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**Re-Submission
Outline Planning application for Steiner Academy, Much Dewchurch, Hereford**

Dear Mike Willmont

I enclose a re-submission application for new school buildings and access, at Much Dewchurch, Hereford.

Following refusal of the previous application at the Southern sub-area Committee on Jan 24th 2007 this revised submission includes additional information to address the Councillor's concerns.

In relation to the three reasons listed for refusal with respect to Policy CF5, we have the following comments:

1a: 'The form, extent and scale of the development, together with associated activity and movement would not be appropriate to the scale of Much Dewchurch or reflect its character':

Much Dewchurch is a 'main' settlement to which more development is to be steered over the coming years. It is entirely reasonable for an existing school in a main settlement to increase its pupils modestly as is being proposed by the applicants. The new school as an Academy will become state-funded, changing from its existing status as a fee-paying school. This will enable the school to become more directly relevant and accessible to the local community as well as a wider county level.

The new access arrangements will shift school traffic activities away from the village centre, thus removing congestion that currently exists at the War memorial 'Pippin's' access and the disturbance that this causes to the residents.

We acknowledge that the new buildings would increase the visual impact of the school; however, we do not accept that its new form will be inappropriate or out of character to its surroundings. The current designs are a direct result of consultation with yourselves and English Heritage, who have supported the 'form, extent and scale' as proposed in the previous application. The Access and Design Statement explains our design approach. We have paid careful consideration to the design in relation to the setting of St. David's Church retaining the existing views from the church. We also have taken account of the local landscape. In order to minimise the scale of new buildings we are setting the buildings down into the landscape by one-storey, with a roof height less than the current school buildings and proposing a barn-like form to the classroom wings, with external circulation. This arrangement reduces the mass of the overall building and gives the building depth and scale in keeping with the local barn vernacular.

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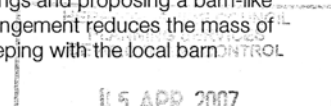
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Please note that the Design and Access document shows revised drawings as part of our design development with the school with the overall effect to further integrate the building in its surroundings. The roofscape is modified to the new buildings with hipped ends, which bring the scale of the buildings down at the ends, and we have removed the chimney feature, which potentially competed with the church. The new buildings are also reduced in area.

We are re-furbishing the existing school buildings as part of our proposals, which offers a sustainable approach to design in the re-use of buildings, and they will be re-integrated into the community for use after school hours with arts/ crafts and music facilities on offer. The Academy will also provide other new facilities to the community including for example a gym, hall, kitchen and a café as well as an all-weather pitch which will provide tennis courts/ basket-ball court.

1b: 'The nature of the proposed Academy is such that it is not necessary for it to be located in Much Dewchurch.'

The School has been located on the site for 24 years. It provides all-through Steiner education for pupils from 3 -16 and at present it has 294 places. As an Academy it will be able to offer 4 more places per school year. There already exist examples in the county of comparably sized schools in main settlements, for example: Fairfield High School, Peterchurch and Weobley High School.

The Academy will specialise in the Land and Environment, with a specific land-works programme, and it is therefore appropriate that the school remains in its rural location. Land will be set aside to make habitats for wildlife, to grow food for the kitchens, to cultivate materials for crafts and potentially for the creation of a small organic farm worked by the pupils. The building itself will also demonstrate in its design the principles of respecting the land and environment, made from locally sourced materials, being highly sustainable and with very low energy consumption, with the long-term aim of gaining zero-carbon status. The pupils' appreciation of and sympathy for the land and nature begins in class 1 and is an integral part of each year's unique curriculum through to class 10. This aspect of the Academy is fundamental to the school's identity. It will be exemplary in its specialism and in environmental aspirations.

1c: 'The proposed development does not provide satisfactory measures so as to ensure that the increased vehicle and pedestrian activity would be safe and convenient and not exacerbate the current operational difficulties arising from the existing school.'

The technical Highways requirements for the new access were satisfied during extensive consultation during the last application period, substantiated by the safety audit submitted at that time. However, in response to the above grounds for refusal the Transport Assessment has been revised and a Travel Plan, a new document prepared by the School Community, is included.

The new entrance and car parking at the south east end of the village will form the main access for all visitors and pupils to the school. It will overcome the present difficulties resulting from the use of the existing poor access, will be safer for the children and will cause less disturbance to residents. A recent survey shows that two thirds of school traffic currently comes from the South-East. The new access therefore will substantially reduce traffic through the village.

The Travel Plan supports the commitment to strictly limit existing access at the 'Pippins' to disabled parking only, together with emergency access and deliveries to the school. The Travel Plan also highlights how the walk from the new drop-off point to classrooms provides an opportunity for the school to extend its commitment to the healthy living agenda. Parents will sign up to this arrangement as part of their 'school agreement'. The Travel Plan recommends that the school provides additional mini-buses to reduce school traffic and works with the Highways Authorities to secure improvements on road safety that can support initiatives to encourage walking and cycling to the school.

Other issues that are relevant to this application and have been discussed and explored during this re-submission period are:



Bus shelter: We are currently proposing to re-locate the bus shelter slightly further north-west and so be able to create a bus lay-by to provide a safer area for buses to pull-in - they currently block the road. We can re-locate the existing structure, or agree a new design in discussion with the Parish Council. Subject to detail design, we also can explore the option to retain the bus shelter in its current position, which we believe may be feasible. We would be happy to discuss the proposals further with the Parish Council, who have agreed to meet with us formally once the application has been submitted.

Traffic calming: In discussion with Highways there is no requirement for traffic-calming with this application proposal. However there is a strong feeling from the school and community that something needs to be implemented to make traffic slow down. Evidence exists of excessive speed on the B4348 through the village and a number of options exist to manage the speed of traffic. Measures such as speed responsive warning signs will be considered, with the school ready to make appropriate contributions towards the cost of delivery.

Drainage: In the last Planning application we proposed a mains connection, subject to findings from a Welsh Water study, which we commissioned. We now are proposing on-site treatment, as the findings from Welsh Water require a prohibitively expensive solution. The estimated costs for a mains connection are in the region of £600k, to upgrade the existing sewerage works. Our estimate for an on-site treatment plant is in the region of £100-200k maximum, depending on the treatment plant used. In discussion with the Environment Agency, they recommend connection to a Mains if it exists, in the first instance and if it is "practical" and "reasonable". Clearly in this instance it is not reasonable to connect to the mains. We are happy to provide the cost breakdown on the options if you require. The Environment Agency will require a Discharge Consent Application, which we intend to submit should the outline application be successful.

Finally I list the enclosures highlighting the revised documents.

Six copies of the following documents:

- Completed forms dated 4th April 2007, revised drainage and reduced building area.
- Location drawing 1311/P/20
- Leaflet prepared by the Hereford Waldorf School, to be circulated to the local Community and Councillors of the Sub-Committee. This will be sent under separate cover.
- Revised Design and Access statement including landscape approach, to be read in conjunction with the leaflet, as above.
- Revised Planning Statement prepared by Paul Smith Associates
- Ecological and Protected Species Surveys prepared by Wildways Ecology and Countryside.
- A revised Education Support Paper prepared by Navigant Consulting, who have been involved with the project from inception.
- Flood Risk assessment document
- Revised Transport Assessment including the Road Safety audit stage 1. This will be sent under separate cover
- New Travel plan prepared by the Hereford Waldorf School Community in consultation with Herefordshire Council's School travel advisor.

Please let me know if you require any further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely



Julia Kashdan-Brown

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