

Plan for a new nursery underneath the arches

By MARY MACPHERSON

A NEW nursery complex is to be built beneath the arches of The Westway, in North Kensington.

The controversial motorway which blighted a corner of London and brought misery to hundreds of families, will have a new role to play when work on the £200,000 scheme begins next year.

The site chosen by the Westway Nursery Association is overshadowed by the vast flyover which spans the mile

between Paddington and White City.

The centre will provide a new focus for run-down North Kensington, for besides a nursery school there will be a parents' centre where adults can carry on with their own hobbies, a "drop-in" service where mothers will be able to leave their children for short periods. A day nursery for even younger children is also planned.

Link

The project near Maxilla Gardens is being designed to link with a nearby community hall and a public laundry.

It is among the first schemes built beneath the Westway, under the auspices of the North Kensington Amenity Trust, who aim to develop the desolate land

beneath and around the motorway.

The plan is for the building, liberally sound-proofed, to be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. so that children of working mothers can be cared for all day.

Facilities

The money is coming partly from the Inner London Education Authority, who are providing £65,000, and partly from a charitable trust with a donation of £50,000. The Westway Nursery Association is hoping for the remaining £80,000 from the Government under the Urban Aid Programme, or Kensington and Chelsea Council.

Local people will be asked to help decide how they want the nursery to be run and what facilities they would like at the parents' centre.

Mr David Head, chairman of

the Westway Nursery Association said: "Many mothers in North Kensington have to work, either to provide full support for their families, or to help the family budget because wages are generally low in the area."

"We are not only concerned that children in families with special difficulties should be catered for but that all under-fives in the catchment area would be catered for and parents would feel that they had a strong support in bringing up their young children."

← **Evening Standard**

November 21 1974

Nurseries

FEW of the people whose lives were so shatteringly disrupted by the opening of Westway three years ago could have anticipated then that they might one day have a good word to say for it. Yet in the gloomy shadow of the motorway there has grown up one of the most spontaneous and effective community action groups in London.

The local people successfully fought GLC plans to use the waste space under and around Westway for car-parking, and instead set up the North Kensington Amenity Trust to develop community uses for the area. With today's announcement that work is to begin next year on an imaginative new scheme to provide nursery facilities for children in the neighbourhood, it appears that their energies are to be amply rewarded.

The particular attraction of the plan is that it would be a combination of both nursery school and day nursery—provided Kensington and Chelsea Council can find the money for the latter, either from its own resources or through Urban Aid.

← Kensington News-Post
Friday, Nov. 22, 1974

Unique nursery plan to beat M-way blight

WORK is due to start next year on a revolutionary nursery scheme in North Kensington, built beside Britain's most controversial urban motorway. Local parents will be asked to help run the centre.

A £50,000 private donation, and help from local authorities, has made it possible for the people of the area to turn the Westway motorway, which has disrupted their lives since 1971, to positive advantage in a unique way.

The Lowndes Charitable Trust has agreed to give £50,000 to the Westway Nursery Association, a group formed last year to provide nursery care and education for children in one of the most deprived areas of London. The Inner London Education Authority will provide some £65,000 and Kensington and Chelsea Council is supporting an Urban Aid application.

Plans are now being drawn up by an I.L.E.A. architect for the centre, which will provide 60 nursery school places, 40 day nursery places, a parents' centre and a "drop-in" centre where mothers will be able to leave their children for an hour or two while, for example shopping.

The project, near Maxilla Gardens, is being designed to link with an independently-funded community hall, and a laundry, which will be the first schemes built beneath Westway under the auspices of the North-Kensington Amenity Trust.

The Trust was set up by local groups and the borough council to develop Greater London Council land beneath and around the motorway after local people successfully fought plans to use this space for car parking and pressed for community uses instead.

BUILDING TO BEGIN IN APRIL 1975

and details of the project will be given to a public meeting next Wednesday (November 27th) at 8 p.m. at the Luncheon Club next to Ladbroke Grove tube station.

Local people will be asked to help decide how they want the nursery run, and what they would like to see at the parents' centre. The aim will be to provide opportunities for parents to pursue hobbies and also become involved in the running of the nursery.

Mr. David Head, chairman of the Westway Nursery Association said: "Many mothers, in North Kensington have to work, either to provide full support for their families, or to help the family budget because wages are generally low in the area."

"We believe that this is the first time a nursery supported by statutory bodies with trained teachers, and hopefully long hours, has emerged from the efforts of local people."

"We are not only concerned that the needs of families with special difficulties should be met, but that all under-fives in the catchment area should be catered for and parents would feel they

Building can begin after April, provided planning permission is granted, because of the firm commitment of Vanessa Lowndes to the £50,000 donation, and of the I.L.E.A. The Nursery Association hopes to raise another £80,000 from Government Urban Aid — or from the Borough Council — to add a further nursery element to the scheme.

While the I.L.E.A. will finance a nursery school open from 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., mothers working to supplement low family incomes need longer hours for their children and the additional £80,000 would provide day nursery places and allow hours to be extended from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

At present, council day nurseries provide long hours, but do not employ trained teachers to provide the pre-school educational environment acknowledged to be particularly important for children in a deprived area.

On the other hand, nursery schools and classes run by education authorities do not provide hours long enough for working mothers. Both types of nursery have long waiting lists which tend to exclude all but priority cases.

The Westway Nursery Centre will take any child within about 10 minutes' walking distance of the Maxilla Gardens site. A precise catchment area will be decided later — but already a detailed survey has been carried out of families in the area with small children to establish their