

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0944 Removal/variation of conditions

Address: 371 GOSBROOK ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING

Proposal: Change of use of ground floor from Class D2 (Assembly & Leisure) to D1 (nursery). Prior Notification under Class T, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. Variation of Conditions 5 and 7 of application PL/15/1497 to allow an increase in the maximum number of children attending the nursery from 30 to 60 and an increase in the maximum number of children permitted to use the external play area at any one time from 10 to 25.

Applicant: Banana Moon Nursery

Received date: 15/07/2026

Target Decision date: 16/10/2026 (agreed extension of time)

Case Officer: Marcelina Rejwerska

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a children's nursery on the south side of Gosbrook Road on the corner of the junction with Mill Road. The nursery extends around the back and to the side behind the residential properties on Gosbrook Road to the east. The nursery has a car park at the front of the site with dedicated entry (Gosbrook Road) and exit (Mill Road) points. The nursery also has small outdoor play areas to the east, abutting the boundary with residential properties on Gosbrook Road and Champion Road, and the Caversham Coachworks garage. There is a flat on the first floor of the host building, while the nursery is contained within the large single storey extensions. The site is also located in the Air Quality Management Area.



Site frontage, photo taken by case officer on 23 July 2026.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Permission is sought to vary Conditions 5 and 7 of prior approval decision ref. PL/15/1497 to allow an increase in the maximum number of children attending the nursery from 30 to 60, and an increase in the maximum number of children permitted to use the external play area at any one time from 10 to 25.

2.1. Information submitted:

Location Plan

Cover Letter

Support Letter from Brighter Futures for Children (RBC), dated 2 March 2026

01311-Pulsar Acoustics-Gosbrook-RP-Rev00 Noise Impact Assessment

Noise Management Plan

26-905 - Transport Statement Rev E

Received 15 July 2026

Addendum letter to Transport Statement, dated 7 September 2026

Received 8 September 2026

26-905 - Car Park Management Plan Rev C

Received 25 September 2026

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- PL/26/0508 - Pre-application advice for forthcoming S73 application to planning decision PL/15/1497 to change the occupancy/ use of external play area conditions 5 and 7. Advice provided to the applicant in relation to the draft noise and transport reports.
- PL/16/2199 - Proposed conversion of 1st floor and part of ground floor (access only) from D2 (Assembly & Leisure) to C3 (Residential) to create 1 x 2 bedroom flat with alterations to fenestration (D1 Nursery use to be retained at ground floor) (Amended Description). Application permitted.
- PL/15/1497 - Change of use of ground floor from Class D2(Assembly & Leisure) to D1 (nursery). Prior Notification under Class T, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. Application permitted.
- PL/01/1208 - Proposed snooker room at rear of club. Application permitted.
- PL/90/0672 - Single storey extension to provide committee room and secretary's office relocated from existing first floor.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Transport Development Control – No objections to addendum letter, subject to conditions to secure car park management plan. No objections to received car park management plan.
- RBC Environmental Protection – No objections, one typo error noted in the submission.
- RBC Early Years Development – No comments received.

A site notice was also erected at the front of the site in the public interest. No letters of representation were received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

S73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides the ability to vary a condition on a planning permission. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 streamlined the procedure to enable local planning authorities to use its discretion on which statutory consultees should be consulted when such an application is submitted in order to speed up the system by being more flexible. This Statutory Instrument was accompanied by 'Greater flexibility for planning permissions' which contained relevant guidance. This states that a minor material amendment is 'one whose scale and nature results in a development which is not substantially different from the one which has been approved'. This is not a statutory definition and the decision on what constitutes a minor material amendment is at the discretion of the local planning authority but is considered to include, "any amendment

where its scale and/or nature results in a development which is not substantially different from the one which has been approved".

Section 73 of the Act instructs the Local Planning Authority to consider the variation to, or relief of conditions that are applied for, stating that "*if they [the LPA] decide that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions differing from those subject to which the previous permission was granted....they shall grant permission accordingly*" (s.73(1)(a)). As such, the Local Planning Authority can grant permission unconditionally or subject to different conditions or alternatively refuse the application if it is deemed that the original condition(s) should remain in place.

The grant of a planning permission under Section 73 essentially provides a new planning permission. It is therefore necessary to reconsider the overall development proposal against the development plan. The key issues for consideration comprise the principle of the development whilst having regard to the impact upon the character and appearance of the area, the effects on traffic generation and highway safety, amenity and the natural environment.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2026) (NPPF)

DM3: Determining development proposals
S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
S4: Principles of development within settlements
L2: Making effective use of land
DP3: Key principles for well-designed spaces
TR4: Street design, access and parking
P3: Living conditions and pollution

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction)
CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change)
CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage)
CC6 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)
CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
EN15 (Air Quality)
EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources)
TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy)
TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)
OU1 (New and Existing Community Facilities)

Supplementary planning documents/guidance

Revised Parking standards and design (2011)
Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

Other documents

Reading Borough Local Plan Partial Update Pre-Submission Draft (2025)
Reading Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2026)

Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. The submission draft of the Local Plan Partial Update was submitted on 9th May 2025 and examined earlier this year. At the time of writing, the examination-in-public of the partial update to the local plan is in the process of taking place. Stage 1 hearings were held virtually on 11th and 12th November 2025. Stage 2 hearings took place in February 2026.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remain very similar in the submission draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the determination of this planning application and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

6. APPRAISAL

Majority of the assessment undertaken under original application is not repeated within this report as it is not relevant to the purpose of this application. The following assessment relates specifically to those matters affected by the proposed increase in numbers of children and the increase in numbers of children being able to use the external play area at any one time. There are no proposed building works or physical changes to the building itself nor the wider site.

Condition 5 – capacity limit

The capacity limit is proposed to double the number of children attending the nursery at any one time (from 30 to 60 children). This is assessed in terms of whether the site is large enough to accommodate this increase, and whether there will be any resulting impacts on parking and highway safety.

The RBC Early Years team have confirmed that the nursery is registered with Ofsted to provide over 70 places based on their physical space (which is currently capped at 30 due to planning conditions). No works are required to construct additional facilities on site. A Transport Assessment has been submitted by the applicant to assess whether the increase in number of children spaces will have a significant impact on highway congestion and parking pressures.

Policy TR4 (Street design, access and parking) of the NPPF proposals to give first priority to sustainable modes of transport (walking, wheeling and cycle movements) and so far as possible facilitating easy access to high-quality public transport.

Policy TR5 (Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging) of the RBLP requires all development to provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the location and accessibility of the site to the sustainable transport facilities in the Borough.

No changes are proposed to weekday operating hours (07:30 –18:30) and no alterations to the site layout, access arrangements, or surrounding highway network. The uplift to the proposed capacity would be likely

to require only a modest increase in staff, anticipated to be in the order of around five to eight additional staff. This would bring the total number of staff in the proposed scenario to up to 22. Whilst approximately 60 children are enrolled at the nursery, not all children attend at the same time due to varying attendance patterns and the existing capacity restriction.

The site is accessed from the B3345 Gosbrook Road with entrance from Gosbrook Road and exit from Mill Lane. Parking and drop-off activity would remain managed within the on-site forecourt, which accommodates up to seven vehicles, with parents encouraged to use a circulate-in / circulate-out arrangement. Existing parking controls in the form of no waiting restrictions and permit holder only parking bays are in place on surrounding streets to discourage overspill parking.

In accordance with the adopted Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, a day nursery would be required to provide parking provision of 1 space per 3FTE staff and 1 drop off space per 10 pupils with flexible pick up and drop off times. The forecourt area to the front of the building provides space for up to seven vehicles and it is stated that the parking area is used for short-stay drop-off and pick-up activity associated with the nursery.

A travel survey was undertaken to establish the existing vehicular arrival/departure profile for staff and children registered at the nursery. The travel survey highlights that most pupils arrive by sustainable modes, with 65% walking and only 32% travelling by car, while a smaller proportion cycle. The survey demonstrates that arrivals and departures are spread throughout the morning and afternoon.

Staff travel patterns are more varied, with 57% travelling by car, 24% walking, and 19% using public transport. It has been clarified that staff attendance is recorded through the nursery's biometric attendance system and established staff rota. Accordingly, the times identified within the survey represent the times at which individual staff arrive at and depart from work and do not represent observations of vehicles physically entering and exiting the nursery forecourt. The Applicant has additionally provided further clarification regarding the current parking arrangements. Up to approximately 3 members of staff are normally permitted to park within the forecourt through an internally managed rota.

Whilst the submitted arrival/departure survey provided information on vehicle trip generation, it did not demonstrate parking demand or parking accumulation associated with the site. Therefore, additional parking accumulation evidence was requested and provided. The survey recorded the number of staff, parent/carer and delivery vehicles physically occupying the forecourt at 30-minute intervals between 07:30 and 18:30 on Wednesday 26th August 2026. The results demonstrate that the forecourt parking area remained below capacity throughout the day and the maximum observed accumulation was 5 vehicles.

The survey also demonstrates the very short duration of parent parking. This is consistent with the nursery operating more as a drop-off/pick-up facility rather than a conventional long-stay car park. The results demonstrate that the current managed parking arrangement operates within the available seven-space capacity and a new updated Car Parking Management Plan has been submitted which sets out measures for the ongoing management and monitoring of staff parking arrangements within the increased capacity.

The proposal is, therefore, considered acceptable in terms of its highway impacts.

Condition 7 – external play area limit

Policy P3 (Living conditions and pollution) of the NPPF requires proposals to provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and neighbouring residents, in line with local policies. Policy CC8 (Safeguarding amenity) of the RBLP requires all development to have no detrimental impact on neighbouring residents.

The use of the outdoor play area is controlled by Condition 7 (number of children outside at any one time) and Condition 8 (hours of operation of the outdoor play areas). The proposal seeks to increase the number of children allowed to use the external play areas at any one time from 10 to 25. This proposal has been

assessed in relation to the impact that this would have on the neighbouring residential properties in terms of noise and disturbance. The submitted noise assessment concludes that the increase in the number of children using the outside play areas from 10 to 25 would result in a worst-case difference of +3dBA to the outdoor environmental noise climate, and this is assessed as No Observed Effect Level (NOEL) within the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE). It is therefore deemed acceptable by the RBC Environmental Health team.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposal has been assessed in line with national and locally adopted policies and is considered in accordance with those policies.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT VARIATION

Conditions as per original decision notice PL/15/1497:

1. Approved Plans
2. Time limit (variation)
3. Use restricted to D1
4. Access to be provided prior to first use (already implemented)
- 5. [VARIED] Occupation limit**
6. Hours of operation
- 7. [VARIED] Capacity limits for external play areas.**
8. Hours of operation – external play areas.
- 9. [NEW] Car Park Management Plan as specified.**

Informative:

1. Construction – hours of operation.
2. No bonfires