



## AJ exclusive: Pocket names winner in nursery competition

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Rising star Dyvik Kahlen wins contest for community centre and nursery in north London

Up-and-coming outfit Dyvik Kahlen Architects has been chosen from a shortlist of eight emerging practices to design a £822,500 community centre and nursery in Haringey, north London.

Organised by 'compact-homes' developer Pocket, the competition was only open to firms founded in the past 10 years, and featured entries from HAT Projects, vPPR, Dallas Pierce Quintero and former Caruso St John architect David Leech.

Studio Weave's scheme featuring 'concentric brick rainbows' was named runner-up in the contest which attracted 95 initial expressions of interest.

Dyvik Kahlen's winning scheme will sit at the gateway to Pocket's West Green Place development, a low-rise housing project next to Downhills Park masterplanned by HTA Design with BD Landscape Architects.

The 360m<sup>2</sup> structure will replace the West Green Playgroup Nursery and Goan Community Centre, which currently occupies the 0.74ha site.

Dyvik Kahlen's proposals for the West Green Place nursery include a storytelling area, play space, sleeping room, kitchen, multi-function hall and shared lift as well as an external patio measuring at least 200m<sup>2</sup>.

The judges praised the practice's 'simple and elegant Pavilion in the Park approach', and hailed its 'deft reconciliation' of the building's two primary functions.

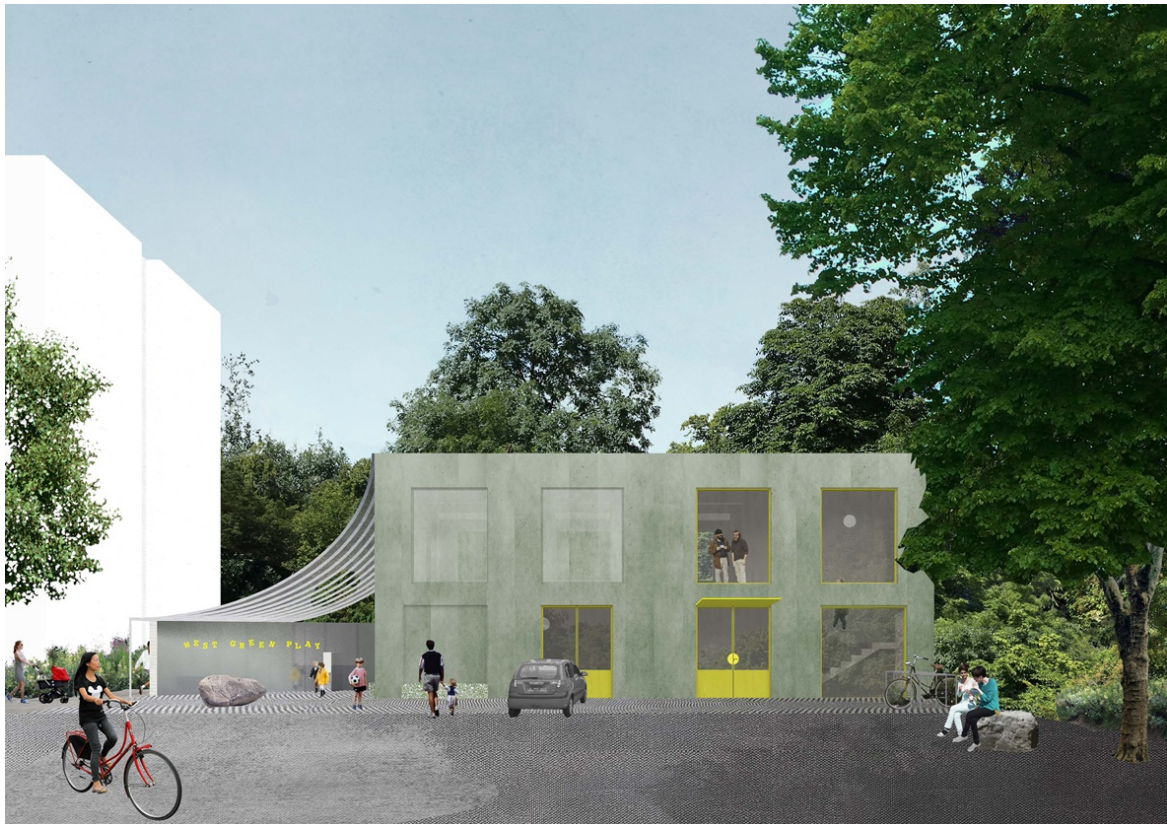
Judges included Pocket's head of design Russ Edwards, HTA partner Ben Derbyshire, Architecture Foundation director Ellis Woodman and Haringey Council's director of place and sustainability Lyn Garner.

A planning application is expected to be submitted shortly, with a start-on-site date scheduled for the new year.

### The finalists

#### WINNER: Dyvik Kahlen

*Max Kahlen: 'Opening up towards a new civic square at the entrance to the development, the simple and elegant form of the new Nursery & Community Centre sets the stage for playful interventions. Conceived as a building with four equal facades, its understated presence is complemented by a set of generous canopies providing a range of different outdoor spaces for visitors, residents and the community.'*



### **RUNNER UP: Studio Weave**

*Afra Vantland: 'Inspired by the historic Downhills house and gardens, the proposal reimagined the role of the traditional country house gatehouse in a contemporary urban setting, where concentric brick rainbows herald a welcome, and calm colonnades contain an airy space for play and interaction in an oasis of green. By rotating the massing, the proposal optimized both sunlight and visual links between the external spaces, the new neighbourhood and the park.'*



### **FINALIST: Dallas Pierce Quintero**

*David Pierce: 'Our ambition was to create a generous and inviting community building linking the woodland with the new development of West Green Place. A brick colonnade, highlighting the civic nature of the building, wraps the internal spaces and creates pockets of sheltered external spaces, including an external entrance courtyard leading to the nursery and community hall. A wildflower rooftop area connects to the natural playground and a terrace from the community hall overlooks the park treetops.'*



**FINALIST: Ludwig Willis**

*Rufus Willis: 'The nursery in the woods is conceived as a natural and sensory landscape for learning and play composed of connected rooms and pergola structures flowing inside and outside, up above the pitched gables of the community centre nestled in the tree tops.'*



**FINALIST: HAT**

*'[Our] proposal responded to the backland nature of the site by creating a bright and welcoming building that would be visible through the narrow access road. A simple wedge-shaped building of white-painted brick was the background to an oversized canopy structure in bright yellow steel and natural timber, creating a generous, welcoming presence by day and night. The canopy wrapped around the building to shelter a secure all-weather play area for the nursery, while the first floor hall had a generous pitched roof and terrace overlooking the park to create a real sense of occasion.'*

**FINALIST: Gibson Thornley**

*Ben Gibson: 'The proposal is embedded into its parkland setting. External courtyards create delicately scaled and layered entrances. Volumetrically rich interiors create specific spaces and connect directly to the more private external areas.'*



### FINALIST: David Leech Architect

*David Leech: 'Observing the inherent duality in the brief for a community centre and nursery, the proposal sought to reflect this condition and reconcile the more private and secure aspect of the nursery within a building that would address the community with a welcoming and inviting prospect. We proposed a raised hall with wide views sitting a top an inhabited walled children's garden.'*

*Standard construction of block work and timber joists is used throughout with free spans of no more than 5m to avoid additional structure and costs. A simple geometric pattern is over-painted with a cementitious render to subtly enliven the outer façade while on the inner elevations the colour of the pattern is left exposed.'*



Pocket view4 garden david leech

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