



Larksmead Pre-school
The Lodge
58 Salisbury Road
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 7LN
Telephone: 01258 456383
E mail: larksmead.preschool@gmail.com

13th October 2015

Sara Loch
Chairman of Blandford Plus

Dear Sara

Re: Policy 5 Land at Salisbury Road, Blandford Forum

Thank you for including us in your email regarding the Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan proposal. We are writing in response and sending a copy to those who have been involved in the discourse regarding our situation and those who may be able to comment.

Seeing that the plan proposes our pre-school is retained on this site has pleased us very much. Since we were served notice by Blandford Forum Town Council in 2012 we have been actively looking for permanent accommodation but as yet, to no avail. Last year, as a temporary measure, NDDC kindly came to our assistance by leasing us the Lodge at Nordon for 2 years. Unfortunately we have found there is a lack of suitable premises in Blandford, especially the northern half of the town where we are needed. By the summer we had not made progress in finding alternative accommodation so we contacted Simon Hoare MP to make him aware of our circumstances. After visiting us in July 2015 he made enquiries with NDDC; the gist of their response, which we were copied in on, was that our residence here was a temporary arrangement and the future of the Nordon site including the Lodge continued to be debated. Also, that they had no obligation to source alternative accommodation for us.

It is important to keep existing parents and carers informed of what will be happening. Prospective parents will want certainty of our continued existence before enrolling their children. In order to obtain grants to attain or improve facilities we need a building on a permanent basis. We want to continue to provide good quality early years education, as we have done for over 30 years for children aged 2-5 years old and continue offering provision from 8am until 6pm. To further help working families we hope to open all year round and facilitate the upcoming 30 hours a week free childcare entitlement.

Time is ticking away for us, therefore, please may we have clarification of what the proposal means for us in the short and long term:

- What happens when our lease is up in July 2016?
- If the site is sold who would be our landlord?
- Could we own the property or lease?
- What are the timescales involved?

We would welcome a meeting with interested parties and look forward to hearing from Blandford Plus and anyone else copied in on this letter that could help us.

Yours sincerely,

Larksmead Pre-school

c.c. NDDC - Stephen Hill, Cllr Michael Roake, Cllr Esme Butler, Cllr John Tanner, Simon Hoare MP.



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

Larksmead Pre-School
The Lodge
58 Salisbury Road
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Dorset
DT11 7LN

Your Ref:

Our Ref: B+Draftplan2015

Date: 15th October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

Blandford + Draft Plan consultation

I write regarding your letter dated 13th October 2015 about the above.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the Draft Plan for the area.

The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan will be to make planning policies that can be used to determine planning applications in the area. In some cases, its policies will encourage development proposals for the benefit of the local community. In others, its policies will aim to protect the special character of the parish. Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan for the area and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided. Plans must therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose.

The process of the Neighbourhood Plan included identifying whether the community's wishes for land uses at this site was achievable, hence I contacted you about your plan for the future of Larksmead Pre-School. The group also engaged with North Dorset District Council (NDDC) about the community's wishes for the site, additionally NDDC officers have been involved in the majority of meetings held by Blandford + and have to date not raised any major concerns, although it was made clear that they do not consider that they had any obligation to source accommodation for Larksmead Pre-School, as stated in your letter. A formal view from NDDC about the proposed policies of the Neighbourhood Plan has also been sought and the group awaits such a response.

The group considers that NDDC's policies 14 and 27 of the Local Plan sets out clearly that a service such as yours should be protected, which support the group's decision to protect such a use on this site.

Policy 14: "Local communities also have the opportunity to address economic development issues and the provision and retention of commercial and non-commercial community facilities through the neighbourhood planning process and the Government's Community Rights....The Council will work with partners and developers to ensure that the level of social infrastructure across the District is maintained and enhanced through the retention and improvement of existing facilities and new provision, where required. Development should support the maintenance and enhancement of existing

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social infrastructure and the provision of new social infrastructure, through provision on-site and / or contributions to provision off-site, as appropriate.”

Policy 27: “To ensure community facilities (both commercial and non-commercial) are retained the Council will:

- a respond positively to applications where facilities need to be extended to improve their viability or to ensure their continued use; and
- b look favourably on diversification to support the continuation of the existing use (i.e. change of use of part of the site to support the original use).

Development (including the change of use of an existing premises) which involves the loss of a commercial community facility (including a local shop or a public house) will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the use is no longer commercially viable or cannot be made commercially viable.”

The group therefore has no objection to meet to discuss this with the interested parties as per your request. I have written to NDDC separately to request this.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Leani Haim
Assistant Town Clerk of Blandford Forum Town Council
Facilitator to Blandford +



Cc NDDC – Stephen Hill, Cllr M Roake, Cllr E Butler, Cllr J Tanner, Mr S Hoare MP

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BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

Mr S Hill
North Dorset District Council
Nordon
Salisbury Road
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 7LL

Your Ref:

Our Ref: B+Draftplan2015

Date: 15th October 2015

Dear Stephen

Blandford + Draft Plan consultation

I write regarding Larksmead Pre-School's letter dated 13th October 2015 and Blandford + response dated 15th October 2015 about the above.

I would be grateful if you could please let me know whether NDDC would be interested in meeting with Blandford + and Larksmead Pre-School about specific details for the Nordon site.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Leani Haim
Assistant Town Clerk of Blandford Forum Town Council
Facilitator to Blandford +



Cc Larksmead Pre-School

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