

**6 DCSW2008/1702/F - SITING AND ERECTION OF PREFABRICATED CLASSROOMS, WC AND KITCHEN FACILITIES TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION DURING REHABILITATION AND EXTENSION OF EXISTING SCHOOL PREMISES, (PLANNING PERMISSION REF: DCSW2003/3461/F) FOR A PERIOD OF 30 MONTHS, HEREFORD WALDORF SCHOOL, MUCH DEWCHURCH, HEREFORD, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 8DL.**

**For: Hereford Steiner Academy Ltd per John Renshaw Architects, 86 Constitution Street, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 6RP.**

Date Received: 30 June 2008

Ward: Valletts Grid Ref: 48127, 31064

Expiry Date: 29 September 2008

Local Member: Councillor MJ Fishley

**1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 Much Dewchurch is located some 7 miles south of Hereford and lies astride the Class II road that connects Wormelow and Allensmore. The site is located on the southern side of the village and comprises the existing Waldorf School. The school site covers a substantial area of land which encompasses the school buildings, pastureland to the south, the existing outdoor play areas to the south of St. David's Church and an area of pastureland to the east. In total the area is some 4.5 hectares.
- 1.2 The application site itself is piece of agricultural land to the south of the former farmhouse (used for staff accommodation, the kindergarten and craft rooms) and is sub-divided from the rest of the school by chestnut paling fencing. The site extends eastwards with a finger of land which runs along the playing field and then heads northwards along the eastern boundary of the school with the Grade I Listed St. David's Church. There are a number of monuments in the graveyard and The Old Vicarage which are listed buildings.
- 1.3 This application is for the siting of temporary classroom units with associated engineering operations and is submitted in order to provide classroom accommodation and other ancillary facilities for use for the duration of the construction of a new assembly hall, classroom block and ancillary building approved pursuant to the extant Application No. SW2003/3461/F. It is proposed to site a maximum of four double classroom units (15.2 metres long and 7.9 metres wide) either side of two temporary buildings comprising a kitchen (3 metres wide and 6.1 metres long) and a toilet unit (both 6.6 metres wide and 6.1 metres long). The number of classroom units will vary according to the requirements of the school during the phased construction of the approved permanent buildings. In the first two phases, two classroom units will be required increasing to four in the third and fourth phases which will include two decked units (maximum height of 6.6 metres).

- 1.4 There will be a 2 metres wide path created that will link the site for the temporary buildings to the rest of the school. Vehicular access will be via a track between the school curtilage and The Pippins further to the west. This would be the route for the HGVs delivering and removing the structures the subject of this application.
- 1.5 Details were submitted with the application for the phasing of construction work including the areas delineated for the contractor's compound which in the final phase will utilise the car park to the north of the school building. The applicants have provided further details of car parking on site throughout the phases including the use of the courtyard area for car parking whilst the contractor's compound is sited on the existing car park. It should be stressed that these arrangements are not part of this application but have been submitted to highlight the means by which parking provision (total of 30 spaces) will be provided during the construction of the approved permanent buildings.
- 1.6 Car parking will be for use by staff and visitors only with contractors vehicles accommodated within the construction compound.

## 2. Policies

### 2.1 Planning Policy Statements

PPS1	-	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS7	-	Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPG13	-	Transport
PPG15	-	Planning and the Historic Environment

### 2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan

Policy S1	-	Sustainable Development
Policy S2	-	Development Requirements
Policy S7	-	Natural and Historic Heritage
Policy S11	-	Community Facilities and Services
Policy DR2	-	Land Use and Activity
Policy DR3	-	Movement
Policy DR4	-	Environment
Policy DR6	-	Water Resources
Policy T11	-	Parking Provision
Policy T14	-	School Travel
Policy LA2	-	Landscape Character
Policy LA3	-	Setting of Settlements
Policy LA6	-	Landscaping Schemes
Policy NC1	-	Biodiversity and Development
Policy HBA4	-	Setting of Listed Buildings
Policy CF2	-	Foul Drainage
Policy CF5	-	New Community Facilities

## 3. Planning History

- 3.1 SH871704PF Change of use of barn into a 2- - Approved 10.02.88  
storey classroom block and  
construction of playground  
parking and turning area

SH940094PF	Erection of new complex to provide theatre and hall space, art/craft facilities and alterations to link block	- Refused 20.04.94
SH940095PF	Erection of a timber framed kindergarten building	- Refused 20.04.94 Appeal dismissed 15.12.94
SH950413PF	Extant temporary permission for two portakabins and a timber storage shed	- Approved 21.06.95
SH950448PF	Kindergarten block, workshops and hall complex, altered and extended toilet block and hard play area	- Refused 20.09.95 Appeal dismissed 04.10.96
SH970543PF	Retention of two portakabins and storage shed	- Approved 03.09.97
SW2000/2970/F	Change of use to educational premises with extension and alteration and erection of garage workshop (Church Farm)	- Approved 18.04.01
DCSW2003/3461/F	New assembly hall, new classroom block and ancillary buildings. Removal of temporary buildings and sheds	- Approved 09.01.04
DCSW2005/3136/F	Change of use from agricultural use to overspill car parking in part of field on temporary basis	- Deemed Withdrawn 23.03.07
DCSW2006/3430/O	Site for new school buildings and new access to extend school facilities	- Refused 24.01.07 Appeal Dismissed 11.03.08
DCSW2007/1091/O	Site for new school buildings and new access to extend school facilities	- Refused 20.06.07 Appeal Dismissed 11.03.08

#### 4. Consultation Summary

##### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Environment Agency – No objection. This is a case where the Agency offers standing advice with regard to surface water run-off and drainage.

##### Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Traffic Manager states that further information is required. How will pedestrian access, cycle parking and car parking be catered for?

4.3 Comments are awaited on the revised car parking plans and will be reported verbally to the Committee. Members are again advised that, as stated above, the management of parking during the construction of the approved school buildings does not form part of the consideration of this application for the temporary classroom units.

4.4 Conservation Manager – Comments awaited.

## **5. Representations**

5.1 In a covering letter to the application the applicant's agent states:

- applying for permission for siting and erection of pre-fabricated classrooms, toilets and kitchen facilities to provide temporary accommodation during the rehabilitation and extension of existing school buildings.

5.2 In a further letter it is stated:

- pathways/decking referred to will not be covered.

5.3 In the Design and Access Statement the following main points are raised:

- proposed temporary buildings needed to replace accommodation in existing school buildings whilst works to rehabilitate and extend the school are carried out
- works undertaken in four phases between August 2008 and October 2010
- four temporary classrooms needed during phases 0 and 1 (see diagrams) and a further four units during phases 1A and 11. Temporary toilet and kitchen facilities required during phases 0, 1 and 1A
- temporary accommodation removed from site as soon as permanent facilities are handed over
- siting best for proximity and ease of access whilst works carried out on site
- segregation between pedestrians and contractor's traffic
- minimising extent of temporary encroachment beyond existing curtilage of school
- minimising visual impact of temporary buildings
- standard pre-fabricated units, utilises slope some 3 metres lower than general ground level and existing school level, not obtrusive from village
- use of two-storey unit in Phases 1A and 11 justified by lower level and reduction in footprint
- colours will be selected in conjunction with local planning authority
- be DDA compliant ramps and ballustrades, pathways of proprietary grass reinforcement system.
- no need for regular vehicular access, no provision has been made
- foul and waste water will discharge to existing septic tank.

5.4 In a further letter received from the applicant's agent the following main points are raised:

- please see copies of car parking arrangements for each of the phases; total of 30 car parking spaces available during each phase (i.e. no reduction in existing provision)
- school is currently developing a Transportation Strategy aimed at reducing number of car journeys, by car sharing, use of shuttle buses connecting with public transport and increased use of public transport and cycles

- relocation of school's early years facility to Llanwarne Village Hall will also help reduce number of vehicle movements
- from September 2008 supervised drop-off facilities for parents in existing forecourt
- parents have been informed only parking provision on premises for staff and visitors (located, as at present, in forecourt and west side of courtyard)
- forecourt will be used as a contractor's compound during final phase of the construction works (Jan - July 2010), during this phase car parking will be in the courtyard
- ad hoc parking has taken place to south, this has ceased.

5.5 In a letter received from the applicant in response to issues raised in representations, the following main points are raised:

- temporary accommodation: purpose of implementing 2004 permission is to obviate need for temporary accommodation
- buildings redundant once new buildings are complete, on hire to school, therefore school has strong financial incentive to remove them as soon as new buildings are handed over
- school is developing a Transportation Strategy, aim is to significantly reduce number of car journeys to and from the school. Measures include car sharing, school shuttle buses connecting with public transport and increased use of public transport and cycles
- from September 2008 there will be a supervised drop-off and pick up facility only for parents in the existing forecourt. Parents have been informed only parking provision on premises for staff and visitors, located as at present in forecourt and west side of the courtyard (forecourt is only used as a contractor's compound during the final phase of the construction works)
- perplexed by statement that plans do not resemble those approved in 2004, subject to minor, non-material amendments the planning permission will be implemented as approved
- aware of obligation to discharge planning conditions, our agents are currently preparing the information required
- site access will be strictly regularised in order to comply with health and safety regulations and to minimise inconvenience to school and its neighbours.

5.6 The Parish Council make the following observations:

"The proposed temporary classrooms and toilets have raised concerns from the residents of Much Dewchurch and the Parish Council.

The proposed site for the buildings is outside the settlement boundary, the buildings would be visible from the Church and Churchyard. The dilapidated temporary units in the School playground do not have current planning permission and the items erected in the field without permission must be removed before considering this application. There is no indication as to whether the proposed units are in section form or already assembled. Access to the site is very limited and the Parish Council question how large transporter lorries could get to the site without damage and inconvenience to properties and residents at the access point, which has occurred on previous occasions, particularly at the War Memorial.

The Parish Council request a written guarantee for completion dates for removal of present illegal items and proposed temporary buildings (if allowed).

These comments only refer to the application for the temporary buildings and drawings TW/1, TW/2, TW/3, TW/3 rev A, TW/4 and Portaloo, 07S-578DC-21-02, but the Parish Council have noted the contents of the seven sheets of plans.”

- 5.7 The Parish Council make the following observations in response to receipt of details for on-site parking during different phases, as follows:

“There have been numerous confrontations between School personnel and people visiting the Church and Much Dewchurch Parish Council consider it not to be unreasonable to request that a condition be included to keep the access lane and the parking space for Church visitors' vehicles clear at all times.

The Parish Council also request that time limits and conditions are adhered to, as the indicated time schedule to complete the development being 30 months is a long time for the Village and residents to face noise and inconvenience.

The proposed parking spaces may well accommodate School vehicles, but no one knows how many nor the size of the contractors vehicles which will require parking spaces for the duration of the development work. Therefore there is no assurance that the proposals will address the concerns being raised nor Health and Safety requirements which will arise when work is in progress.”

- 5.8 The Parish Council state:

“Further information needed regarding route of traffic; conflict will occur and inconvenience to residents of Almond House and The Pippins. Damage could also occur. Should have been consultation, also poor risk assessment (Health and Safety). Needs more thought and consideration.”

- 5.9 Thirty one letters of objection have been received. The following main points are raised:

- temporary buildings already, approval expired not enforced, do not trust applicant nor Council to enforce
- site for temporary buildings will increase site area for school; therefore contrary to Appeal Decision/Inspector's wishes
- temporary buildings may be allowed to remain
- hard-standing could form basis for car park
- need to penalise/fine School if buildings not removed
- excessive gap between southern boundary and buildings
- how will field be reinstated?
- no application for change of use of field
- will detract from setting of village and of Grade I Church
- 30 months excessive; needs to be itemised to be credible
- need to ensure conditions for 2004 approval discharged first (inc. archaeological investigation and drainage) i.e. before development approved
- plans submitted different from 2004 approval; therefore fresh planning application necessitated
- applications for extended development on recently acquired fields in 2006 and 2007 refused and both dismissed in March 2008
- single track inadequate for access for church/domestic use and contractor's traffic
- traffic will back up, as presently, onto main road, parking will be displaced onto main road (dangerous and illegal) and around village cul-de-sacs

- contractors taking over car park (for compound) in Phase II; where are cars to be parked?
- how will 40 x 10 feet long structures get down lane without damaging hedges, etc?
- no traffic plans
- need to restrict use to 9 - 5, weekdays only
- need road markings
- how will track be reinstated/repaired?
- need improved drainage in place, given it was 220 pupils in 2004, currently 270, proposed to be 316 + staff
- remote site for public transport; school serves disparate areas
- no cohesive travel plan produced, a criticism of Council officers previously
- concern for cyclists on HGV laden B4348 road
- amenity and safety to nearby dwellings and church with increase in traffic a major concern. School people have abused church visitors over access previously
- Inspector (Public Inquiry) stated vehicles back up onto road, concern to residents and users of main road. School roll of 250, 316 from September 2008 need convincing evidence on how to reduce traffic movement
- stated temporary road and hardstanding will be provided for HGVs on south field; separate application? If allowed, need to see reinstatement conditions
- need to resolve above before approval can be granted
- make deliveries post 9.30am and not between 3.00pm and 4.00pm to avoid congestion.

5.10 In respect of details for car parking and Travel Plan submitted; the following objections were received:

- no additional public transport available (as stated)
- those who cycle locally, will continue if allowed, to do so
- parents will park illegally on main road or on private drives, therefore dangerous and illegal for former and unacceptable to the latter
- suggest using Three Horseshoes and Park Ballrooms (Wormelow) car park for shuttle bus pick up points
- seems car parking area will be a building site, where will cars be parked?
- flow of construction traffic hazardous, given narrow access and dangerous stretch of road
- findings of expensive inquiry disregarded
- is it safe for children to play in a designated car parking area
- area south of curtilage used for parking in recent months (not ceased as stated) there until recently; Enforcement Officer informed in March, proven inadequacy of 30 spaces
- not convinced vehicle movements can be reduced; average 11 miles, not possible to increase amount of walking/cycling.

5.11 Six letters of support have been received. The following main points are raised:

- aware of history, strongly support
- have seen current condition of classrooms, important to be allowed to continue education
- sensible to allow temporary buildings, it allows School to function
- now in maintained sector need, means to lawfully implement planning permission
- also needs to be proper facilities for car parking and dropping/collection of children from school

- school has suffered enough from local campaign to undermine school's efforts to improve facilities for many local children who go to school now and in the future
- without temporary classrooms all the classes could not be taught and there would be no toilet facilities for the children
- logical site for temporary classrooms
- important for children to have outside area for ball games that is not slippery or muddy in winter.

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Southern Planning Services, Garrick House, Widemarsh Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

## **6. Officer's Appraisal**

- 6.1 It is considered that the main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are the principle of allowing the development with regard to existing temporary buildings on site and the extant planning permission, the relevance of the issues raised during the Public Inquiry held in relation to the dismissed appeals for a new school development (DCSW2006/3430/O and DCSW2007/1091/O), the possible use of site in future, access and drainage.
- 6.2 The temporary buildings are required whilst works are carried out on the school in respect of the planning permission granted in January 2004 for a new assembly hall, new classroom block and ancillary block, solar panels on existing roof and the removal of temporary buildings and sheds. The site selected is considered to relate well to the school and is sensitively sited as regards the Grade I church. The proposed siting of the classrooms will still leave the playing field to the south of the listed church, the courtyard and northern car park free for use. This space is needed for the contractors' compound and staff and visitors car parking.
- 6.3 The buildings are not permanent structures and therefore do not raise the same policy issues as those that were the subject of the recently dismissed appeals for a permanent extension and other works. The works proposed do not establish a precedent given that the works are time limited as are the works to refurbish and extend the school. Works such as a hardstanding for HGVs and the path linking the school and the temporary classrooms will need to be removed with the classrooms, kitchen and toilet blocks and the land made good to the satisfaction of the local planning authority. It is not considered that this application could be refused on the basis that the classroom units and associated buildings could remain on the site after works are completed. This will be controlled by way of the time limiting condition. The existing temporary buildings which were refused by the appointed Inspector at the Public Inquiry earlier this year are to be removed as part of the works to implement the extant planning permission and their removal will be monitored. They are in the way of the contractors' compound and will be covered in new building and as such there is no reason to consider that they will be retained beyond the construction phase but clearly this would be the subject of further investigation if required.
- 6.4 It is reiterated that the contractors' compound does not require planning permission and it should be noted that the parking and siting of the contractors' compound fall outside the identified site boundary for the application and as such are not therefore matters that should be considered under the terms of this application.
- 6.5 The extant planning permission is subject to a number of conditions, and details have been submitted in respect of some of the conditions which are currently the subject of detailed consideration. It is not evident from the plans submitted that they materially



differ from the approved plans and ultimately this is not a matter of consideration in relation to this application.

- 6.6 The applicants have provided details of how the classroom units will be delivered and there are no highway safety implications in relation to this temporary disturbance associated with the use of the track that would warrant withholding planning. Clearly, should damage be done to any hedges and trees then this would be a matter for those with third party interests, including those who own the adjacent agricultural land, to resolve with the applicant and their contractors.
- 6.7 The last issue relates to the access to the site whilst works are undertaken to the school. It is evident that the Inspector who considered the recent appeals noted the existing access problems, however that was in relation to different proposals from that which already has extant planning permission. Clearly there will be a period when the movement of construction vehicles will result in inconvenience to local residents and this will be the case whether or not these temporary classroom units are in situ. It is not considered that the temporary units will significantly exacerbate the parking issues during the duration of any temporary permission and the applicant has sought to provide clarification as to how this difficult problem will be managed. The site proposed for the temporary units provides a safer environment for staff and children at the school and provides the basic necessities (i.e. kitchen and toilets) which will be required whilst work is carried out on the site. Furthermore it is stressed that it is the temporary classroom units that are the subject of the application and not the access arrangements whilst works are undertaken on the site.
- 6.8 The application can be supported subject to conditions restricting the time period, controlling the reinstatement of the site following removal of the temporary units, the colour of the units and ensuring that the foul drainage arrangements are controlled appropriately.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

**1. B01 (Development in accordance with the approved plans)**

**Reason. To ensure adherence to the approved plans in the interests of a satisfactory form of development and to comply with Policy DR1 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

**2. F20 (Temporary permission and reinstatement of land) (30 months from the date of permission)**

**Reason: The local planning authority is only prepared to allow the siting and use of the land as a temporary measure having regard to the sensitivity of the site in relation to the setting of the historic core of the village, including the Grade I Listed Church .**

**3. Prior to the installation of the classroom units and ancillary structures hereby approved, details of their external finish shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The units shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details for the duration of this permission**

**Reason: To conform with Policy LA2 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan and to minimise any visual intrusion into the surrounding countryside.**

**4. I24 (Standard of septic tank/soakaway system)**

**Reason: To prevent pollution of the water environment and to comply with Policy DR4 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

**Informative(s):**

- 1. N19 - Avoidance of doubt - Approved Plans**
- 2. N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission**

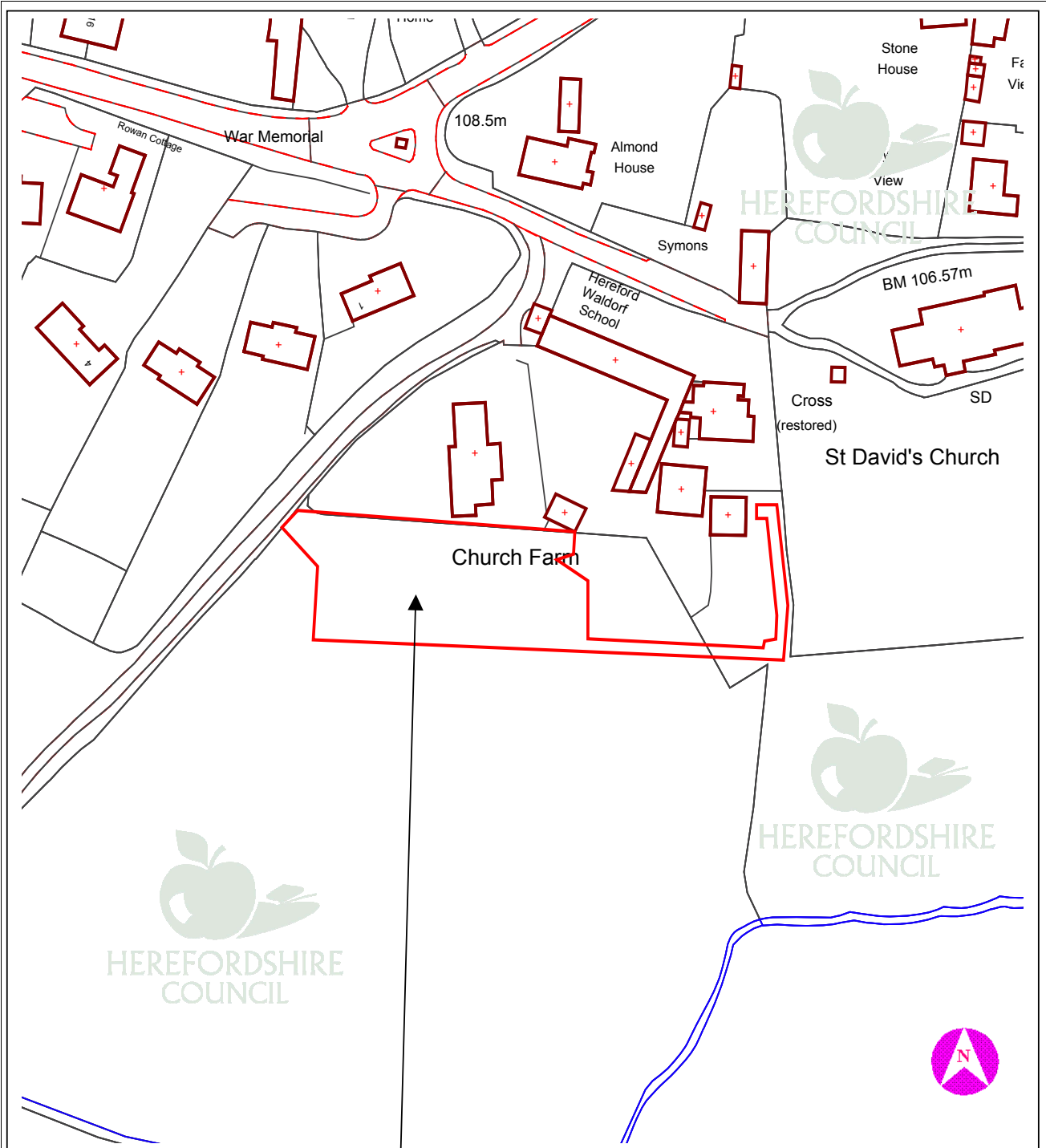
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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** DCSW2008/1702/F

**SCALE :** 1 : 1250

**SITE ADDRESS :** Hereford Waldorf School, Much Dewchurch, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR2 8DL

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