

Application Number:	P/FUL/2026/03042
Webpage:	Planning application: P/FUL/2026/03042 - dorsetforyou.com
Site address:	Colehill First School Pilford Heath Road Colehill BH21 2HL
Proposal:	Demolish existing covered area and replace it with a new roof. Erect single-storey extension.
Applicant name:	Mr Howard Jolliffe
Case Officer:	Kelly Pugh
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Atwal and Cllr Todd

1. Reason application is going to committee:

The application site comprises land in the Council's ownership.

2. Summary of recommendation:

To grant planning permission subject to conditions as set out at the end of this report.

3. Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	Acceptable: Urban Area
Impact on character and appearance including trees	Acceptable: subject to Tree protection fencing
Impact on the living conditions of the occupants and neighbouring properties	Acceptable
Flood risk and drainage	Acceptable
Highway impacts, safety, access and parking	Acceptable, subject to condition
Biodiversity	Acceptable

4. Description of site

- 4.1 Colehill First school lies on a parcel of Council owned land within the settlement of Colehill. The vehicle access is off Cannon Hill Road to the north. Pilford Heath Road runs alongside the eastern boundary and Middlehill Road lies to the south. Colehill Village hall is on land to the west.
- 4.2 The school grounds are demarcated by fencing and are surrounded by dense trees with the school sited toward the southeast of the site.

- 4.3 Established residential properties lie to the north, east and west but are separated from the school site by highways.

5. Description of development

- 5.1 It is proposed to demolish the existing modest timber gazebo structure located on the southern side of the building and replace it with a single-storey extension.
- 5.2 The proposed single-storey extension would comprise a pent tiled (single pitch) roof, partially positioned beneath the existing roof structure, to achieve an enlarged covered outdoor area and a new enclosed toilet block.
- 5.3 The proposed pent roof would measure approximately 4.5m in height at its highest point, reducing to approximately 2.1m at the eaves. The extension would have an overall width of approximately 9.4m and project approximately 3.3m from the rear (southern elevation) of the building.
- 5.4 The materials proposed are shiplap cladding and Kingspan roof tiles in anthracite, similar to the existing.

6. Background and relevant planning history

- 03/00/0158/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 28/03/2000
Demolish Existing Timber Dining/ Hall & Erect New School with Link to Existing Temp. Classroom.
- 03/00/0760/FUL - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 12/09/2000
Erect Additional Classroom Linked to School Hall
- 03/03/0069/FUL - Decision: No objection - Decision Date: 13/03/2003
Demolish Existing Temp Classrooms, Extend Existing Hall & Class to Form New First School.

7. List of constraints

Tree Preservation Order (EDDC/CO/99)

Neighbourhood Plan Area - Colehill

Within Settlement Boundary; Wimborne/Colehill

Colehill First School Playing Field, Policy: HE4

Right of Way: Bridleway E36/11; - Distance: 4.56

Medium pressure gas pipeline 12.5m or less from 12.5m Buffer on Regional Medium

Dorset Council Land Freehold: Colehill First School, Middlehill Road, Colehill

Radon: Class: 1.0 (low risk, protective measures not required)

Contaminated Land

8. Consultations

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

Consultees

1. **SSE (electric) and SSN (gas)** – Informative is recommended
2. **Dorset Council (DC) - Rights of Way Officer** – No comments received
3. **DC - Highways** – No Objection
4. **DC - Trees (East & Purbeck)** – No objection subject to condition
5. **Colehill Town Council** – No Comment
6. **Colehill & Wimborne Minster East Ward Members**
 - Cllr Todd has raised concerns from the school that delays in determining the application may affect the ability to complete the proposed works during the summer holiday period, potentially impacting school operations at the start of the new academic year.

Representations received

The application was advertised by site notices.

No neighbour representations have been received.

9. 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.

10. Relevant policies

Development plan

In this case the development plan comprises the adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan 2014:

Adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan – Part 1 Core strategy 2014:

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

KS1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

KS2: Settlement hierarchy

KS1: Transport and development

HE2: Design of new development

HE3: Landscape quality

HE4: Open Space Provision

ME6: Flood management, mitigation and defence

Material considerations

• Emerging draft Dorset Council Local Plan:

Policy DM4: Emerging development plan proposals 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 compliance of the relevant policies in the emerging plan with the policies for plan-making in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given to them).

The Dorset Council Local Plan

The emerging Dorset Local Plan is being prepared in accordance with plan-making processes set out in the Levelling Up and Regenerating Act 2023 and Local Planning Regulations (2026). As the plan is still at an early stage of the plan making process, limited weight can be attached to it when taking decisions on planning applications. Decisions on planning applications should continue to be assessed against the policies in adopted development plans, national planning policy and any other relevant material considerations.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

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.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 17 August 2026, sets out the Government's national planning policies for both plan-making and decision-making in England.

When determining development proposals decision-makers are required to take a positive and proactive approach and to seek to approve sustainable development where possible.

The NPPF introduces a permanent presumption in favour of sustainable development, through Policies S3 to S5 (which replaces the former "tilted balance" contained in paragraph 11 of the previous NPPF) and sets out the principles for development within and outside settlements. The Framework also confirms that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Relevant NPPF chapters and policies include:

- Chapter 3: Decision making policies. Local planning authorities should approach decision making positively, proactively and proportionately. They should work with applicants through pre-application engagement and consultations and aim to resolve concerns through planning conditions or obligations where possible to avoid delay and to enable an approval rather than a refusal. Applications that accord with the

development plan, the NPPF and other material considerations should not be refused where they can clearly be approved.

Policy DM3: Determining Development

DM6: Use of planning conditions and obligations

- Chapter 4: Achieving Sustainable Development. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to meet development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including by maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlements, enabling development which will support the rural economy, rural communities and the provision of infrastructure, and limiting development away from settlements to help safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

S4: Principle of development within settlements

- Chapter 12: Making effective use of land. Planning decisions should give substantial weight to proposals that make more effective use of land and buildings, while maintaining good design, living conditions and local character. This includes redevelopment of previously developed, vacant, underused, contaminated or derelict sites, reuse of existing buildings, creation of additional homes through sensitive infill, upward extensions and development within existing plots. Higher-density development is also promoted within settlements in well-connected locations near public transport. Development that fails to make efficient use of land in accordance with the policy should be refused.

L2: Making effective use of land

- Chapter 14. Design Policies. Good design remains a fundamental component of sustainable development, and development should respond positively to local character while creating attractive and functional places. Proposals that demonstrate good design and place-making should be supported, while those that fail to meet established design standards should be refused unless clearly justified.

DP3: Key principles for well-designed places

DP4: The design process

- Chapter 15. Promoting sustainable transport. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that transport considerations are taken fully into account in the preparation of development plans and the evolution and assessment of development proposals; using a vision-led approach to embed the role that transport infrastructure and choices can play in creating well-designed, sustainable, inclusive and popular places.

TR4: Street design, access and parking

TR6: Assessing transport impacts

- Chapter 16: Promoting healthy communities. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to promote the creation of healthy and inclusive places and support the provision of appropriate public services, by enabling development which can support this aim and seeking to retain, improve and deliver new facilities which are important for community wellbeing and minimising inequalities.

HC4: Proposals for new and improved community facilities, public service infrastructure and development providing public health benefits

HC7: Development affecting existing recreational land and facilities

- Chapter 17. Pollution, public protection and security. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account risks posed by pollution and other hazards; that any impacts which development might have are taken into account; and that sufficient provision is made for development required for public safety and security.
 - P2: Ground conditions
 - P3: Living conditions and pollution
- Chapter 18: Managing flood risk and coastal change. Development proposals should minimise risks to development arising from all sources of flooding and coastal change, taking into account the impacts of climate change, by steering development away from areas of risk, ensuring that development will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and incorporating sustainable drainage systems where appropriate.
 - F4: Assessing flood risk for decision-making
 - F7: Ensuring development is safe from flooding
 - F8: Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses
- Chapter 19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Development should conserve and enhance the natural environment by protecting important landscapes, habitats, biodiversity and trees, while maximising opportunities for nature recovery, green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain. Proposals should avoid significant environmental harm, prioritise land of lower environmental value where possible, and be sensitively designed in protected landscapes and coastal areas. Development causing unacceptable impacts on designated sites, irreplaceable habitats or biodiversity that cannot be adequately avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused.
 - N3: Trees in new development

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

Including 'Determining a planning application'

Supplementary Planning Guidance

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.

11. 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.

12. 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 will enhance opportunities for engagement in outdoor activities and will provide improved toilet facilities both benefiting young children.

13. Public Benefits

No significant financial benefits identified

14. Planning Assessment

Principle of development

- 14.1 The proposed extension relates to an existing school use and seeks to enhance facilities within the established school site. The development would support the continued operation and functionality of the school and, as such, the principle of development is considered acceptable. The extension would be sited on an area currently used as hard-surfaced playground; the proposal would not result in the loss of any playing pitches, sports fields, or formal recreational facilities. Whilst a modest area of playground would be lost (approx. 18sqm for the toilets), the development would provide enhanced school facilities, including a larger covered area and additional toilet provision, improving the usability of the site and providing greater opportunities for outdoor activity, shade and protection from adverse weather conditions. Policy HC4 requires that substantial weight should be given to benefits where improved community facilities would be provided as in this case.
- 14.2 Having regard to Policy HC7 of the NPPF ‘Development affecting existing recreational land and facilities’, it is considered that the educational and recreational benefits arising from the proposal outweigh the limited loss of playground space, and the development would not result in an unacceptable reduction in the quality or functionality of recreational provision available to pupils.

Impact on character and appearance including trees

- 14.3 Local Plan Policy HE2 requires development to be compatible with its surroundings, in relation to 11 criteria including scale, visual impact and its relationship with mature trees.

This policy is judged to accord with NPPF design policy DP3 which identifies key principles for the creation of well-designed places and policy N3 'Trees in new development' which recognises the benefits that trees can provide. The existing school building has a relatively low visual presence within the street scene, with established trees around the site contributing to limited views of the building and reinforcing the sylvan character that defines the wider area surrounding the school.

- 14.4 The proposed single storey extension is to be partially positioned beneath the existing roof structure and would therefore sit lower than the main school building. The extension proposes a tiled pent-style (single pitch) roof that reflects the design of the existing building, resulting in a form that is sympathetic to the established built appearance of the school. The proposed external materials comprise shiplap cladding and anthracite-coloured Kingspan roof tiles, which are comparable in appearance to those already present on the building and would ensure a compatible finish.
- 14.5 The extension would extend approximately 3.3 metres from the existing south elevation, largely reflecting the footprint of the structure to be removed, and would occupy only around half the width of the existing school building. Consequently, it is considered to represent a modest addition that would not appear overbearing or disproportionate.
- 14.6 Furthermore, the extension would be suitably screened along both Middlehill Road and Pilford Heath Road by the surrounding vegetation.
- 14.7 The Council's Tree Officer has noted that the trees on the South and West flanks of the site are positioned behind a low picket fence and has advised that this should remain in place for the duration of the construction as this will be adequate to protect the trees. The trees on the Eastern side of the site do not sit behind any existing fencing. A line of Heras fencing will be required to be installed prior to construction beginning and remain in place until completion of the project, to adequately protect the trees.
- 14.8 A planning condition will be imposed to secure adequate tree protection fencing is in situ with photographic evidence to be provided prior to commencement of the works on site.
- 14.9 Given its limited scale, compatible design and screened position, the proposed extension is considered to have limited visual impact on the character and appearance of the area. Subject to the above condition, the proposal is in accordance with the requirements of policies HE2 and HE3 of the Local Plan and policies DP3 and N3 of the NPPF in regard to character and appearance.

Impact on the living conditions of the occupants and neighbouring properties

- 14.10 Policy HE2 requires that development should be compatible with nearby properties including minimising general disturbance to amenity. This accords with NPPF policy P3 'Living conditions and pollution' which requires healthy living conditions for users and neighbouring residents including consideration of air, noise, artificial light and other forms of pollution.
- 14.11 The extension would be suitably screened from the properties on Pilford Heath Road to the east. Whilst the extension may be associated with an increase in the intensity of the current use by the school with associated noise, given the context of the existing school use and that the distances of approximately 30m between the extension and the front boundary of these properties and the intervening boundary screening there is no demonstrable harm anticipated.
- 14.12 Furthermore, the distance to the neighbouring properties on Middlehill Road exceeds 40m. As such, it is concluded that the proposal would not result in any additional harmful

impact on the amenity of these neighbouring properties so accords with policies HE2 and P3.

Flood risk and drainage

- 14.13 The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, and the site is located within Flood Zone 1. The Environment Agency surface water flood mapping identifies areas of high surface water risk during a 1 in 100-year event (including an allowance for climate change) to the north and south of the site, however these areas do not coincide with the location of the proposed extension.
- 14.14 The extension would be constructed on an existing area of hardstanding and would not encroach into identified areas at risk of surface water flooding. Taking a proportionate and pragmatic approach, it is considered that the development would not increase flood risk on or off the site and is therefore acceptable in planning terms. The proposal is considered to accord with Local Plan policy ME6 and NPPF policy F7.

Highway impacts, safety, access and parking

- 14.15 No changes are proposed to the existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements serving the school. The development will continue to utilise the established access point from Cannon Hill Road, and the proposal will not result in any changes to vehicle movements, parking provision, or site circulation.
- 14.16 The Council's Highway Officer states that it is important to ensure that any construction works do not impact on safe access and egress of children to and from school. A suitably worded planning condition has been imposed requiring a Construction Management plan be submitted prior to commencement, to ensure safe access and egress during construction, as such the proposal complies with policy KS11 and NPPF policies TR4 and TR6.

Biodiversity

- 14.17 The application has claimed the de minimis exemption from the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. This exemption is accepted as the proposed development falls below the de minimis threshold and meets the relevant criteria. The de minimis threshold applies to 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).
- 14.18 The proposal will not require alterations to the existing roof of the building. Due to the scale and nature of the development no ecological assessment has been required.

15. Environmental implications

There will be some carbon emissions associated with the new development. No significant environmental impacts have been identified.

16 Summary of issues and the planning balance

For the above reasons the application is found to accord with the Development Plan as a whole and there are no material planning considerations that would warrant refusal.

The agreement of the agent to the pre-commencement planning condition was received on 5th August 2026.

17 Recommendation

To Grant planning permission 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:

100 1 Site Location and Block Plan

103 2 Proposed Floor plan

104 2 Proposed Elevation Plan

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

3. No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CMP shall include measures to ensure that construction traffic, contractor parking, deliveries and site operations do not prejudice the safe access and egress of pupils, staff and visitors to and from the school. The approved CMP shall be adhered to throughout the construction period.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to safeguard the safe operation of the school.

4. The erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans Q6883 drawing 100 (amended) and BS 5837:2012 (as amended) before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought to the site for the purposes of the development. Fencing shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site and nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced, nor ground levels altered or excavated without the prior written consent of the local planning authority.

Dated photographic evidence of the erected fencing must be supplied to the Local Planning Authority at least 5 days prior to the commencement of works.

Reason: In order to prevent damage during construction to trees that are shown to be retained on the site.

5. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed entirely of the materials details of which are identified in section 5 of the application form and drawing '104/2 Proposed Elevations' unless any minor variation is agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: This is required to ensure the satisfactory visual relationship of the new development to the existing

6. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority and an investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with requirements of BS10175 (as amended). Should any contamination be found requiring remediation, a remediation scheme, including a time scale, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Remediation must then be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and on completion of the approved remediation scheme a verification report shall be prepared and submitted within two weeks of completion and submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure risks from contamination are minimised.

Informative Notes:

1. The applicant's attention is drawn to the letter from the Scotia Gas Network (SGN) dated 29 June 2026 and Scottish & Southern Electricity (SSE) dated 29 June 2026 in respect of this application.

2. 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 which is not 'major development' (within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015) where:
 - 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).

3. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with policy DM3 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.