

Application Number:	P/FUL/2025/06825
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	168 Springdale Road Corfe Mullen BH21 3QN
Proposal:	Change of use of an existing residential bungalow (Use Class C3) to a Children's Day Nursery (Use Class E(f)) including erection of secure boundary fencing to rear
Applicant name:	Mr Paul Spencer
Case Officer:	James Brightman
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Florek and Cllr Sowry-House

1. Reason application is going to committee:

At the request of the Chairman of the Eastern Area Planning Committee.

2. Summary of recommendation:

GRANT subject to conditions as set out at the end of this report.

3. Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	The site is in the urban area and is acceptable in principle.
Highway impacts, safety, access and parking	The applicant has demonstrated that the proposal would not result in a harmful impact on highways safety
Impact on the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring properties	No adverse impacts on the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring properties are foreseen given the mitigation measures proposed
Impact on the character of the area	No significant changes to the site and no adverse impact on the character of the area would result
Impact on protected heathland	The need for an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations has been screened out as the proposal would not have a significant impact on the protected heathlands.

4. Description of site

- 4.1 The application site comprises an existing residential bungalow and garden. It is in the urban area of Corfe Mullen to the north of Upton Heath and in a predominately residential area. There is no flood risk on the site.
- 4.2 Access is onto Springdale Road and the site is close to the Springdale Road junction onto the Wareham Road and close to housing. Properties fronting Springdale Road vary in scale and design and there is a mix of bungalows, houses and chalet bungalows.
- 4.3 The site has a common boundary with the dwellings at 166, 170 & 177 Springdale Road and the dwellings at 24-54 Victoria Close to the rear.
- 4.4 A 1.8m approx. high hedge grows on the front boundary and boundary with 168 & 177 Springdale Road with trees and vegetation on the rear boundary and a 1.8m approx. hedge on the southern section of the boundary with 166 Springdale Road.
- 4.5 The site is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport and is considered to be in a sustainable location.

5. Description of development

- 5.1 It is proposed to change the use of the existing 3 bedroom bungalow (Use Class C3) on the site to a Children's Day Nursery (Use Class E(f)) and erect secure boundary fencing to contain the outside play area at the rear of the bungalow.
- 5.2 There would be approx. 2m high acoustic fencing within the site to enclose the outside grassed play area with some fencing of approx. 1.4 m separating the car park from the outdoor play area.
- 5.3 No changes to the site access are proposed and there would be 7 on-site parking spaces provided with spaces provided to the rear of the bungalow for staff working at the nursery.
- 5.4 The Design & Access Statement submitted advises that:
 - The proposal would provide high-quality early years childcare within the local community, in a safe, accessible and stimulating environment that meets current standards and Ofsted requirements while maintaining the residential character of the area.
 - Up to 24 children will be accommodated at any one time, consisting of 16 children aged 2–5 in a main activity area and 8 babies (under 2) in a separate baby room
 - 5 full-time and 1 part-time member of staff will attend the nursery
 - Hours of operation will be 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, with no use proposed at weekends or overnight stays
 - The rear garden will be adapted to form a secure, outdoor play area with appropriate fencing and surfacing and use of this area will be restricted to between 09:00 and 17:00 and will be managed and supervised to mitigate any potential disturbance to neighbours

- 7 parking spaces are to be provided on the existing hard surfaced areas on the site with space to turn vehicles
- No building works or changes to the outward appearance of the existing dwelling are proposed and the detached outbuilding at the rear of the site is to be retained and fenced off from the outside play and parking areas
- Signage will be discreet and in keeping with the residential character of the area
- A designated turning and short-stay drop-off area will be created to allow parents to safely drop off and collect children without obstructing the highway
- The proposed arrangement will reduce potential on-street parking and improve overall safety
- Pedestrian access will remain via the existing front entrance. The pathway will be level and wheelchair accessible. Secure gates and child-safe fencing will ensure controlled access for all users
- Waste storage will be contained within the existing side/rear garden area in appropriate bins for regular collection

6. List of constraints

Settlement Boundary; Corfe Mullen

Dorset Heathlands (400 metre buffer)

Wessex Water Treatment Works Catchment

Medium pressure gas pipeline 12.5m or less from 12.5m Buffer on Regional Medium Pressure Pipelines (75 mbar – 2 bar);

Higher Potential ecological network – doesn't cover application site, but land to the south across Springdale Rd

Groundwater Source Protection Zone

Radon: Class 1: Less than 1% (low risk, protective measures not required)

7. Consultations

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

Consultees

1. Wessex Water

No comments rec'd

2. Scottish & Southern Electricity (SSE)

Service cable and electricity line enter site from Springdale Rd and run along site's west boundary inside the site. *Officer Note: No works proposed which would affect the cables*

3. Southern Gas Network (SGN)

Map submitted to show medium pressure gas main on south side of Springdale Rd (outside application site)

4. Dorset Wildlife Trust

No comments rec'd

5. Dorset Council (DC) - Highways

The Highway Authority considers that the proposal does not present a material harm to the transport network or to highway safety and has no objection subject to conditions to require the construction of turning/manoeuvring and parking & provision of cycle parking.

6. DC Environmental Protection Officer

There need to be controls in place to ensure that numbers of children outside don't create noise at a level to have an adverse impact on neighbouring residential neighbours.

The submitted Noise Impact Assessment (that includes a Noise Management Plan) is acceptable with the inclusion of the submitted noise complaint form, information on the Mini Munchkins nursery website regarding how to make a noise complaint and the plan to show the outside play area and acoustic fencing position

Suitably worded planning conditions should be imposed to secure the following:

- Hours of operation: Monday to Friday, 08:00–18:00 (no Bank Holidays)
- Hours of outdoor play area use: Monday to Friday, 09:00–17:00 (no Bank Holidays)
- A maximum of 10 children to use the outdoor play area at any one time
- Acoustic fencing, as specified in the Noise Management Plan, to be installed prior to first use
- The Noise Management Plan to be implemented at all times the nursery is in operation and not amended without prior written agreement from the local planning authority.

7. DC - Dorset Waste Team

No objections. No comment at this stage on how many bins would be needed on site but any bin store would need to be hard standing and suitable for the numbers of bins needed. Suggest that bin store would need to be in the same location as the bins are kept now (i.e. adjacent to boundary with No.170 inside the access).

8. DC Early Years

No comments rec'd

9. Corfe Mullen Town Council

Object on the following grounds:

- The property is on a main arterial route in close proximity to Hillview roundabout. Concerns with additional vehicle movements onto Springdale Road and potential of additional on street parking should parents/carers be unable to access designated drop off/pick up bays.
- A Traffic Management Plan should be provided for Dorset Council Highways Officers to understand the impact of additional vehicles movements onto the existing road network, with a recommendation that a Highways Officer conducts a site visit.
- The proposal is contrary to policies HE2; ME2 & KS11 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1, Core Strategy (2014)

10. Corfe Mullen Ward Member- Cllr Scott Florek

- The proposal introduces risks to highway safety, pedestrian welfare, and the functioning of the surrounding residential streets.
- The importance of early-years provision within the community is recognised but it is essential that such facilities are located where the supporting infrastructure can operate safely and reliably. In this case, the application does not demonstrate that these conditions can be met.

11. Corfe Mullen Ward Member- Cllr Sowry-House

- Adverse impact on highway safety, insufficient parking provision, risk to pedestrians (especially young children), and non-compliance with relevant national and local planning policy.
- Inadequate mitigation to address impact on road safety.
- Undermines sustainable transport objectives
- Increased traffic will negatively affect residential amenity from noise, disturbance and obstruction (of driveways/pavements)
- Request that this application be refused unless substantial, demonstrable, and enforceable mitigations are presented

Representations received

Total - objections	Total - No objections	Total - comments
1	1 (support in principle)	0

Summary of comments of objection:

- Traffic generation

- Impact on road safety
- Parked vehicles obstruct visibility from driveways
- Impact on the adjacent SSSI
- Concerns about traffic management & safety of other road users and pedestrians

Summary of comments of support:

- Well thought-out development in respect of the childcare element
- the yellow line from outside 170 through to the curtilage of 150 needs to be extended to increase the safety for existing residents of these properties to safeguard the safety of all and any pedestrians and attendees at the day nursery

8. 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.

9. Relevant policies

Development plan

In this case the development plan comprises:

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

KS2: Settlement hierarchy

KS11: Transport and development

KS12: Parking provision

LN7: Community services & facilities

HE2: Design of new development

ME1: Safeguarding biodiversity and geodiversity

ME2: Dorset heathlands

Saved Policy DES2 of the **East Dorset Local Plan 2002** - Criteria for development to avoid unacceptable impacts from types of pollution:

Developments will not be permitted which will either impose or suffer unacceptable impacts on or from existing or likely future development or land uses in terms of noise, smell, safety, health, lighting, disturbance, traffic or other pollution.

Made Neighbourhood Plans

None relevant

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, with further consultation between 18 Aug – 31 October 2025. Being at a very early stage of preparation, the relevant policies in the draft plan should be accorded very limited weight in decision making.

Emerging Corfe Mullen Neighbourhood Plan- In preparation – limited weight applied to decision making

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies local priorities for nature recovery and maps areas where action would be most beneficial. In planning decisions it is a material consideration, helping to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.

- Only land to the south across Springdale Rd is shown as part of the LNRS.

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.
- Section 14 'Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change'
- Section 15 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment'- Paragraphs 192-195 set out how biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

Inc. Determining planning applications

Supplementary Planning Documents

Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 Supplementary Planning Document

Dorset Heathlands Interim Air Quality Strategy 2020-2025

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.

10. 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.

11. 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 characteristic most directly engaged by this proposal are:

- Age including older persons who may have a preference or need for single-storey accommodation such as bungalows and young children who would attend the proposed day nursery/pre-school.
- Disability including older persons and others with mobility impairments who may benefit from step free housing as well as children and adult with disabilities who may require accessible childcare provision.
- Sex and Pregnancy and maternity in so far as access to local childcare supports parents and carers including those returning to work.

The proposal would result in the change of use of an existing occupied bungalow, which is a form of accommodation often favoured by older persons and by individuals with mobility impairments due to its step-free nature. The loss of a single bungalow is recognised as a potential equality consideration insofar as it marginally reduces the stock of that housing type within the settlement. However, it is noted that the application does not involve the loss of specialist or designated accommodation for older persons or disabled individuals, and there is no evidence that the property is uniquely required to meet an identified local need that cannot be met elsewhere within the existing housing stock of Corfe Mullen.

Balanced against this, the proposal would deliver a children's day nursery providing early years and pre-school education in a sustainable location. Access to affordable, local childcare disproportionately benefits certain protected groups, including young children, parents (particularly mothers and those with caring responsibilities), and families with disabled children who may require structured and accessible early years provision. The nursery would support social inclusion, child development and the ability of parents and carers to participate in employment and community life.

The potential impact of the proposed use on neighbouring residents, including those who may be elderly, disabled or housebound and therefore more sensitive to environmental disturbance, has also been considered. In this regard, conditions are proposed which require the installation and retention of acoustic fencing and the implementation of a Noise Management Plan, with controls over hours of use and outdoor activity. These measures are intended to mitigate noise impacts arising from the operation of the nursery and to safeguard the living conditions of surrounding residents, including those who may spend extended periods within their homes.

The application site is relatively flat, and the proposal would allow people with disabilities or mobility impairments or pushing buggies to readily access the facility. This would assist in meeting the needs of children, parents and carers with disabilities or mobility impairments.

Conclusion on the Public Sector equalities duty

Taking all matters into account, it is concluded that while the proposal gives rise to limited impacts in relation to age and disability through the loss of a single bungalow, these impacts are not of such weight as to outweigh the significant equality benefits arising from the provision of accessible early years childcare. The proposal would therefore comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and would not result in unlawful discrimination or failure to advance equality of opportunity.

12. Public Benefits

The proposals would provide a number of financial and non-financial benefits, including public benefits. These are summarised in the table below:

What	Amount / value
Material considerations	
Employment (it is intended to retain the existing nursery in Corfe Mullen so the proposal would be an additional facility)	5 full-time and 1 part-time job
Non-material considerations	
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Zero-rated for CIL
Business rates	Unknown

13. Planning Assessment

Principle of development

- 13.1 The site is in the urban area and is acceptable in principle as the proposal complies with Core Strategy Policy KS2: Settlement Hierarchy where Corfe Mullen is identified as a Main Settlement which will provide the major focus for community, cultural, leisure, retail, utility, employment and residential development.
- 13.2 Core Strategy Policy LN7 is also supportive of the proposal as the proposal would provide a facility/service to support existing and future population growth and in the settlement of Corfe Mullen, where access can be by public transport, bike and on foot.

Highway impacts, safety, access & parking

- 13.3 There is an established vehicular access from the site onto Springdale Road which currently serves the existing dwelling and no modification to this is shown.
- 13.4 The proposed nursery is likely to result in a materially greater number of traffic movements to and from the site over the movements generated by the existing dwelling.
- 13.5 The impact of the proposed use on highway safety has been raised by Corfe Mullen Town Council, the two Corfe Mullen Ward members and two occupiers of nearby residential properties, one of whom was formerly a children's nursery operator.
- 13.6 The comments recognise the importance of providing Early Years care but consider the children's nursery use would have an adverse impact on highway safety in the immediate area and lead to additional parking on Springdale Rd that already on occasion obstructs the visibility from the driveways of adjacent dwellings for emerging vehicles.

- 13.7 Concern is also raised over the safety of pedestrians, young children and other users of Springdale Road from the traffic generated by the nursery.
- 13.8 In response to these concerns, and although not requested by the Council's Highways Officer, the applicant has submitted a Traffic Management Plan and advised that:
- around 75% of the drop off & collections of children are staggered which would prevent concentrated traffic increase if all children arrive and leave at the same time (as with a primary school)
 - Several siblings attend the nursery
 - Some parents walk to the nursery and a couple of children are staff children and will arrive and leave with the respective staff member
 - Parents do not come into the site and drop off & collection is at the front door so the turnaround is quite quick and will be advised to use the allocated parking bays for drop off and collection. An allocated time is given for drop off & collection
 - In respect of the pre-school & after-school clubs, the children will leave and return in the nursery minibuss transport which is parked on site for all collections & drop offs
 - The applicant prioritises the welfare, safety, education and growth of the children that they are entrusted to care for.
- 13.9 The Council's Highways Engineer has assessed the proposal and notes that Springdale Road is a class C road, is street lit and subject to a 30mph speed limit. There is a 2m (approx.) footway running along the frontage of the site, on the opposite side of the road there is a grass verge and wooded area.
- 13.10 The carriageway is around 7m in width; there are no parking restrictions in the location of the site, there are double yellow lines near to the junction with Wareham Road at the roundabout. There have been no recorded personal injury incidents, or damage only, in the vicinity of the site in the latest 5 years data.
- 13.11 7 car parking spaces, 1 disabled parking space, and 6 cycle spaces are proposed and this level of parking is acceptable and in line with Dorset Council's car parking guidance standards for this type of non-residential use. The dimensions of the parking and turning areas all meet with Dorset Council's recommendations and is deemed acceptable.
- 13.12 There will also be 1 temporary parking space for the nursery minibuss for use during nursery operational times and there is adequate space within the site for the minibuss to be able to turn to exit the site in a forward gear. This space will also be used to prevent unauthorised access to the rear of the nursery and a member of staff will always be available to move this. Out of hours it will then be parked across spaces 1, 2, and 3.
- 13.13 The nursery is encouraging active travel, recommending that parents in the local area walk to the site. The nursery does not expect a high level of traffic movements to and from the site; the information submitted by the nursery shows that drop off and pick up times are staggered and also grouped, visits to the nursery are not promoted, there should not be lots of comings and goings throughout the day.

- 13.14 The turnaround time is anticipated to be quite short as usually parents would not enter the setting, with drop off and collection taking place at the front door. Therefore, the traffic impact associated with the proposed use would be minimal, especially in the AM and PM peaks, and the traffic impact is not thought to be severe in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 115 and 116 - December 2024.
- 13.15 The access to the site measures approximately 6m in width which is adequate for 2 vehicles to pass each other simultaneously and there is also adequate visibility from the access along Springdale Road and this is acceptable.
- 13.16 There are no parking restrictions along Springdale Road, and in some cases parked vehicles on the highway can act as a natural traffic calming and would help to reduce vehicle speeds. Drivers are expected to adapt their driving to the appropriate type and condition of road they are on; they must not drive dangerously, without due care and attention, or without reasonable consideration for other road users.
- 13.17 The Highway Authority has advised that considering footway provision, visibility, parking provision and the absence of recorded injury collisions in the vicinity, the proposal would not result in a material harm to the operation or safety of the highway network.
- 13.18 While Members and objectors have requested additional measures such as further traffic controls or on-street parking restrictions, it is noted that such measures would need to be justified by demonstrable evidence of highway danger or severe residual cumulative impacts. In this case, the submitted information, accident data and professional highways advice do not identify a level of harm that would warrant refusal of the application or the imposition of off-site highway controls.
- 13.19 In accordance with paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework, development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds where the residual cumulative impacts would be severe. For the reasons set out above, that threshold is not met in this instance. Subject to conditions securing on-site parking, turning, cycle parking and operation in accordance with the submitted Traffic Management Plan, the proposal is considered to accord with Core Strategy Policies KS11 and KS12 and national policy.
- 13.20 In order to ensure that the development operates in the manner assessed and that the anticipated highway impacts remain acceptable, it is necessary and reasonable to impose a condition requiring the children's day nursery to operate in full accordance with the submitted Traffic Management Plan dated 5 March 2026. The Traffic Management Plan contains operational measures which are integral to the highways assessment, including staggered drop-off and pick-up arrangements and the use of on-site parking and turning facilities. Securing these measures by condition ensures that the development remains acceptable in highways terms for the lifetime of the use.

- 13.21 The site is immediately adjacent to dwellings at 166, 170 & 177 Springdale Rd and also the dwellings to the north at 49-54 Victoria Close. Noise from the use of the outside play area and from comings and goings to include traffic will have an impact on the occupants of these adjacent properties.
- 13.22 The Council's Environmental Protection Officer (EPO) has considered the details submitted which include a Noise Impact Assessment and noise complaints procedure and advises that there aren't any existing recognised standards for specifically assessing noise from children.

Noise Impact Assessment (NIA)

- 13.23 The submitted NIA evaluates potential noise impacts from outdoor play, traffic and operational activity and states that predicted noise levels demonstrate that, with mitigation, impacts remain within acceptable residential thresholds. Primary sources of noise from the proposal include outdoor play, vehicle movements and occasional deliveries. While there are no nationally adopted quantitative standards for assessing children's play noise, the assessment adopts a proportionate and professional approach and identifies mitigation measures designed to minimise disturbance to neighbouring occupiers.
- 13.24 Outdoor play will only be within the secure fenced boundary area at the rear and side garden area of the site located on the right-hand side of the property when viewed from the road (hatched green below). The front area and left-hand side of the property with space to the rear will be a parking area and driveway. Acoustic fencing will be around the outside play area and rear storage area.
- 13.25 Staff / Children Ratios will always be in line with the requirements of EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).

Mitigation measures

- 1.8 – 2m acoustic fencing for the outside grassed play area
- Staggered and staff supervised outside play sessions. Morning session 09:30 to 11:30 & Afternoon session 14:00 to 17:00. Sessions will be staggered to reduce the number of children outdoors at any one time.
- No static play equipment installed or used (such as swings or climbing frames)
- Complaint response procedure implemented into the company Terms & Conditions
- No amplified sound equipment permitted
- Implementation of the submitted Noise Management Plan

- 13.26 The submitted NMP is acceptable to the Council's Environmental Protection Officer (EPO) and with a condition imposed to require the nursery to operate in accordance with the NMP and limit the number of children playing outside at any one time to 10, the proposal accords with Saved Policy DES2: Criteria for development to avoid unacceptable impacts from types of pollution of the East Dorset Local Plan (which forms part of the development plan for the area, namely the Christchurch & East Dorset Core Strategy 2014).
- 13.27 A condition is to be imposed to prevent a change of use of the premises to another use under Class E of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2025 to control the impact on the amenity of the occupants of adjacent properties.

Impact on the character of the area

- 13.28 There are no outward changes proposed to the buildings at the site and the existing boundary treatments are to be retained so that the only impacts on character would be parked vehicles within the site and from vehicles associated with drop offs and pick ups which are likely to be materially greater than the existing on-site parking and vehicle movements generated by the existing single dwelling.
- 13.29 The existing approx. 1.8m high hedge on the site's front boundary with Springdale Rd would screen 3 of the onsite parking spaces and the existing bungalow building would screen 3 spaces, and it would not be readily apparent that numerous vehicles were parked on the site and no harmful impact on the street scene would result accordingly.
- 13.30 The boundary vegetation, adjacent buildings and proposed fencing on the other site boundaries would screen parked vehicles when seen from adjacent land.
- 13.31 On the above basis, no adverse impact on the street scene or character of the area would result from the proposal.

Impact on protected heathland

- 13.32 The site lies in close proximity to Upton Heath which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest; Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation. The proposal has therefore been considered having regard to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The proposed use is not residential and so the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 does not apply as it only applies to residential uses.
- 13.33 A Screening Opinion under the Habitats Regulations has been undertaken. The proposed development involves the change of use of an existing dwelling to a non-residential community use and would not introduce new residential accommodation or overnight stays. The scale of the proposal is modest, traffic generation would be limited and short-duration, and the use would be confined to daytime hours only. Having regard to the nature, scale

and location of the development, it is concluded that the proposal would not give rise to likely significant effects on the integrity of the SPA, SAC or SSSI, either alone or in combination

- 13.34 On this basis, Dorset Council as the competent authority is satisfied that the proposal does not require an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitat Regulations and the proposal complies with Core Strategy Policy ME1 & ME2

14. Environmental implications

The proposal would generate additional vehicle emissions from the vehicles transporting the children and staff to and from the site. This is difficult to quantify as vehicles dropping off and collecting the children may well be passing the site in any event.

15. Summary of issues and the planning balance

In reaching this recommendation, the local planning authority has carefully balanced the concerns raised in relation to highway safety, residential amenity and impacts on the surrounding area against the benefits of the proposal. While the development would result in an increase in activity when compared to the existing lawful residential use, these impacts have been assessed as limited in scale and capable of being satisfactorily mitigated through conditions.

The proposal would deliver a community facility providing early years childcare in a sustainable location, supporting working families and local employment. As set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty assessment, the proposal has potential equality implications in relation to age and disability through the loss of a bungalow but also delivers positive equality outcomes through the provision of accessible early years childcare. Potential impact on neighbouring residential amenity can be safeguarded by way of acoustic fencing and other mitigation measures.

When assessed against the development plan as a whole, and having regard to all material considerations, it is concluded that there are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal. Planning permission is therefore recommended to be granted subject to conditions set out below.

16. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the conditions below:

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:
Location Plan at 1:1250 scale
Amended Block Plan

Drawing No. 168SR/001: Existing & proposed floor plans
Drawing 002: Existing & proposed elevations
Play area, parking and fencing plan

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

3. Before the children's day nursery use hereby approved commences, the mitigation measure of acoustic fencing as set out in Sections 3 & 8 of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) by IJO Consulting: Acoustic Report March 2026 shall be erected in the position shown on the submitted Play area, parking & fencing plan and thereafter shall be retained for the lifetime of the use.

Reason: To mitigate against the impact from noise on the occupants of the adjacent properties.

4. The use of the site as a children's nursery must at all times be undertaken in accordance with the mitigation measures and Noise Management Plan set out in Sections 3, 4 & 5 of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) by IJO Consulting: Acoustic Report Rev C 24/4/2026, unless any minor variation to this has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To mitigate against the impact from noise on the occupants of the adjacent properties.

5. The use hereby approved shall be operated in accordance with the Mini Munchkins Day Nursery Traffic Management Plan dated 5th March 2026, unless any minor variation to this has been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of occupants of adjacent dwellings.

6. The premises, building and land shall only be used as a children's day nursery and for no other purpose whatsoever (including any other purpose in Class E of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2025, as amended, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order.

Reason: The Council considers an unrestricted Class E use may not be compatible with the amenity of surrounding residential properties or highway safety.

7. The premises shall not be attended by children using the children's day nursery outside the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Mondays to Fridays and at no time on Saturdays or Sundays.

Reason: To safeguard the character and amenity of the area and living conditions of any surrounding residential properties.

8. There shall be no more than 24 children (including babies) in attendance at the nursery for day care at any one time and no more than 10 children playing outside at any one time.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the occupants of the adjacent dwellings.

9. Before the site is first used as a children's day nursery, full details of both hard and soft landscape works (to include boundary fencing) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and these works shall be carried out as approved before occupation unless otherwise agreed in accordance with a programme submitted to the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure the approved landscaping scheme is implemented correctly.

10. Before the development hereby approved is occupied or utilised the parking shown on Drawing Number 168SR/004 must have been constructed. Thereafter, these areas, must be permanently maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purposes specified.

Reason: To ensure the proper and appropriate development of the site and to ensure that highway safety is not adversely impacted upon.

11. Before the development is occupied or utilised the cycle parking facilities shown on Drawing Number 168SR/004 must have been constructed. Thereafter, these must be maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purposes specified.

Reason: To ensure the proper construction of the parking facilities and to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes

Informative Notes:

1. Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Dorset Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed in full in a subsequent informative below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

The permission which has been granted is for development which is exempt being:

- Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Read more about Biodiversity Net Gain at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/biodiversity-net-gain>

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 applicant/agent was updated of any issues and provided with the opportunity to address issues identified by the case officer.