

**GILBERT WHITE AND THE OATES COLLECTIONS
(THE WAKES, SELBORNE, HAMPSHIRE)**

Pre-application submission for
a new education centre and holiday cabins

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EMIL EVE ARCHITECTS

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0.0 INTRODUCTION

Dear Sir/Madam,

We submit this document seeking pre-application advice in respect of a planning application for the development of seven holiday cabins and one new freestanding education centre for Gilbert White and the Oates Collections at the Wakes, Selborne.

A group of seven holiday cabins are proposed in the area of land known as The Piddle, adjacent to the path between the High Street and the Zig-Zag. These would be let either individually or as a group in relation to events held at the Field Studies Centre. These are small, self-contained buildings, the exact size and design for which has yet to be established. We therefore seek your advice on the suitability of this proposal, the scale and massing proposed.

The new education centre is proposed to provide new, purpose-built facilities for education on the museum site. It is proposed to be closely integrated with its surroundings, which will improve the ability to teach on the subject of and engage with the environment. It is intended that the building will in itself provide material for teaching on the natural world and sustainability, through its low-carbon, highly insulated construction and through features such as the integrated bird-hide that will bring birds and insects up close to children within the building.

These two developments are proposed to deliver financial sustainability and greater resilience for the museum, which are key to its ongoing operation. They will extend the museum's capacity in its ability to deliver its aims and objectives by expanding the museum's education programme.

The museum currently hosts a large number of school groups in the Field Studies Centre throughout the year, including many children who do not frequently encounter the natural world. The building is also used for weddings and other events that financially support the museum, and while the building suits both uses the cohabitation is to the detriment of both. The need to change furniture, lighting and other equipment between the two uses prevent the barn from being permanently furnished for either use and the time required for setup and takedown for both limit the number of sessions and events that can be offered. A separate education centre will allow an increase in the number of education sessions able to be offered for school groups as well as allowing for educational events outside of school hours. It will also allow the existing Field Studies Centre to be used primarily for events, increasing income to directly support the museum's financial sustainability.

The museum site is sensitively situated within the National Park and the Selborne Conservation Area. The main house is grade I listed, and the stables and brew house are also separately listed at grade II. The gardens are on the Register of Parks and Gardens at grade II*. There are also a number of neighbouring listed buildings along Gracious Street and the High Street. The site also sits below the Selborne Hanger and the Zig-Zag, providing a beautiful setting but also increasing the visibility of any development from publicly accessible National Trust land and public rights of way.

The proposals respond to this especially sensitive position by being carefully sited within the grounds to minimise their impact, while also being of careful scale and massing, and high quality design and construction such that they sit comfortably in their setting,