

Officer Report

Application Number:	P/FUL/2024/03747		
Webpage:	Planning application: P/FUL/2024/03747 - dorsetforyou.com (dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)		
Site address:	Bere Regis Primary School, Southbrook, Bere Regis, BH20 7DB		
Proposal:	To site a temporary container classroom for a period of up to 5 years		
Applicant name:	Wessex Multi Academy Trust		
Case Officer:	Victoria Chevis		
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Beddow and Cllr Baker		
Publicity expiry date:	16 September 2024	Officer site visit date:	17 th September
Decision due date:	16 October 2024	Ext(s) of time:	16 October 2024
No of Site Notices:	3		
SN displayed reasoning:	1 erected on the entrance gate to the site and 2 on lampposts along Southbrook secures visibility for all adjoined properties.		

1.0 Reason application is going to committee

The application site includes land owned by Dorset Council (whole site).

2.0 Summary of recommendation:

GRANT subject to conditions.

3.0 Reason for the recommendation: as set out in paras 16 at end

- The location of the proposed temporary classroom is discrete and the structure is acceptable in its design and general visual impact.
- No harm to neighbouring residential amenity is anticipated as a result of the siting.
- There are no material considerations which would warrant refusal of this application

4.0 Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
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Principle of development	No objection to the principle of development within the settlement boundary.
Scale, design, impact on character and appearance	The design is functional and given the surrounding context no objection is raised.
Impact on the living conditions of the occupants and neighbouring properties	There are no amenity impacts for the neighbouring properties.
Community benefits	The proposal will allow the school capacity to increase until a permanent building can be secured which accords with Government advice in the NPPF which gives great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

5.0 Description of Site

Bere Regis Primary school is located within the settlement boundary, on a gentle hillside rising south from the river which separates it from most of the settlement of Bere Regis. The main entrance is accessed via Southbrook.

The school grounds are surrounded on three sides by open green space. To the east there are residential properties separated from the school grounds by a public footpath.

The temporary classroom is to be located to the west of the main school building. The site is partially hard surfaced, and the remainder is an area of grass and bushes.

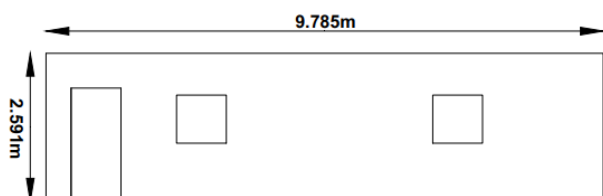
6.0 Description of Development

To site a temporary container classroom for a period of up to 5 years.

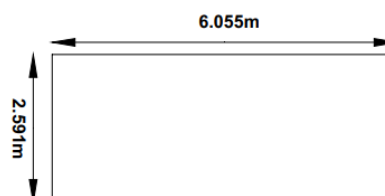
The temporary classroom is 6m wide and 9.8m long with a footprint of 58.8m². The converted container is flat roofed with a maximum height of 2.6m (all measurements are approximate). It will have prefabricated walls with a level access.

The application form states that the temporary classroom is required to accommodate a year group class, pending an application for an extension of the school's main building to accommodate an additional classroom.

Elevations

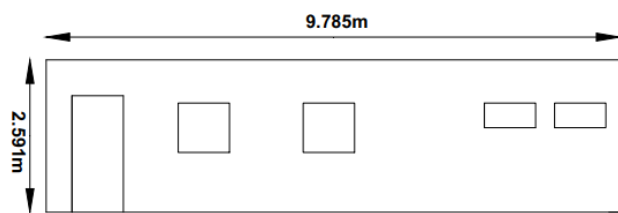


Elevation A - Container

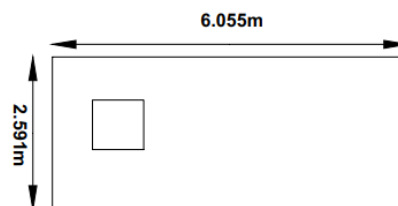


Elevation B - Container

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Elevation C - Container



Elevation D - Container

7.0 Relevant Planning History

6/2014/0437- Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 05/11/2014

Erect new school and pre-school in field at end of Egdon Close and construct new access drive to it along Souls Moor.

6/2015/0072- Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 12/06/2015

Section 73 application for variation to condition 3 (Alteration to Access) of planning permission 6/2014/0437 (Erect new school and pre-school).

6/2014/0437_1- Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 05/11/2014

Erect new school and pre-school in field at end of Egdon Close and construct new access drive to it along Souls Moor

6/2015/0072_1- Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 12/06/2015

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8.0 List of Constraints

Neighbourhood Plan Areas – Purbeck/Bere Regis

Right of Way: Footpath SE6/30

Dorset Council Land (Freehold): Land for Bere Regis Primary School, Southbrook, Wareham

Within Dorset Heathlands 5km buffer

9.0 Consultations

All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

Consultees

Bere Regis Parish Council – Members consider this application, and no comments or objections were raised. The application is fully supported.

Ward Members- Cllr Beddow and Cllr Mike Baker

No comments received

Representations received

No letters of representation have been received.

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10.0 Duties

s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the development plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise.

11.0 Relevant Policies

Development Plan

Adopted Purbeck Local Plan (2018-2034) adopted 2024:

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this proposal:

Policy V1: Spatial strategy for sustainable communities

Policy E8: Dorset heathlands

Policy E12: Design

Policy I7: Community facilities and services

Adopted Neighbourhood Plan

Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan

BR1: Settlement Boundaries

BR4: Bere Regis Groundwater

BR9: Community Facilities and Services

Material Considerations

Emerging Local Plans:

Paragraph 48 of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan

The Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation took place between January and March 2021. Being at a very early stage of preparation, the relevant policies in the Draft Dorset Council Local Plan should be accorded very limited weight in decision making.

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National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out-of-date then permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of approval would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

Other relevant NPPF sections include:

- Section 4. Decision taking: Para 38 - Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available...and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- Section 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities- Paragraph 99 sets out the important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should (a) give great weight to the need to expand schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications.
- Section 12 'Achieving well designed places indicates that all development to be of a high quality in design, and the relationship and visual impact of it to be compatible with the surroundings. In particular, and amongst other things, Paragraphs 126 – 136 advise that:

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Other material considerations

Dorset Council Interim Guidance and Position Statement Appendix B: Adopted Local Plan policies and objectives relating to climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable design and construction. December 2023.

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12.0 Human rights

Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

13.0 Public Sector Equalities Duty

As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:-

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty.

The proposal is not anticipated to materially impact anyone with protected characteristics.

14.0 Financial benefits

None relevant.

15.0 Environmental Implications

The proposal will use a converted container. Some emissions will arise as a result of its transportation.

16.0 Planning Assessment

16.1 The main planning considerations for this application are:

- The principle of development
- Scale, design and impact on character and appearance
- Impact on amenity
- Community benefits

Principle of development

16.2 Paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) explains that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities and that local

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planning authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

16.3 Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan confirms that the school lies within the settlement boundary (policy BR1). Purbeck Local Plan Policy V1 contains a presumption in favour of development within the settlement boundaries provided the criteria of Policy E12 are satisfied. Purbeck Local Plan Policy I7 and Neighbourhood Plan policy BR9 encourage the sustainable growth of community services within the settlement boundary.

16.4 As this site lies within the settlement boundary of Bere Regis and the provision of the additional classroom is necessary to accommodate the growth in pupil numbers, the proposed temporary classroom is acceptable in principle.

Scale, design and impact on the local area

16.5 The proposed temporary classroom will have a small overall footprint and low flat roof form so will appear subordinate to the main school building. The design is functional but as a temporary facility this is acceptable; the proposal does not conflict with policy E12.

Impact on amenity

16.6 The proposed classroom will enable the school to accommodate additional students but as a proportion of the existing school population the numbers will not be significantly increased. Due to the location of the proposed classroom west of the main school building and over 80m from the nearest residential boundary it is considered that the proposal will not result in any adverse impacts for the residential amenities of those occupying houses in Egdon Close.

Community benefits

16.7 The classroom will allow the school capacity to increase until a permanent building can be secured. The proposal accords with Government advice in the NPPF which gives great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

16.8 The proposal will modestly reduce the play space available but does not impact the playing field.

Flood Risk

16.9 The site lies outside of the area identified by the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as being at risk of groundwater or surface water flooding.

17.0 Conclusion

For the above reasons the proposal accords with the development plan as a whole and is recommended for approval subject to a condition requiring the removal of classroom after 5 years to take account of its temporary nature.

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18.0 Recommendation

Grant, subject to the conditions:

Recommendation: Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Proposed container location submitted 18/07/2024

Location plan submitted 14/07/2024

Site plan submitted 14/07/2024

Landscape plan submitted 14/07/2024

Elevation visuals submitted 14/07/2024

P02 - Proposed floor plans and elevations submitted 14/07/2024

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. This permission is limited to the period expiring 5 years after the decision date, when the building/container and any associated structures/works hereby permitted shall be removed.

Reason: To reserve to the Local Planning Authority control over the long term use of the land where a permanent development has not yet been permitted.

Informative Notes:

1. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.

The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.