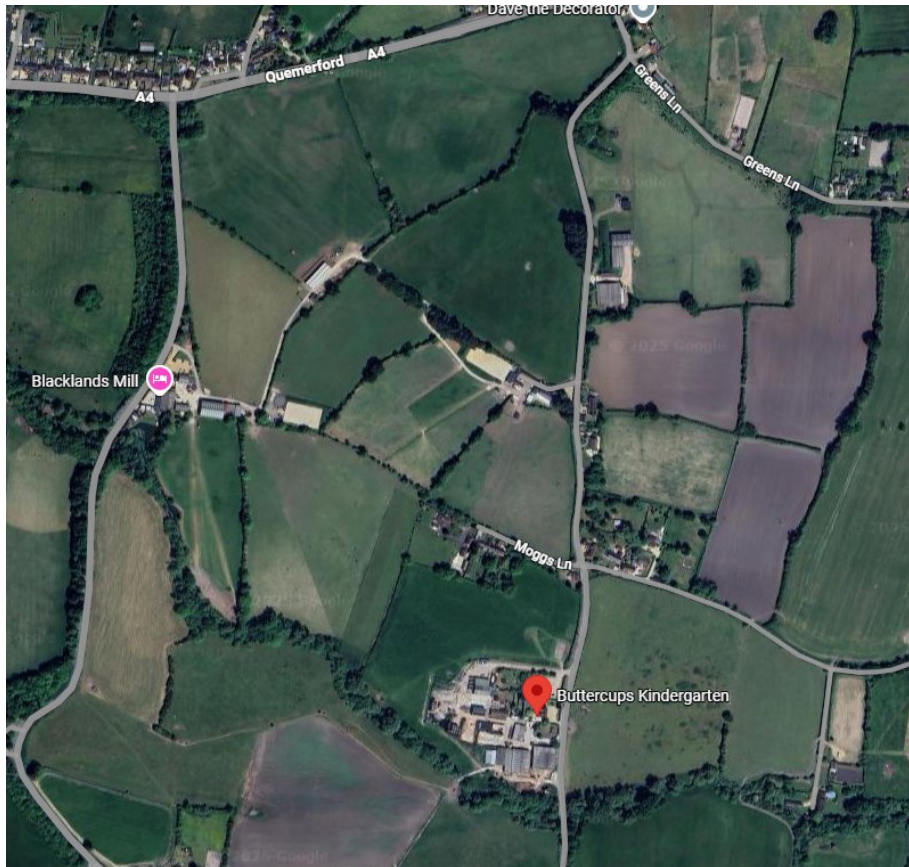
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by RAW Planning Ltd to accompany a planning application which is submitted on behalf of Buttercups Kindergarten ("The Applicant"). The application relates to Land at Buttercups Kindergarten, Sprays Farm, Calne, SN11 8QA (the "Application Site").
- 1.2 Full planning permission is sought for a purpose built replacement nursery building. The existing nursery has been in operation since 1993 and partly operates from the original farmhouse and partly from a single storey building that was erected around 2008 but which is in very poor condition. The proposals will enable a purpose built building to be constructed significantly improving facilities for existing and future children as well as enabling the nursery to expand its offering to the 0-2 age group. The nursery is also an integral part of the farm both in terms of a successful diversification scheme and the farm is an integral part of nursery life.
- 1.3 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the application and provides a summary overview of the application proposals as well as identifying the planning policy framework within which it should be considered and provides an assessment of the planning impacts of the application proposals.
- 1.4 Section 2 provides a description of the application site and surrounding area. Section 3 sets out the development proposals. The relevant planning policy that is applicable to the application is provided in Section 4. Section 5 assesses the main planning considerations and Section 6 sets out a summary and conclusions.

2. THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 Buttercups Kindergarten is located approximately 2km south east of the market town of Calne at Sprays Farm as identified on the aerial photo below (by the red balloon).



- 2.2 Buttercups Kindergarten was established in 1993 by Rob Hislop who owns and runs Sprays Farm. The farm is a Dairy Farm with a current herd of 180 cows. The nursery is managed by a full time manager but is an integral part of the farming business with the nursery's ethos being to offer children a world of learning experiences based around the site's location in the countryside and on a working farm. Further information about the nursery can be found on their website at <https://buttercupskindergarten.co.uk/>.
- 2.3 The nursery currently operates from the original farmhouse which is a two storey stone built cottage fronting onto the lane serving the farm. The ground floor of the property forms part of the nursery and Mr Rob Hislop lives on the first floor (sharing kitchen facilities with the nursery). Planning permission was granted to extend the nursery in 2008 (LPA ref: N/08/00137/FUL) with a single storey rear extension which forms the main pre-school area. The single storey extension is in very poor condition and is no longer fit for purpose. Likewise, the ground floor of the former farmhouse is unsuitable for the operation of a children's nursery and is inflexible in terms of enabling facilities to be adapted.

Furthermore, the sharing of facilities between the nursery and Mr Hislop is unsustainable. Whilst the nursery is located on a farm and in the countryside its current external space is also limited and restricted by the existing configuration of buildings.

- 2.4 The nursery is currently accessed from the lane serving the farm to the front (east) and car parking is within a gravel area to the front of the former farmhouse. Photos of the existing nursery are inserted below.



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- 2.5 The nursery is located towards the north east corner of the complex of farm buildings with a parcel of vacant land to the north upon which the replacement purpose built nursery is proposed to be located. The wider farm buildings are located to the south and west and there are separate farm entrances to the north and south of the nursery. Planning permission (LPA ref: PL/2022/04704) was granted in 2022 for a rural workers dwelling in association with Sprays Farm on land to the north of the application site.
- 2.6 The application site lies outside the North Wessex Downs National Landscape although the designation washes over land to the east. The nearest public rights of way (PRoW) are located circa 200m south of the farm buildings (CHER42A) and 250m east of the proposed nursery site (CHER40A). Whilst the River Marden is located to the south of the farm the application site and wider farm lie in flood zone 1 which has the lowest probability of flooding.

3. THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS

3.1 Full planning permission is sought for:

“Erection of replacement children’s nursery building together with garden area and car parking. Demolition of existing single storey nursery buildings and reinstated of two storey element to a dwellinghouse with associated works”.

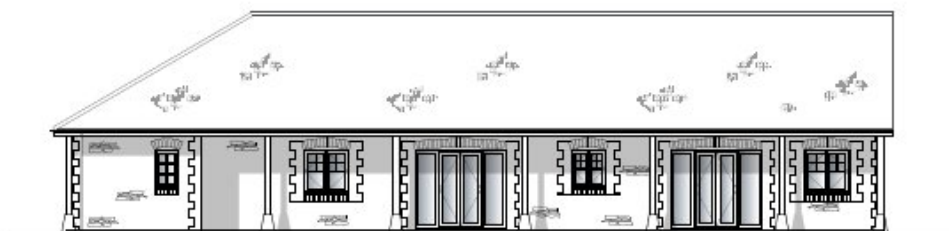
3.2 A single storey purpose built nursery building is proposed to be built on vacant land to the north of the existing nursery building. The building would provide dedicated rooms for each age group to enable children to be appropriately grouped. The new purpose built building would also enable the nursery to expand its provision into the early 0-2 years which it cannot currently provide. The absence of this age group provision can pose difficulties for working parents with 2 children below school age and the need to find alternative provision for the youngest child until they are 2. The new building will also enable all staff facilities (i.e. kitchen, toilets, storage and office) to be provided in one place and will remove the unsustainable sharing of facilities between the nursery and Mr Hislop.

3.3 The proposals will enable the nursery to expand from a capacity of 42 children to 68 children, with the age mix and staff provision set out below:

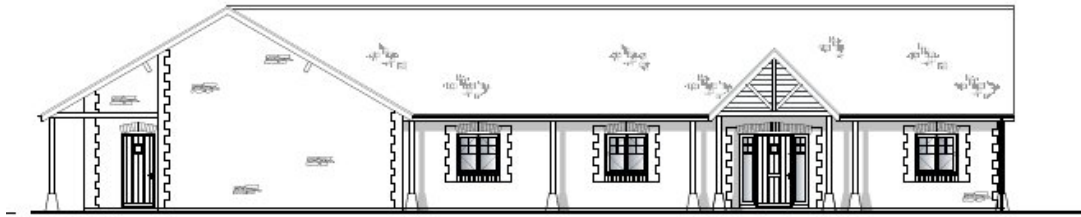
Age Groups	Existing number of children & staff	Proposed number of children & staff
Under 2 year olds	0	11
2-3 year olds	15 children & 5 staff	25 children & 9 staff
3+ year olds	27 children & 4 staff	32 children & 4 staff

3.4 The building would be L-shaped maximising the extent of external walls for light and ventilation and provision of opening doors into play space. The building will be single storey in height optimising its usability and ensuring the building is visually subservient to the neighbouring dwelling.

3.5 Materials will be natural stone coursed walls with brick quoins and concrete double roan roof tiles. Copies of the proposed elevations are inserted below.

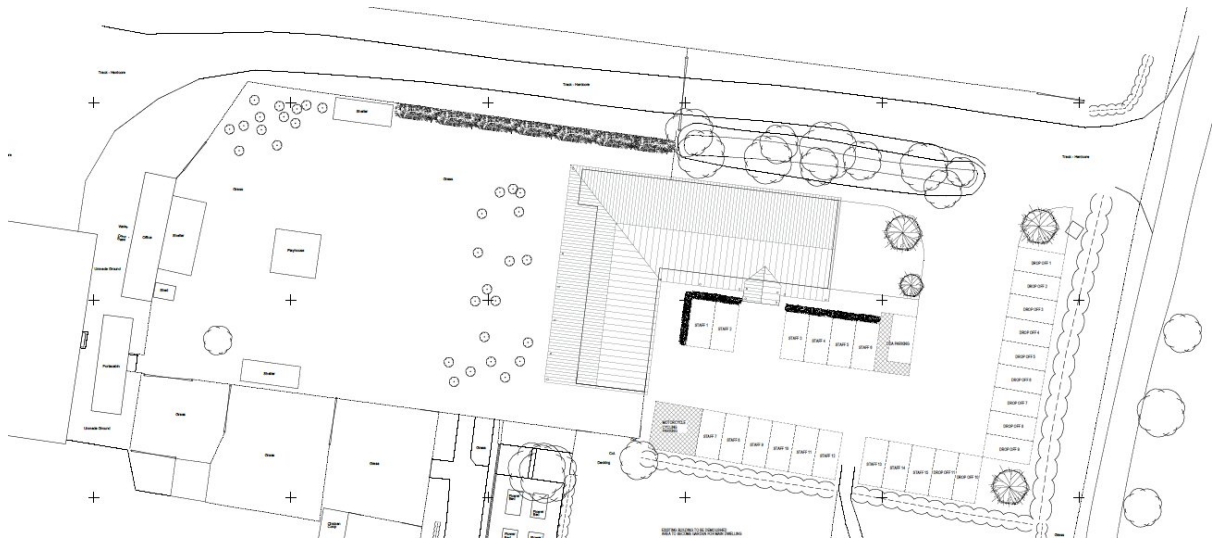


PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION



PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION

- 3.6 A purpose designed garden area would be provided to the rear of the nursery enabling children to have access to a grassed area with ample space for play equipment and for games and activities to take place and all ages to play separately from each other.
- 3.7 The nursery would be accessed via the existing northern farm access and would lead directly into a dedicated car park providing space for the parking of 15 staff cars as well as 11 parent drop off spaces. A copy of the proposed Site Plan is inserted below.



- 3.8 As part of the proposals the existing single storey extension to the existing nursery will be demolished and the former farmhouse reinstated as a dwelling for Mr Hislop.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is considered to be a material consideration which attracts significant weight.

4.2 This section refers to relevant national planning policy and guidance as well as Development Plan policies that provide the planning policy framework for this application that should be considered. It deals with the following layers of policy and guidance:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and
- The Development Plan (including Neighbourhood Plans).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.3 The NPPF outlines national guidance and the Government's policies on the many different aspects of planning. The latest version of the NPPF was published in December 2024.

4.4 Paragraph 2 explains that planning law requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.5 Paragraph 10 confirms that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4.6 Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 goes on to state that for decision-taking this means:

“c) Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

4.7 Section 6 deals with building a strong, competitive economy and is therefore relevant given that the nursery is a local employer as well as provider of childcare. Paragraph 85 states that 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 local business needs.

4.8 Paragraph 88 states that planning policies and decisions should enable:

- The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings.
- The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.
- The retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities.

- 4.9 Paragraph 89 states that planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport.
- 4.10 Section 8 is entitled 'promoting healthy and safe communities'. Paragraph 100 states that 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. The paragraph continues to state that local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education.
- 4.11 Section 12 is entitled 'achieving well-designed places'. Paragraph 131 explains that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 135 sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments would add to the overall quality of their area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.
- 4.12 Section 15 is entitled 'conserving and enhancing the natural environment'. The site lies outside but adjacent to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and as such paragraph 189 is of relevance stating that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes (together with National Parks and the Broads) which have the highest status of protection in relation to those issues.

The Development Plan

- 4.13 The Statutory Development Plan covering the application site comprises the:
- Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015);
 - Saved Policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (2011) – there are no policies relevant to this application.
 - Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan (2023-2038), made March 2025

Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

- 4.14 There are no Core Strategy policies that directly relate to the proposals for a replacement children's nursery or to such development in the countryside. As such the most relevant policies are considered to be as follows:
- 4.15 **Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and geodiversity)** states that developments should attempt to conserve and preserve sites for their ecological value, as part of this the policy expects there should be no net loss gain of the local biodiversity resource.
- 4.16 **Core Policy 51 (Landscape)** focuses on protecting, conserving, and enhancing landscape character, with particular attention to National Landscapes (formerly AONBs). Development must avoid harmful impacts on landscape character, and any negative effects should be mitigated through sensitive design and landscape measures. Proposals must respect the distinctive features of the landscape, such as natural elements, settlement character, views, and tranquillity.
- 4.17 **Core Policy 57 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping)** sets out 14 criteria which all new developments must meet, including alterations to existing buildings. Specifically, criterion (iv) requires development to be sympathetic to, and conserve historic buildings, and criterion (xii) requires the use of high standards of building materials and finishes.

Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.18 There are no Neighbourhood Plan policies that directly relate to the proposals for a replacement children's nursery or to such development in the countryside. As such the most relevant policies are considered to be as set out below.
- 4.19 The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the application site and wider land between Calne to the west and the National Landscape to the east as a 'countryside gap between settlements and landscape features'.
- 4.20 **Policy NE5 (setting of Calne and Calne Without)** states that proposals for new development must respect the rural setting of the Plan Area and accordingly must assess and address, with mitigation where appropriate, their impact on:
- a. the rural edges of the town and villages where views both in and out and linkages are an integral part of the character of these places
 - b. the physical separation (countryside gaps) that protect the separate identity of settlements and landscape features as shown in figure 5a (NB. As set out above the site lies within a 'countryside gap between settlements and landscape features').

c. the dominance of the natural features that provide the setting for these settlements such as the valley setting of Calne below rural hilltops

d. the rural qualities of the country lanes

e. important views, including but not limited to, the 3 views identified in the Design Guide, should be protected

f. Tranquillity and the need to protect against intrusion from light and noise pollution

The Policy continues to state that wherever possible, development should deliver enhancements to the landscape character including well integrated additional planting.

4.21 **Policy WS2 (Supporting local agriculture and farm diversification)** provides support for small scale development for business space outside of the Calne and Studley/Derry Hill settlement boundaries for schemes which would diversify and/or support an existing rural-based business, where they:

a. are appropriate in scale with their location, do not adversely affect the operation of nearby uses or unacceptably harm residential amenity

b. demonstrate how the historic environment is protected

c. demonstrate how ecological resources and networks are protected

d. do not represent unacceptable harm to landscape character or visual intrusion

e. would not undermine the delivery of strategic employment allocations

f. lead to no unacceptable impacts on the local transport network; and

g. are supported by adequate infrastructure, including broadband

h. Proportionate proposals that would increase local employment opportunities through increased employment at Forest Gate Business Park within the current site boundary will be supported.

4.22 Other relevant policies include NE2 (Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity) and BE1 (Design Principles for Local Distinctiveness).

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 5.1 NPPF paragraph 100 supports the provision of early years places stating that there should be sufficient choice of such places to meet the needs of existing and new communities and that planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement.
- 5.2 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF also provides support for the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, including through well-designed new buildings and for the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities.
- 5.3 The Wiltshire Core Strategy does not contain any policies that directly relate to the provision of early years childcare or to existing businesses in the countryside. The Calne Neighbourhood Plan does however contain Policy WS2 which provides support for schemes which would diversify and/or support an existing rural-based business. As set out above Buttercups Kindergarten has been operating from the farm since 1993 and is therefore a well established business that both serves the local community and acts as a successful farm diversification project. The application proposals for a replacement nursery building are therefore considered to fall within the remit of Neighbourhood Plan Policy WS2. The following paragraphs consider the proposals' compliance with the criteria of Policy WS2.
- 5.4 **Criteria (a): Are appropriate in scale with their location, do not adversely affect the operation of nearby uses or unacceptably harm residential amenity** – The proposed replacement nursery building is single storey in height so as to be subservient to the neighbouring original farmhouse (within which the existing nursery is partially located) and is also substantially smaller in scale than the surrounding agricultural buildings. The nursery will be located adjacent to the existing site and at the north east corner of the farmyard so as to not interfere or affect the operation of the wider farm. The Applicant currently lives in part of the farmhouse which is shared with the nursery. The proposals will enable the whole farmhouse to be returned to residential use providing a greater degree of separation between the nursery and farmhouse, improving residential amenity. With the exception of the recently approved rural workers dwelling to the north (which will also be occupied by the Applicants family) there are no other nearby residential properties.
- 5.5 **Criteria (b): Demonstrate how the historic environment is protected** – There are no heritage assets within or surrounding the application site.
- 5.6 **Criteria (c): Demonstrate how ecological resources and networks are protected** – A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) is submitted as part of the application. The PEA states that whilst the development will lead to the loss of small-scale and relatively low-value habitats, these impacts are not

considered ecologically significant in the context of the wider rural landscape and provided that appropriate mitigation and protection measures are incorporated, the overall impact on habitats is expected to be minimal. No evidence of any protected species was identified during the survey work although the report recommends the incorporation of bat and bird boxes within the proposed development.

- 5.7 **Criteria (d): Do not represent unacceptable harm to landscape character or visual intrusion** – This criteria is dealt with in more detail below under the heading 'Design and Landscape Impact', however in summary the proposed building would form part of the existing farmyard and would be subservient in scale to the neighbouring farmhouse and recently approved rural workers dwelling as well as the surrounding agricultural buildings. The siting, scale and design would ensure that the development conserves and does not adversely impact upon the setting of the National Landscape.
- 5.8 **Criteria (e): Would not undermine the delivery of strategic employment allocations** – This criterion is not relevant.
- 5.9 **Criteria (f): Lead to no unacceptable impacts on the local transport network** – This criterion is dealt with in more detail below under the heading 'Highway Impact', however in summary the proposals would replace an outdated nursery building with a new modern facility. Whilst the proposals would increase capacity by 26 children this would in part be through the creation of a 0-2 age group room which would increase the potential for link trips (i.e. parents dropping off 2 children at the same time) and would not therefore lead to a direct increase in traffic movements. The proposals have the potential to increase vehicular movements by a maximum of 26 parents per day and 8 staff. The proposals would therefore result in a relatively minor increase in vehicular movements.
- 5.10 **Criteria (g): are supported by adequate infrastructure, including broadband** – The proposals would replace an existing facility which is fully serviced by the necessary infrastructure.
- 5.11 **Criteria (h): Proportionate proposals that would increase local employment opportunities through increased employment at Forest Gate Business Park within the current site boundary will be supported** – This criterion is not relevant.
- 5.12 In summary, the proposals are considered to be in line with national planning policy and to accord with Neighbourhood Plan Policy WS2.

Design and Landscape Impact

- 5.13 The proposed purpose-built replacement nursery building would be single storey in height and L-shaped maximising its internal usability providing a central core of shared facilities together with separate rooms for each age group. The L-shaped building also maximises external walls and the ability for openings to the garden area.
- 5.14 A single storey building would also be subservient to both the original farmhouse within which the nursery is currently based and the recently approved rural workers dwelling.
- 5.15 The building has been designed to appear liked a converted stable building in keeping with its rural location at Sprays Farm. The natural stone walls would be in keeping with the neighbouring original farmhouse.
- 5.16 The nursery would continue to form an intrinsic part of the farm and would remain physically part of the farmyard located at the north east corner of the yard but contained by the recently permitted rural workers dwelling. The new building would therefore visually form part of the farmyard and a continuation of existing built form (as acknowledged in the Officers Report for the recently approved rural workers dwelling) and would be substantially smaller in scale than the majority of surrounding buildings.
- 5.17 Whilst the site lies outside the North Wessex Downs National Landscape it lies within its setting with the adjoining road (to the east) forming the boundary. The building would occupy an existing vacant plot of land within the wider farmyard and would not therefore extend built form into the open countryside. The siting, scale and design of the nursery building would also ensure that it is in keeping with the character of the wider farmyard.
- 5.18 The nearest public rights of way (PRoW) are located circa 200m south of the farm buildings (CHER42A) and 250m east of the proposed nursery site (CHER40A). The proposed building would be visible from PRoW CHER40A across the intervening fields, although would be viewed in the context of the existing agricultural buildings and the new rural workers dwelling upon construction and would be set behind an existing mature hedgerow. The proposed building would be completely screened from views from CHER42A by virtue of the existing mature tree belt to the south of the farm together with the farm buildings themselves.
- 5.19 Whilst the application site is located within an area identified as a 'countryside gap' the proposed building would be located within an existing farm yard and its development would not erode or compromise the physical separation between Calne to the north west and the National Landscape to the east in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan Policy NE5.

- 5.20 In summary, the proposed building would form part of the existing farmyard and would be subservient in scale to the neighbouring farmhouse and recently approved rural workers dwelling as well as the surrounding agricultural buildings. The siting, scale and design would ensure that the development conserves and does not adversely impact upon the setting of the National Landscape.

Highway Impact

- 5.21 The proposals involve a new modern replacement nursery building for Buttercups Kindergarten which has operated at the site since 1993 and was extended following the grant of planning permission in 2008.
- 5.22 The nursery currently employs 10 staff plus Mr Hislop; the Applicant who lives on site.
- 5.23 The nursery currently has capacity for 42 children between the ages of 2 and 5. The replacement building will largely just provide more modern facilities for the existing nursery provision, however it will also enable the nursery to offer childcare for the 0-2 age range. Whilst the proposals would increase capacity by 26 children this would in part be through the creation of a 0-2 age group room which would increase the potential for linked trips (i.e. parents dropping off 2 children at the same time) and would not therefore lead to a direct increase in traffic movements. The proposals have the potential to increase vehicular movements by a maximum of 26 parents per day and 8 staff, although it is likely that parents would have children across more than one age group reducing this overall total number of movements. The proposals would therefore result in a relatively minor increase in vehicular movements.
- 5.24 The nursery will utilise an existing farm access which also serves the recently approved rural workers dwelling. The access benefits from good visibility in both directions.
- 5.25 The existing nursery has evolved over time and as such does not have formal parking arrangements with the large driveway to the front of the farmhouse providing an informal parking arrangement. The proposals would provide a dedicated car park with marked out spaces for staff and parents. A total of 16 staff spaces will be provided together with 11 drop off spaces for parents. This will result in a significant enhancement over the existing situation.

Ecological Impact and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 5.26 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) is submitted as part of the application. The PEA states that whilst the development will lead to the loss of small-scale and relatively low-value habitats, these impacts are not considered ecologically significant in the context of the wider rural landscape and

provided that appropriate mitigation and protection measures are incorporated, the overall impact on habitats is expected to be minimal.

- 5.27 The PEA states that the timber clad nursery building was subject to a detailed Preliminary Roost Assessment, during which no features with potential to support roosting bats were identified. As the site supports habitats that may offer some localised value for commuting and foraging bats any new external lighting is recommended to follow best practice guidance. No evidence of any other species was identified although the report recommends the incorporation of bat and bird boxes within the proposed development.
- 5.28 A separate BNG Report confirms that the required 10% BNG requirement will be delivered on site through the retention of sapling trees and new tree and hedgerow planting.

Residential Impact

- 5.29 The existing nursery partly shares the original farmhouse for Sprays Farm with Mr Hislop (the applicant and owner of the nursery and Sprays Farm) and this will be returned into full residential use and will therefore be the closest property to the nursery. The recently approved rural workers dwelling will also be located to the north.
- 5.30 A children's nursery will be compatible with the neighbouring residential uses and will not lead to any adverse noise disturbance. The nursery will operate within daytime hours and is an existing use that is owned and run by the farm who occupy the two residential properties. The proposals will not therefore harm the residential amenity of any neighbouring occupants.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Full planning permission is sought for:

“Erection of replacement children’s nursery building together with garden area and car parking. Demolition of existing single storey nursery buildings and reinstated of two storey element to a dwellinghouse with associated works”.

6.2 The proposals will enable a purpose built building to be constructed significantly improving facilities for existing and future children as well as enabling the nursery to expand its offering to the 0-2 age group. The nursery is also an integral part of the farm both in terms of a successful diversification scheme and the farm is an integral part of nursery life.

6.3 Buttercups Kindergarten has been operating from the farm since 1993 and is therefore a well established business that both serves the local community and acts as a successful farm diversification project. Calne Neighbourhood Plan Policy WS2 provides support for schemes such as the application proposals which would diversify and/or support an existing rural-based business. The proposals would comply with Policy WS2 in terms of being appropriate in scale with their location and not unacceptably harming residential amenity, not representing unacceptable harm to landscape character or visual intrusion and not leading to unacceptable impacts on the local transport network.

6.4 The proposed single storey building would be subservient to both the original farmhouse and the recently approved rural workers dwelling as well as the surrounding agricultural buildings. The siting, scale and design would ensure that the development conserves and does not adversely impact upon the setting of the National Landscape.

6.5 The proposals will increase the capacity of the nursery by 26 places together with an additional 8 staff, although it is likely that parents would have children across more than one age group reducing the overall total number of additional vehicular movements. The replacement will utilise an existing farm access which benefits from good visibility in both directions. The proposals will also provide a dedicated car park with dedicated staff parking and parent drop off spaces marking a significant improvement over the existing situation where everyone parks on the hardstanding to the front of the former farmhouse.

6.6 In summary, the proposals will support an existing thriving rural business that was set up as a farm diversification project in 1993 and which continues to form an integral part of the farming enterprise. The replacement nursery will also provide significantly improved facilities for the users of the existing successful nursery business which has a waiting list. The proposals will therefore fully comply with Neighbourhood Plan Policy WS2 as well as Core Strategy Policies 50, 51 and 57 regarding the delivery

of high quality design and avoiding adverse impact to biodiversity and the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is approved.

RAW



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