

Our ref: 2025-032/GRA

Holy Trinity Proposed Nursery

Planning Statement

Site Address: Holy Trinity CofE School, Rickmansworth Road, Northwood, HA6 2RH

Proposal: Construction of a detached single-storey nursery building (Use Class E(f)) with associated outdoor play area, canopy, and landscaping works

Applicant: Holy Trinity CofE School

Agent: Metashape Architects

1. Executive Summary

- **Direct Assessment:** The proposal complies with the Hillingdon Local Plan
- **Key Benefit:** It provides essential community and early-years educational infrastructure
- **Policy Compliance:** The loss of residential garden land is entirely mitigated **with a Net Green Gain:** The scheme delivers a 22.2 m² net increase in high-quality soft landscaping (See Design and Access Statement page 26).

2. Site and Context Analysis

- **Location:** The application site lies within the grounds of Holy Trinity CofE Primary School
- **Existing Space:** The development footprint occupies the rear garden of the attached School Residence
- **Current Condition:** This garden area consists primarily of concrete and timber decking and it is segregated from the active school playground by a timber fence.
- **Heritage Status:** The site is not inside a designated Conservation Area. However, the school sits adjacent to the Grade II listed Church of the Holy Trinity.

3. Proposal Details

The scheme seeks planning permission for a detached, single-storey nursery facility to accommodate up to 20 local children aged 2–4 years:

- **Gross Internal Area (GIA):** 60.4 m²
- **Net Internal Area (NIA):** 59.1 m² (comprising usable learning space, kitchenette, cloakroom, and WCs)
- **Outdoor Provision:** A dedicated 27 m² wet-pour outdoor play area protected by an integrated roof canopy).
- **Access:** Children and adults arrive at the building through the playground via the existing entrance gates off Kewferry Road. The nursery offers morning drop-off between 8:30 am and 9:00 am, aligning with the main school. Flexible collection times are available at 1:30 pm, 2:30 pm, or 3:15 pm. Nursery places will be limited to just 10 children, the provision ensures any impact on local traffic and parking remains minimal.
- **Design & Materials:** Red brickwork to match the existing asset, metal standing seam cladding, and integrated photovoltaic (PV) panels (pp. 20, 24).

4. Planning Policy Assessment

4.1 Principle of Development & Community Infrastructure

- **Hillingdon Local Plan Policy CI1 & DMCI 1A:** These policies strongly support the expansion of existing educational facilities and early-years provisions to meet local community needs.
- **Justification:** The project optimises underutilized school-owned land to fill a clear local requirement for nursery places, directly aligning with borough infrastructure objectives.

4.2 Loss of Residential Garden Land vs. Public Benefit

- **Policy Context:** Local policies heavily resist losing residential gardens to prevent overdevelopment and protect biodiversity.

- **Overriding Factors:** This proposal justifies the change of use on two clear grounds:
 1. **Infrastructure Swap:** The plot is transferred from a residential curtilage to a critical community/educational use.
 2. **Quality of Land:** The existing garden is dominated by low-ecological value hardstanding and artificial decking.

4.3 Landscape, Open Space, and Green Uplift

- **Policy DMHB 14 (Sustaining and Enhancing the Visual Amenities of the Built Environment):** This policy requires developments to protect green infrastructure.
- **The Green Space Uplift:** Rather than reducing open space, the layout reprofiles the grounds to deliver a net gain of 22.2 m² of soft landscaping.
- **Quantified Changes:**
 - Existing soft playground landscaping: 74.7 m².
 - Proposed soft playground landscaping: 84.5 m².
 - New front entrance green space: 12.4 m².

4.4 Design, Character, and Heritage Impact

- **Policy DMHB 11 (Design of New Development) & Policy DMHB 12 (Heritage Assets):** New buildings must respect local character and the setting of nearby listed assets.
- **Design Response:** The building maintains a modest single-storey profile that prevents any over dominant massing near neighbouring boundaries.
- **Visual Integration:** The use of matching red brickwork and a feature brick motif ensures a highly sensitive, harmonious relationship with both the School House and the adjacent Grade II listed church.

5. Conclusion

The proposed nursery facility represents a sustainable, highly tailored addition to an established educational site. It carefully balances local infrastructure needs with strict urban design and environmental requirements. By providing a net gain in functional green space and utilizing high-quality architecture, the project fully conforms to the Hillingdon Local Plan (pp. 5, 24, 26). We respectfully request that planning permission be granted.
