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For Immediate Release

JCoSS Trust submits planning application for new inclusive Jewish secondary school

The UK's first state-maintained, inclusive Jewish secondary school (JCoSS) moved one step closer today when the JCoSS Trust, the charity behind the scheme, submitted a thousand page planning application to the London Borough of Barnet.

The application proposes a 14,852m², state-of-the-art building on the site of the existing East Barnet Upper School on Westbrook Crescent, New Barnet. Inside, in addition to the usual school facilities will be dance and drama studios, a multi-gym 'Fitness Suite' and a hydrotherapy pool (the first of its kind in Barnet). Outside, there will be two brand new all-weather playing fields, as well as two grass pitches.

If the application is successful, JCoSS will be the first Jewish secondary school to treat on an equal basis Jews of all backgrounds and beliefs, and to provide a syllabus that encourages respect for and integration with the broader community. JCoSS will incorporate a 50-place Special Resource Unit under the auspices of Norwood for children with severe and complex disabilities.

478 people with children eligible to enter JCoSS have already registered an interest in the school by visiting its website, www.jcoss.org, despite it being still over three years until its anticipated opening. This number includes nearly 400 Barnet residents, all living within a six miles radius of the site.

Announcing the planning application, JCoSS Trust Chair, Michael Phillips, said:

“We are delighted by the support we have received for JCoSS both locally and across the borough, from Jews across the community and non-Jews alike. We hope we have managed to minimise the impact on local residents, while bringing to Barnet an excellent and innovative school, which will be a source of pride for the whole community.”

The JCoSS Trust has consulted widely on its plans over the past six months, hosting two public exhibitions as well as meeting with local residents’ groups and their representatives.

The London Borough of Barnet will now conduct its own consultation on the plans, before putting them to a Planning Committee meeting, to be held later in the year.

Should JCoSS obtain planning consent, detailed design work will begin immediately with construction anticipated to start in September 2008. The school will open in September 2010 with one year of entry plus students in the SRU, building year on year to 1,310 students in 2015.

Plans to create a new building for East Barnet School, to be consolidated on a single site on Chestnut Grove, are expected to be submitted over the summer.

Commenting on the project for the two new schools, Victoria Road resident, Caroline Kent, said:

"The redevelopment of East Barnet School and the building of JCoSS will enrich the local area, bringing not only further choice in education, but greater diversity."

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Computer generated images of the school available on request

For further information please see <http://www.jcoss.org>