

Application Number:	P/FUL/2025/02132
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	St Catherines Roman Catholic First School Cutlers Place Colehill BH21 2HN
Proposal:	Installation of 2no windcatchers to school hall roof
Applicant name:	Solent Planning
Case Officer:	Victoria Chevis
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Atwal and Cllr Todd

1. Reason application is going to committee

The application site is land owned by Dorset Council.

2. Summary of recommendation:

GRANT subject to conditions.

3. Reason for the recommendation: as set out in paragraph 16 at the end of the report

- The site is within the settlement boundary, its location is considered to be sustainable and the proposal is acceptable in its design and general visual impact.
- There is not considered to be any significant harm to neighbouring residential amenity.
- There are no material considerations which would warrant refusal of this application.

4. Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	Acceptable- No objection to the principle of development within the settlement boundary.
Scale, design, impact on character and appearance	Acceptable- The design elements are functional and given the surrounding context no objection is raised.
Impact on the living conditions of the occupants and neighbouring properties	Acceptable- There are no substantial amenity impacts for the neighbouring properties.
Community benefits	The proposal will facilitate the school site to being reutilised providing additional school places for the local area which accords with Government advice in the NPPF which gives great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

5. Description of site

- The school is located centrally within the Colehill urban area.
- The windcatchers are located upon the roof of three central school building's roof. is at least 50 metres from the site boundary in all directions and will have no visual impact beyond the site
- The main entrance is located to the north off Cutlers Place. There is a maintenance vehicle access to the southeast also off Cutlers Place.
- Olivers Park and Recreation Ground is located on the school's west boundary.
- Residential properties of a variety of designs and sizes lie to the north, east and south of the school.
- The site is surrounded by an established woodland on the south and west boundary with a less dense coverage of trees on the east and north boundary.

6. Description of development

Installation of 2no windcatchers to school hall roof for ventilation. The windcatchers can't benefit from permitted development right as they would protrude above the existing roof by more than 1.5m. The proposed windcatchers would be 1.8m tall and 1.24m wide and deep.

7. Background and relevant planning history

03/00/0026/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 10/02/2000

Extension To Provide Improved School Office And Entrance & Reclad Existing Building.

03/00/0990/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 16/10/2000

Erect Two Timber Framed Buildings For Use As Classroom & Kinder Garten.

03/87/0652/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 08/07/1987

Extension And Alterations

03/92/0076/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 03/03/1992

Detached Storage Building,

03/92/0833/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 13/01/1993

Single Storey Extension, As Amended By Plans Rec. 9 Nov 92

3/06/1497/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 18/01/2007

Extension to School Classroom and a Covered Play Area

3/11/0488/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 19/07/2011

Construction of raised paths, decking and seating as part of prayer garden within school playing field - part retrospective. Additional information received on 22/06/11.

3/12/0299/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 12/07/2012

Demolition of existing wooden classrooms, construction of new multi-purpose classroom block. Erect two temporary classrooms during period of building works additional information received 19 June 2012 and 21 June 2012

3/12/0299/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 12/07/2012

Demolition of existing wooden classrooms, construction of new multi-purpose classroom block. Erect two temporary classrooms during period of building works additional information received 19 June 2012 and 21 June 2012

3/13/1036/NMC - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 15/11/2013

Non-material minor amendment to 3/12/0299/FUL to relocate boiler room door in front elevation and to replace pitched glazed roof over courtyard with a straight glazed roof.

P/CLP/2024/02543 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 03/07/2024

The works include the erection of extensions and alterations to the existing school. Works include internal and external alterations for updating the school for educational purposes, to improve the energy efficiency of the building and to rationalise the layout for improved movement and circulation. The works proposed also include the erection of structures for outside educational purposes.

P/FUL/2024/05639 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 18/12/2024

Creation of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), erection of a dining canopy, boundary treatments, hardstanding for bin storage, installation of air source heat pump equipment, hard standing and enclosure for electric substation, water storage for the sprinkler system, ancillary equipment, reconfiguration of parking and circulation space. Hard and soft landscaping.

P/CLP/2025/00738 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 27/03/2025

Installation of solar equipment on non-domestic premises of microgeneration solar PV equipment; in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J(b).

8. List of relevant constraints

- Area Tree Protection Order
- Adjacent to Olivers Park- Open Space
- Dorset Council Land (freehold): Land for St Catherines Roman Catholic First School Cutlers Place Colehill
- Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 100

9. Consultations

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

Consultees

1. Bournemouth Water Ltd (South West Water)

No comment

2. Dorset Council - Highways

No objection

3. Colehill Parish Council

No comments received

4. Colehill & Wimborne Minster East Ward

Cllr Todd - Assuming a discrete "low profile" model is used, as opposed to an aluminium "industrial" execution, Windcatchers can offer an environmentally appropriate solution to temperature control that decreases energy consumption and environmental pollution whilst simultaneously respecting the semi-rural nature of the Colehill environment.

10. 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. Relevant policies

Development plan

Adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan:

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

KS1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

HE2: Design of new development

HE3: Landscape quality

ME5: Sources of renewable energy

Saved policies of the East Dorset Local Plan 2002

DES2 - Criteria for development to avoid unacceptable impacts from types of pollution, of the East Dorset Local Plan 2002.

Material considerations

Emerging local plans:

Paragraph 49 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 plan should be accorded very limited weight in decision making.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended 2025)

Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable 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 specific NPPF policies protecting areas or assets provide a strong reason for refusal

and/or any adverse impacts of approval would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole, with particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well designed places and providing affordable homes.

Other relevant NPPF sections include:

- Section 4 'Decision making': Para 39 - 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 6 'Building a strong, competitive economy', paragraphs 88 and 89 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy' promotes the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, through conversion of existing buildings, the erection of well-designed new buildings, and supports sustainable tourism and leisure developments where identified needs are not met by existing rural service centres.
- Section 11 'Making effective use of land'
- Section 12 'Achieving well designed places' This 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 131 – 141 advise that:

The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

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

Paragraph 161 sets out that "the planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating... It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

National Planning Practice Guidance

Including 'Determining a planning application'

12. 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. 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.

No disadvantage to persons with protected characteristics have been identified for the proposed development.

14. Environmental implications

The proposed development seeks to provide substantially improved ventilation and heating management for the school hall in a sustainable manner, it will lead to a reduced carbon footprint by reducing energy consumption to facilitate the school estate.

15. Planning Assessment

Principle of development

- 15.1 As this site lies within the settlement boundary of Wimborne/Colehill the principle of development is acceptable under policy KS2.

The current use class of the site, as set out in the Use Class Order is Class F1 [Learning and non-residential institutions]. The use class of the site will not change as it will remain as a non-residential learning institution.

The school site was closed in 2021 and remains vacant. Two certificates of lawfulness applications have confirmed alterations to the building’s layout, to better facilitate its use as a new school, do not require planning permission and a Full application permitted a number of site alteration/improvements. The current proposal is for an additional alteration where permission is required includes the installation of two windcatchers located upon the roof of the 3 central buildings within the middle of the site. The scheme is intended to improve ventilation and reduce energy consumption within the school. The works form part of wider proposals at the school to facilitate an additional 59+ school places within the newly re-developed site This NPPF paragraph 99 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 planning authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

Scale, design and impact on character and appearance

- 15.2 The character of the site is defined by mature trees and grassland with a collection of single storey school buildings. Due to the central roof top position views of the windcatchers from outside the site will be limited. There may be glimpse from Cutlers Place but these views in are restricted and it is anticipated that they will only be visible from the end of the access

road off of the main drag of Cutlers Place, when approaching the school. There form will be basic and functional and will not look out of place when viewed within the context of the school roof.

- 15.3 The character of the area will be maintained and enhanced by the rejuvenation of the school site being brought back into use. The proposal accords with design and landscaping local plan policies HE2 and HE3.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

- 15.4 A basic noise impact assessment was completed which found that the windcatchers would be quieter than other equipment approved by application P/FUL/2024/05639, therefore no harm to neighbouring amenity is anticipated due to noise. The previous permission included conditions to control the noise from externally mounted plant which is referenced in the supporting statement for this application. No condition is required for the current proposals.
- 15.5 The site's historical use was as a mainstream school with a higher pupil capacity than now anticipated. Due to their central roof top position and a distance to the school boundary of at least 50 metres in all directions, the location of the windcatchers ensures that there will be no impact on neighbouring amenity.
- 15.6 No harm to neighbouring amenity is anticipated therefore the proposal is judged to comply with local plan policy HE2 and saved policy DES2.

Community Benefits

- 15.7 The proposal will facilitate the school site being re-utilised providing additional school places for the local area which accords with Government advice in the NPPF which gives great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

Sustainable energy

- 15.8 The Windcatchers will provide a more sustainable ventilation system within the school's large spaces, due to their low energy consumption and much lower embodied carbon.

16. Conclusion

For the above reasons the proposal accords with the development plan as a whole and is recommended for approval subject to a conditions.

17. Recommendation: Grant subject to 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:
00001 P01 S2 Location Plan
00002 P02 S2 Block Plan
01140 P01 S2 Proposed Roof Plan
03010 P01 S2 Proposed Elevations

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

Informative Notes:

1. Please check that any plans approved under the building regulations match the plans approved in this planning permission or listed building consent. Do not start work until revisions are secured to either of the two approvals to ensure that the development has the required planning permission or listed building consent.

2. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with paragraph 39 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.