

# Ribble Ecology

20 Hall Road

Fulwood

Preston

Lancashire

PR2 9QD

Tel: 01772 879545

mail@ribbleecology.co.uk

Clitheroe Royal Grammar School  
C/O Cassidy and Ashton  
7 East Cliff,  
Preston  
PR1 3JE

6<sup>th</sup> June 2012

Ref: RB-12-74

Dear sirs

**Re: Bat survey (plus consideration of breeding birds) at three trees that are proposed for felling (in connection with a planning application, ref 3/2012/0277) at Clitheroe Royal Grammar School, Chatburn Road, Clitheroe**

On the evening of **1<sup>st</sup> June 2012**, I, Ms Lorna Bousfield B.Sc.(Hons) MIEEM, Principle Ecologist at Ribble Ecology, attended the grounds of Clitheroe Royal Grammar School (CRGS) to conduct a daylight and nocturnal survey to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats at **three Hawthorn trees** within the grounds of the school.

Ribble Ecology was asked to undertake a bat survey at CRGS because of a planning proposal for the construction of a new sports hall building and reconfiguration of sports pitches (Ribble Valley Borough Council planning application ref **3/2012/0277**).

The proposal will affect land that is mostly open grass and tennis courts on hard standing, but also the three Hawthorn trees that have been made the subject of this bat survey. The trees have also been made the subject of an arboriculture survey in which they are labelled as specimens 07, 08 and 09 (ref Treescapes Consultancy Ltd: Pre-development Arboricultural Report, April 2012).

In addition to determining the presence or absence of roosting bats, Ribble Ecology has also assessed for the presence and likelihood of nesting birds, because wild birds are protected whilst breeding.

This letter presents information about the legislative protection of roosting bats and nesting birds, followed by the survey methodologies, survey results and conclusion.

## **1. Legislation**

All UK bat species are provided full legal protection under Schedule 5 (section 9) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, making them European Protected Species. In combination this legislation make it illegal to intentionally kill, injure, harm or disturb bats and illegal to damage, disturb or obstruct access to bat roosts.

Wild birds, their nests and their eggs are protected under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it illegal to kill or injure a bird and to destroy its eggs or its nest whilst it is in use or being built. Game birds are an exception and are protected under the separate Game Acts, which fully protect them during the close season. In addition, certain bird species are listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and these are afforded special protection that makes it illegal to disturb them at the nest.

## **2. Personnel**

I, Ms Lorna Bousfield, am an experienced bat worker and an active member of North and South Lancashire Bat Groups (**Natural England licence number 20114211**). I regularly conduct bat surveys at a range of environments and features, both as a volunteer and as a consultant.

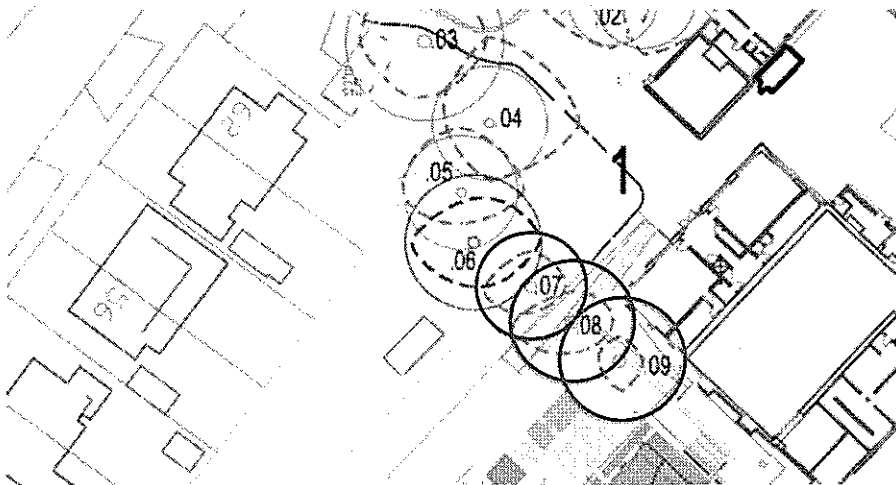
## **3. Survey Methodologies**

By **daylight** (early evening) I made a thorough inspection of the three trees from the ground, using binoculars and a high-powered torch where appropriate. All occurrences of rot holes, cracks and/or lifting bark were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats or nesting birds (as would be indicated by their size, aspect, exposure to precipitation etc) and all were checked for field signs indicative of the presence of bats and birds, including droppings, urine stains and grease marks.

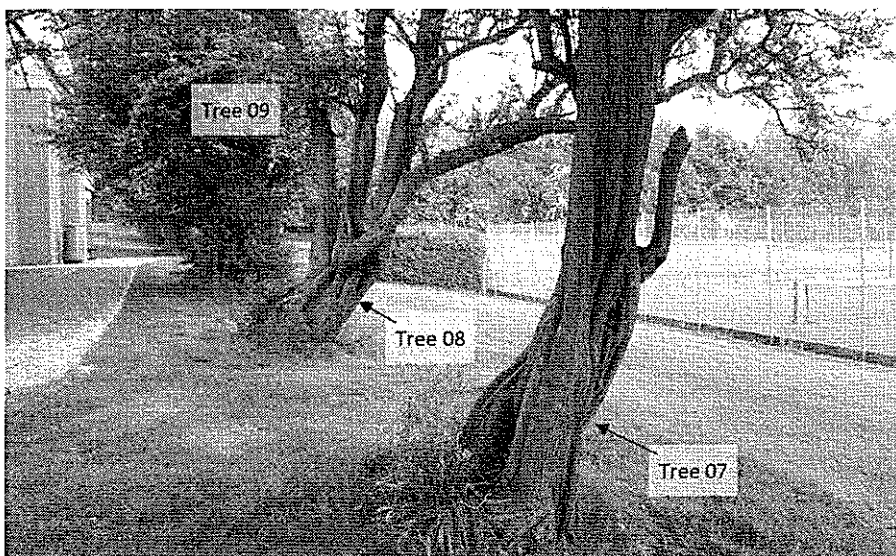
A **nocturnal emergence survey** was then carried out, commencing 25 minutes before official sunset time and continuing until 1 hour after sunset. This entailed using a heterodyne and frequency division bat detector (Batbox Duet), coupled with attentive visual observation of the trees. The detector makes bats' echo-location calls audible, recordable and identifiable to species level.

## **4. Survey Result**

The three Hawthorn trees are mature specimens. In the arboricultural report they are labelled as **07, 08 and 09**, as shown in the drawing and photograph below.



**Location plan**



**Photograph**

**Trees 07 and 08** are to approximate heights of 8m. They are both multiple-stemmed and have knarled trunks, with internal cavities and an array of open rot holes. Their smaller branches are all high up, leaving the trunks exposed and allowing potential for bats to gain access to the rot hole and crevice features associated with the trunks.

Whilst the lower rot holes and crevices (to heights of approx 1.5m) are all stuffed with crisp packets etc, the upper holes are clear of litter. It is assessed that these upper holes have low potential value for roosting bats, or for use by nesting birds such as blue-tit.

At the time of survey there was **no evidence of roosting bats (by day or night)** and there was also **no evidence of nesting birds**. However, though uptake by nesting birds, or by opportunistic and lone-roosting bats, would be feasible in the future, so precautions are to be applied when scheduling the felling of the trees, as detailed under sub-heading 5 of this letter.

**Tree 09** has been pollarded at 3m high and all re-growth above this height is young material. In addition there is an abundance of young side branches around the remaining trunk, resulting in a very 'cluttered' habitat that is unsuitable for roosting bats, but that has low potential for nesting birds.

Consistent with the habitat assessment, there was **no evidence of roosting bats (by day or night)**. At the time of the survey there was also **no evidence of nesting birds**. No precautions are required in respect of roosting bats, but as uptake by nesting birds would be feasible in the future, precautions to protect breeding birds should be applied when scheduling the felling of the tree, as detailed under sub-heading 5 of this letter.

The nocturnal bat activity throughout the dusk survey comprised the regular presence of one Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and/or one (very occasionally two) Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*). The bats were feeding over the school grounds and loosely in the vicinity of the three trees, but they did not interact with the three trees in any way during the course of the survey.

## **5. Recommendations and Conclusion**

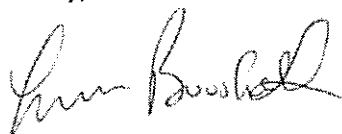
Having found **no evidence of roosting bats or nesting birds**, it is judged that there is certainly no requirement for further surveys and no requirement for mitigation licensing in respect of bats.

However, as there will remain low potential for future colonisation of any of the three trees by one or more pairs of nesting birds and low potential for future use of the upper crevices of trees 07 and 08 by lone-roosting bats, the following recommendations are applicable.

- Where possible, the felling of the trees is to take place outside the typical bird breeding season, i.e. it should be **scheduled to occur between the end of August and the end of February**.
- If other constraints dictate that felling must take place during the breeding bird season then extra due diligence is required and in the days immediately prior to felling, a thorough inspection is required, to check for any active birds' nests.
- If any active birds' nests are detected, the nest(s) must be left undisturbed until the chicks have fledged, at which point the work can take place.
- The winter period between November and February is the time of year when bats are least likely to use tree crevices for roosting and no additional precautions are required. However, the felling can take place outside the winter period provided that once trees 07 and 08 have been felled, they are left intact for at least one suitably mild night, so that any bat(s) within them can escape before the trunks and boughs are cut for logs.

In conclusion, as these recommendations are practical and simple to implement, ensuring that there is no risk to roosting bats or nesting birds, it is recommended (in respect of ecology matters) that planning permission can be granted.

Yours sincerely,



Lorna Bousfield B.Sc. (Hons), MIEEM (Principal Ecologist)

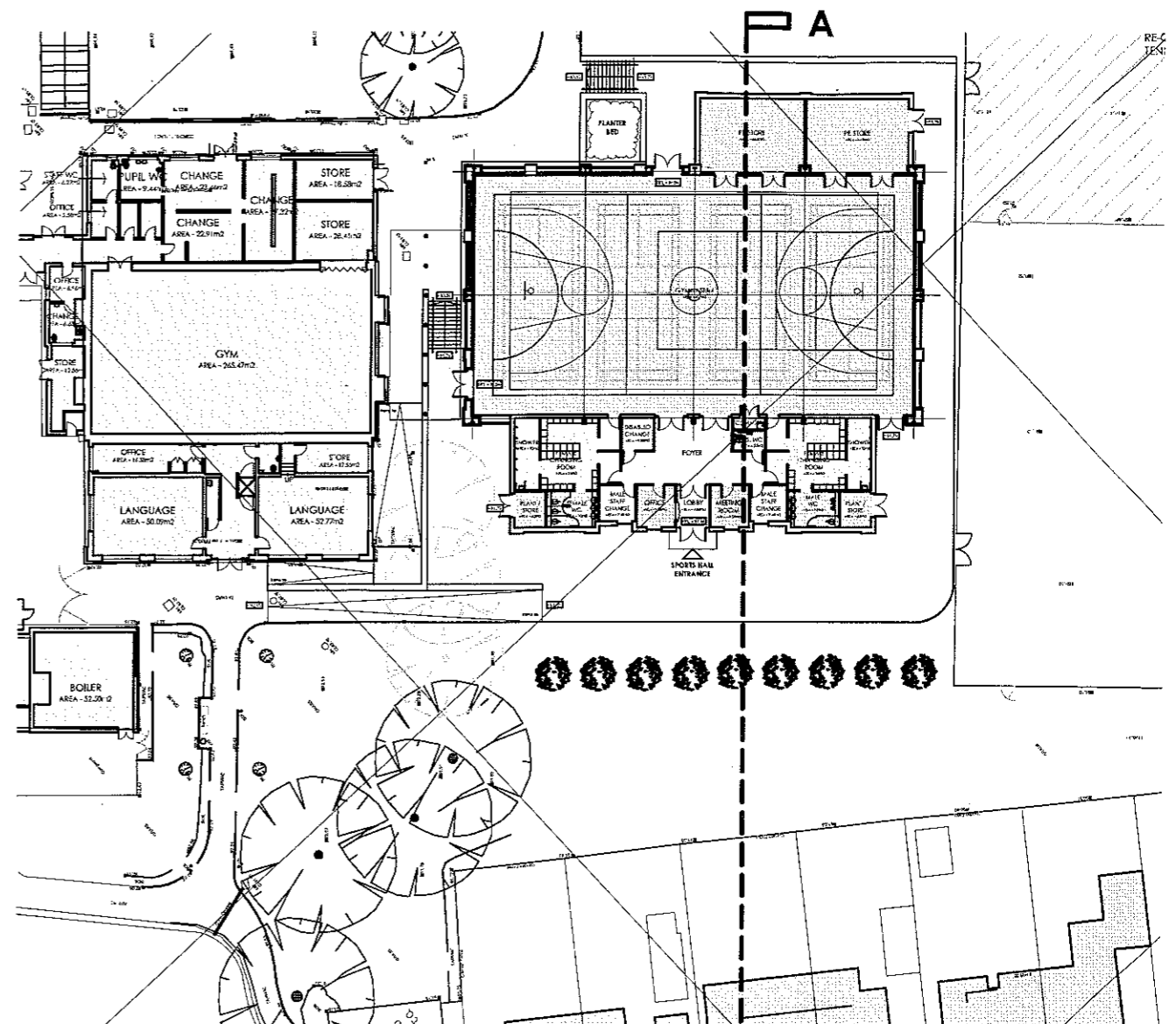
**Ribble Ecology**

Tel: 01772 879545 Mob: 07887 532666

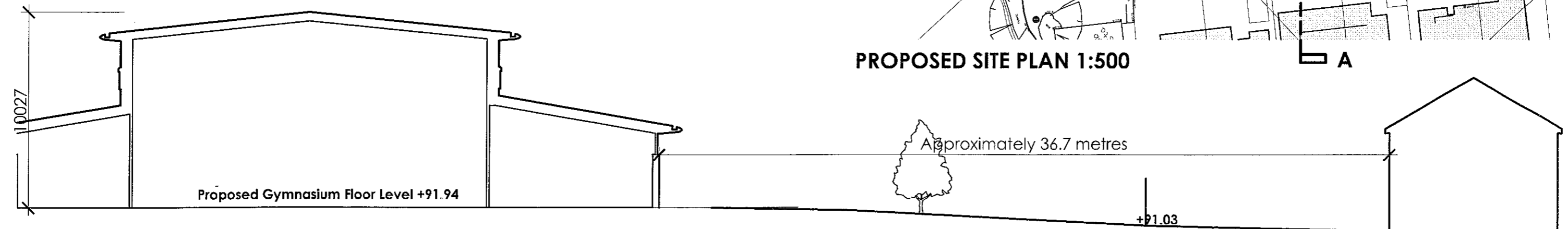
[lorna@ribbleecology.co.uk](mailto:lorna@ribbleecology.co.uk)

[www.ribbleecology.co.uk](http://www.ribbleecology.co.uk)



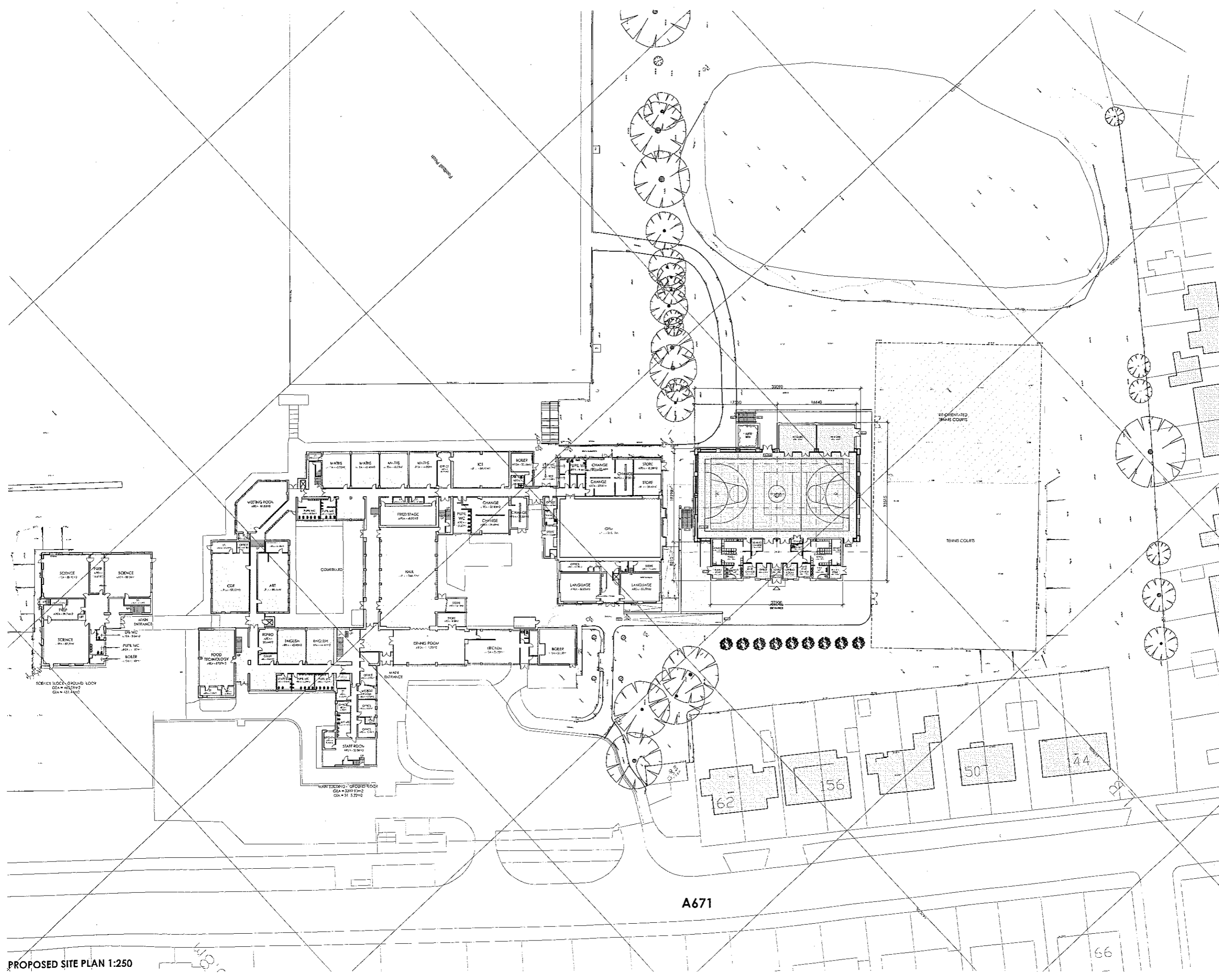


PROPOSED SITE PLAN 1:500



SECTION A-A: PROPOSED DESIGN SECTION IN CONTEXT - 1:200

1. This drawing is subject to copyright and is not to be reproduced in part or whole without approval 2. Do not scale this drawing - Check all dimensions on site.		Checked by:		Project Proposed Sports Hall Development		Client CRGS School Governors	
Rev		Initials	Date	Dwg Title	Drawn	Dwg No.	Rev
A	BUILDING MOVED 2.7 M TO THE SOUTH EAST.	FM	6/12	<b>Proposed Design Section</b>	db	7999	
					Date	April '12	
					Scale@A3	1:200 / 500	<b>L17 A</b>
				<b>CASSIDY + ASHTON</b>		<b>C+A</b>	
				Architects Building Surveyors Planners Designers		Cheshire House	
				www.cassidyashton.co.uk caabs@cassidyashton.co.uk		Gorse Lane	
				7 East Cliff		Widnes	
				Preston		WAB ORP	
				Lancashire		Tel: 0151 4236914	
				PR1 3JE		Tel: 0151 4236915	
				Tel: 01772 258356			
				Fax: 01772 825000			
				1 Regency Chambers			
				Greater Manchester			
				BL9 0JW			
				Tel: 0161 762 5800			
				Fax: 0161 762 5801			



- NOTES
1. DO NOT SCALE THIS DRAWING
  2. ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE
  3. FINAL POSITIONS OF ALL EQUIPMENT TO BE ADDED ON SITE
  4. THIS DRAWING IS SUBJECT TO COPYRIGHT AND IS NOT TO BE REPRODUCED IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT APPROVAL

A | FM | June 12 | Building moved 2.7 m to the South East  
 A | DB | Mar 12 | Dimensions added

REVISION DATE	DESCRIPTION

Client  
 Clitheroe Royal Grammar School Governors

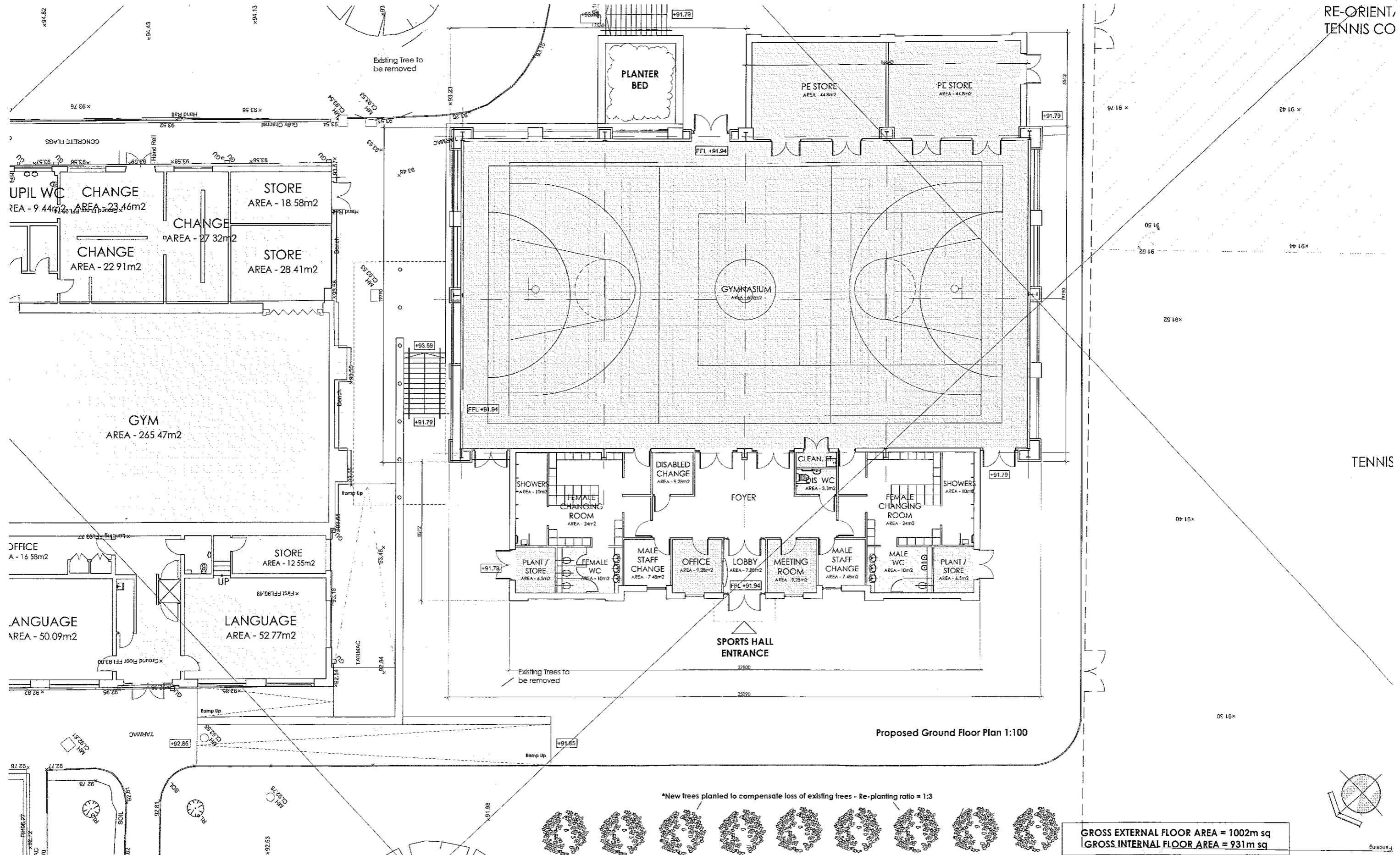
Project  
 Proposed Sports Hall Development

Drawing Title  
 Proposed Site Plan

Drawn	1:400 No.	7999
Date	March 2012	1:250
Scale	1:250	L114 B

**CASSIDY + ASHTON**  
 Architects Planners Designers Building Services  
 www.cassidy-ashton.co.uk  
 2nd Floor, 100, Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2BU  
 Tel: 0161 275 2200 Fax: 0161 275 2201

PROPOSED SITE PLAN 1:250



Proposed Ground Floor Plan 1:100

GROSS EXTERNAL FLOOR AREA = 1002m sq  
 GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR AREA = 931m sq

\*New trees planted to compensate loss of existing trees - Re-planting ratio = 1:3



Rev.	Initials	Date	Rev.
A	DB	27.03.12	
B	FM	20.6.12	

Initials	Date	Notes
		1 This drawing is subject to copyright and is not to be reproduced in part or whole without approval.
		2 Do not scale this drawing - Check all dimensions on site.
		Checked by:

Project	Clitheroe Royal Grammar School - Chatburn Road	Client	School Governors
Dwg Title	PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN	Drawn	DB
		Dwg No.	7999
		Date	DEC 2011
		Scale	1:100
		Rev.	L115 B
<b>CASSIDY + ASHTON</b> Architects Building Surveyors Planners Designers www.cassidyashton.co.uk		7 East Cliff Preston Lancashire PR1 3JE Tel: 01772 263355 Fax: 01772 625000	