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BOWLAND HIGH SCHOOL

PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

4266 _ REVISION 00_AUGUST 2012

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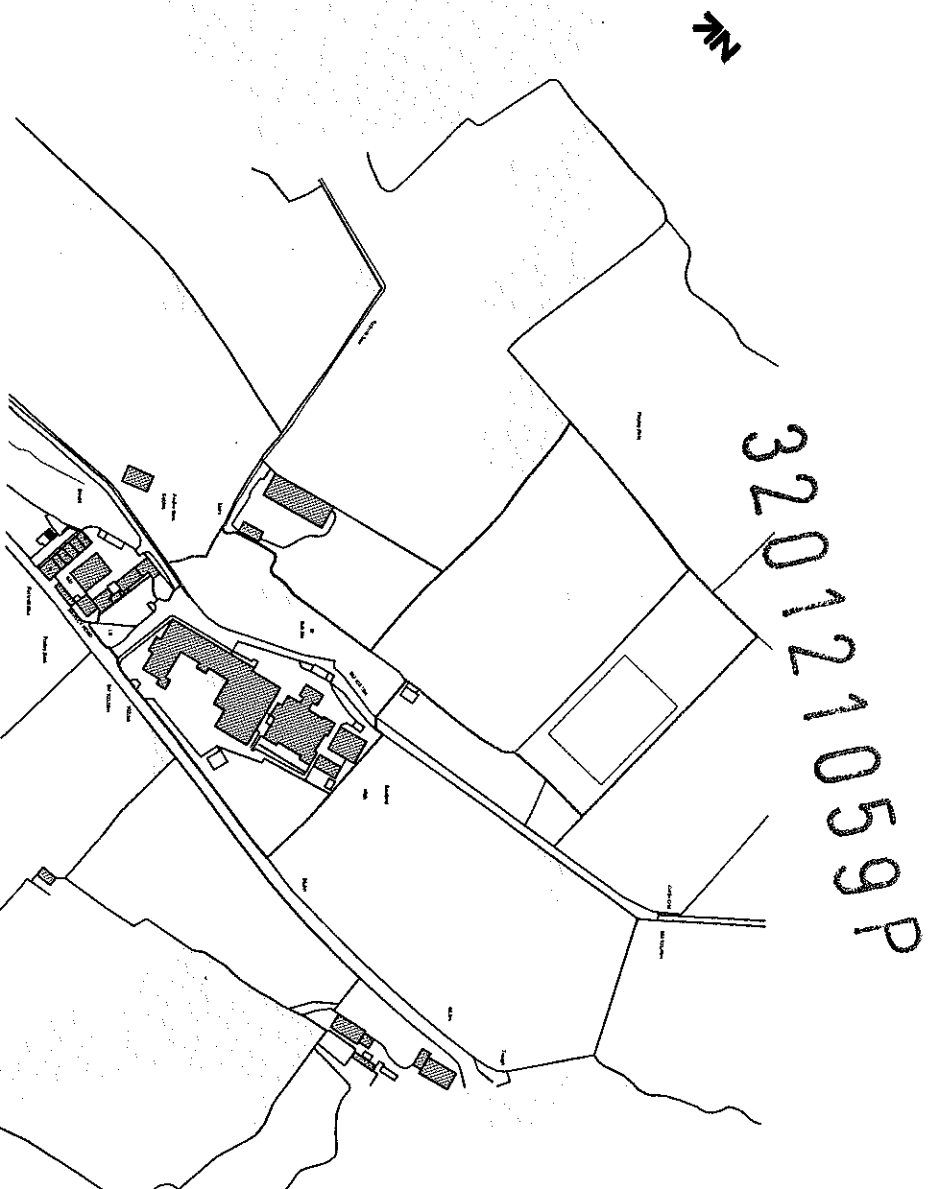
10.0 CONCLUSION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This application is for the replacement school building and the refurbishment of the caretaker building at Bowland High School in Grindleton.

The application proposes to replace the existing building with a layout formed around the current footprint and location. It is intended to introduce a better quality of building and facilities to assist the education at the school for the present and future generations. Such areas include a new dining and library which are influential new spaces set out in the proposal.

The design aims to enhance the existing site and surrounding area through the replacement of the building which has become outdated functionally and visually. The proposed building will also act as a link to the other three isolated buildings on the school site creating a more unified school campus.



2.0 EXISTING

Foxley Bank Hydro was constructed circa 1865 to serve as a country hotel. The building was re-opened as an orphanage until 1949 when Riversmead was opened as a school.

The proposed building to be demolished currently accommodates the kitchen, dining hall, 5 classrooms, office accommodation and staff facilities. Many of these rooms are substandard in terms of internal space requirements. Further internal alterations are not possible due to the building layout initially being designed as a hotel and not for educational purposes. Several smaller attic rooms are now obsolete due to being unfit for purpose.

When it was originally opened as a school it was to accommodate 200 pupils. The current facilities remain the same while the growth of pupil numbers has increased to 560.

The current entrance to the old school building remains largely unchanged as shown on the right. A solid brick wall

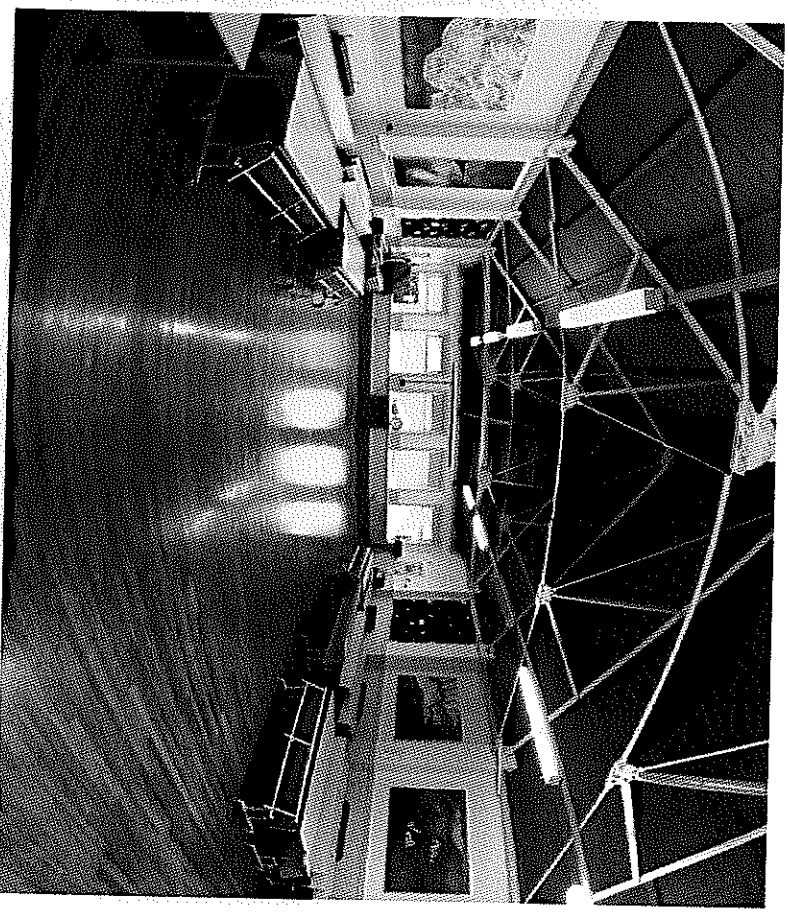
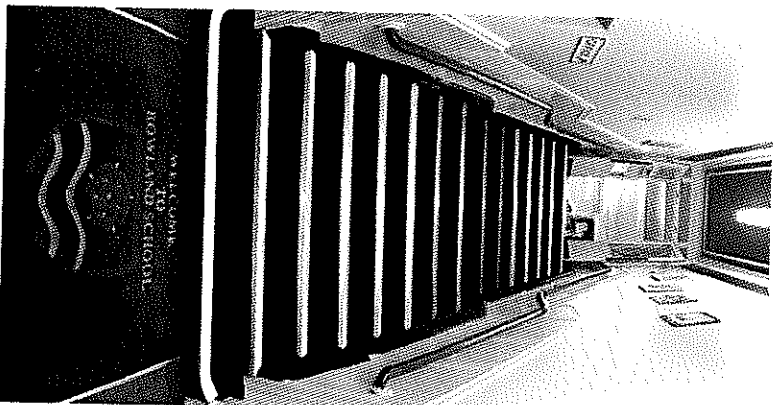


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construction and uninsulated slate pitched roofs are extremely thermally inefficient and cause internal condensation issues throughout the colder months. Many of the lead flashings over parapets and roof abutments are now defective causing further internal damp issues.

The left image shows the main entrance to a foyer leading up a wide stairway where students must queue on both sides during lunch period due to the dining hall only being capable of housing only a fifth of the students at one time. Disabled users must use the entrance to the changing rooms to gain access into the building via a platform lift.

Existing 138sq. m dining / assembly hall to serve over 500 pupils is undersized and cluttered due to its shared usage. Computer equipment housed alongside catering equipment is far from ideal. No storage is available for collapsible furniture when the room is being used for drama and assembly purposes as the image to the right highlights.

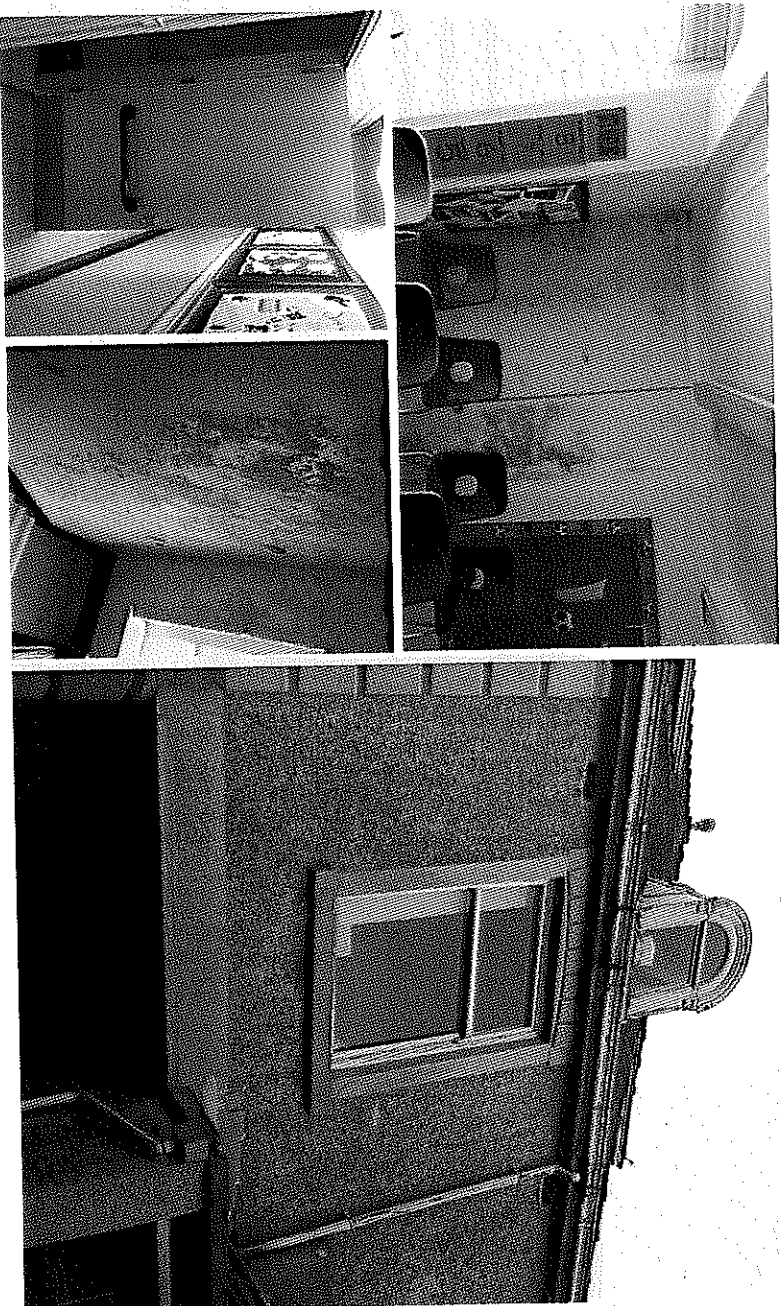


Access throughout is very restricted for any wheelchair users, with several rooms accessible only by steep narrow stairs. Many internal door openings are also too narrow and further contribute to this access problem.

A change of building use and keeping up compliance with current fire and accessibility regulations, along with the increasing prevalence of computers and technology within schools has led to unsightly retrofitted surface fixed services in the building.

Externally the building has become visually tired with the cast iron rainwater goods are in a state of disrepair. Many of the flashing at building / roof abutments are defective and would require remedial work to make watertight.

The old oil fired boiler system for the school, coupled with an almost total lack of insulation within the building result in a very inefficient energy performance for the building. The subsequent running costs of this building are already extremely high and will only further increase.



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produce a diverse dining space with the potential to be separated for other uses and a catering facility to accommodate for pupil demands.

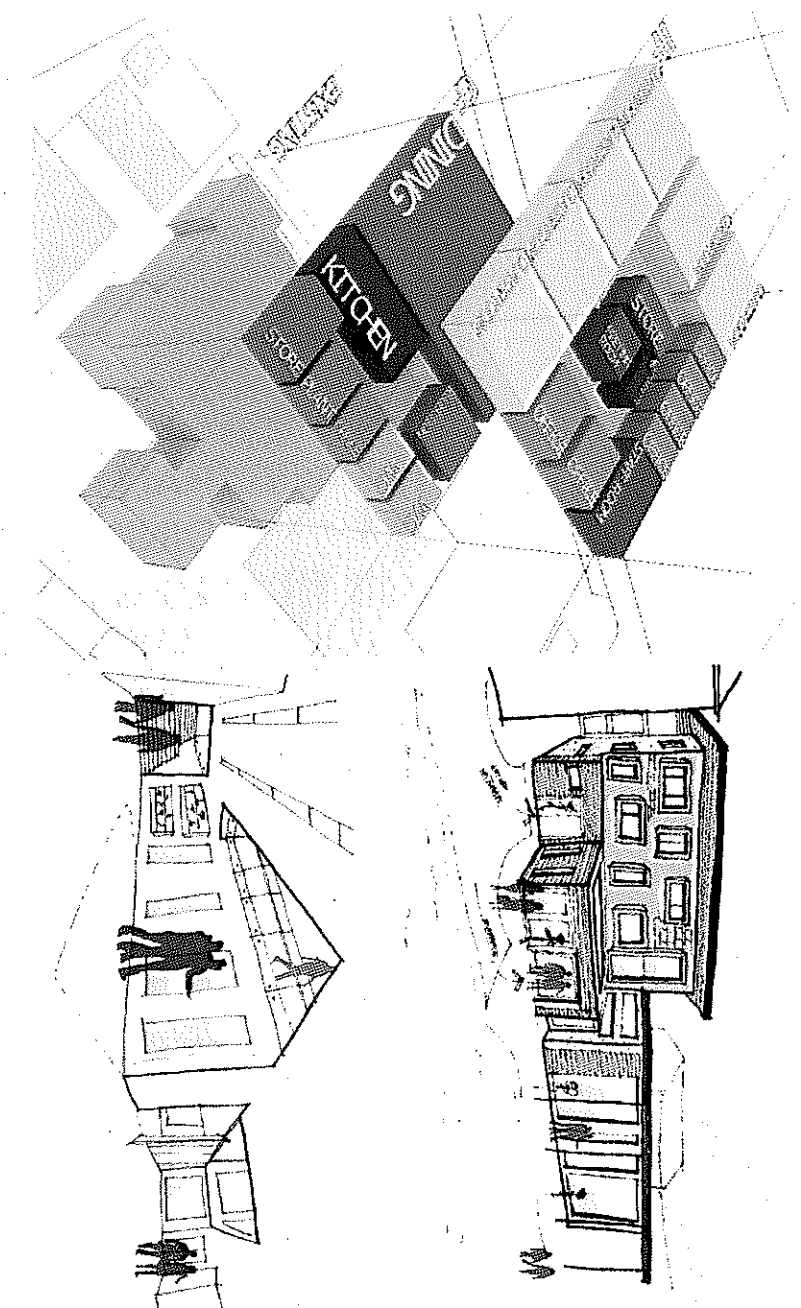
For these reasons it is the proposal is to replace the existing building.



4.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Initial design development comprised of the massing of the proposal for the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund Bid as shown to the right. It illustrates the massing of the initial brief in relation to the existing foot print.

Following further development of the scheme, one of the early proposals investigated the possibility of excavating to the sports hall floor level to the south of the site which faces Pendle Hill. Following further analysis this proved to be unsustainable for the budget available for the project. The general layout and aesthetics principles were formed at this stage and have followed through to the main proposal as the initial sketches illustrate. This was scheme was presented to the Lancashire County Council planning authority and received a positive feedback.



5.0 PROPOSAL

The proposal site seeks to re-arrange the existing pupil and visitor access of the site. The proposal re-locates the main pupil entrance and recreation area to the north-west area of the site which faces the existing playing fields. The existing pupil recreation area is to be reallocated to staff and visitor parking to the south-west of the site. This will be accessed via an existing track that will be widened and by the removal of the existing tree. This ensures that all visitors and deliveries to the school are directed to the front of the building to a secure entrance and thus a more secure site.

The pupil recreation area and entrance is protected by a vehicle barrier making a more pupil friendly zone. It provides a direct point of access for pupils as well as the entrance being overseen by the admin and pupil service office. The position of the pupil entrance also allows a more direct route from the changing rooms to the playing fields to the north west of the site.

The visitors entrance is located a storey higher than the

pupil entrance which echoes the existing structure of the site.

The building provides access to the media and the other teaching building via steps, ramp or platform lift ensuring it is accessible to all.

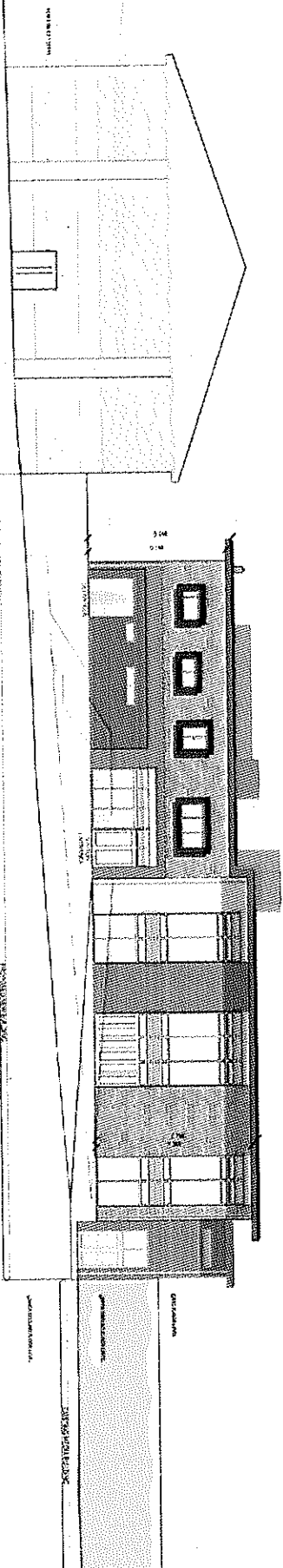
This application involves the refurbishment of the caretaker building located opposite the proposed pupil entrance. As the drawings illustrate this will be used to incorporate a wood chip boiler and store at the lower level which will feed all the school buildings. The higher floor will form the caretaker's store and workshop.

The works include a section of wall to be built up to the roof, re-roofing, replacement of windows, re-rendered and introducing some timber cladding as well as the application of insulation. The new roof will echo the proposed building materials and extrude over an external area to provide a store.

The external aesthetic is designed to reflect the contemporary nature of project through the use of traditional and

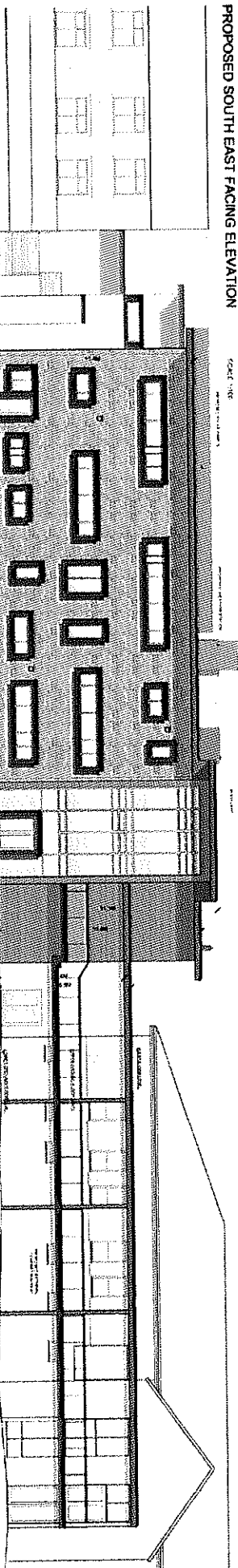
new materials. The flat roofline of the proposal reduces the visual impact of the design on the surrounding area.

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PROPOSED SOUTH EAST FACING ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



PROPOSED NORTH WEST FACING ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

6.0 LAYOUT AND SCALE

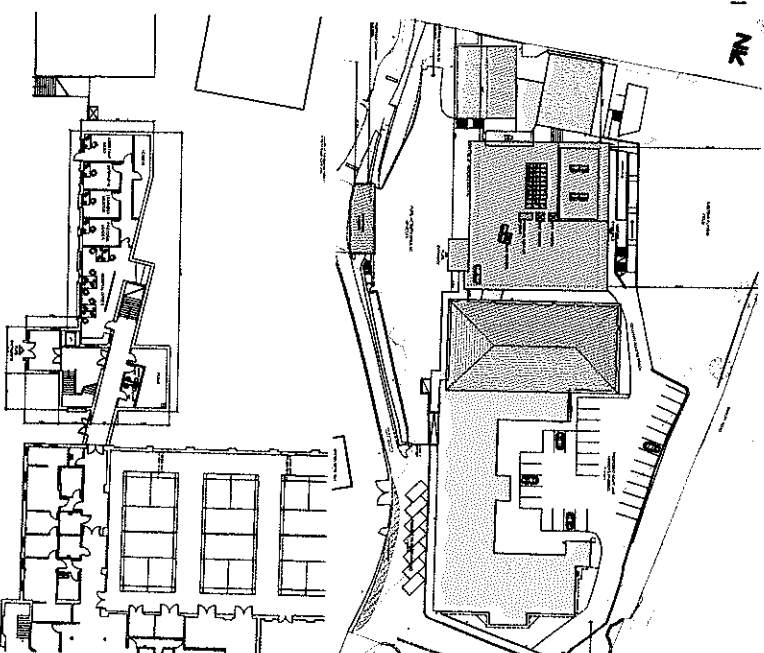
The design layout has been formed through careful consideration, discussion with the clients and analysis of the unique site. The topography of the site has been an important factor in developing the design and layout. It is split over three floors echoing the existing site layout.

As discussed the pupil entrance is accessed at lower ground floor which links directly via an internal corridor to the existing sports hall building. There are two main staircases as well as a lift which links the rest of the building. This floor is predominantly occupied by offices which offer a direct link to pupils if required.

The ground floor level (equivalent to be first floor level in the main block) is occupied by the visitors entrance, dining hall and learning resources. An external covered walkway links this floor to the rear of the main building and to the north-east elevation a canopy covers the link to the media and teaching building.

The first floor level contains the maths and ICT classrooms as well as a number of offices.

The scale of the building reflects the proportions of the existing building. The main proportion of the rear elevation is stepped back with the entrance building line projecting to meet the main block building. The front elevation is also stepped back to reduce the prominence of the proposal as well as to create a terrace and access point to the building. The two side elevations are stepped back slightly from the existing footprint to allow sufficient building, massing and maintenance distance.



7.0 APPEARANCE

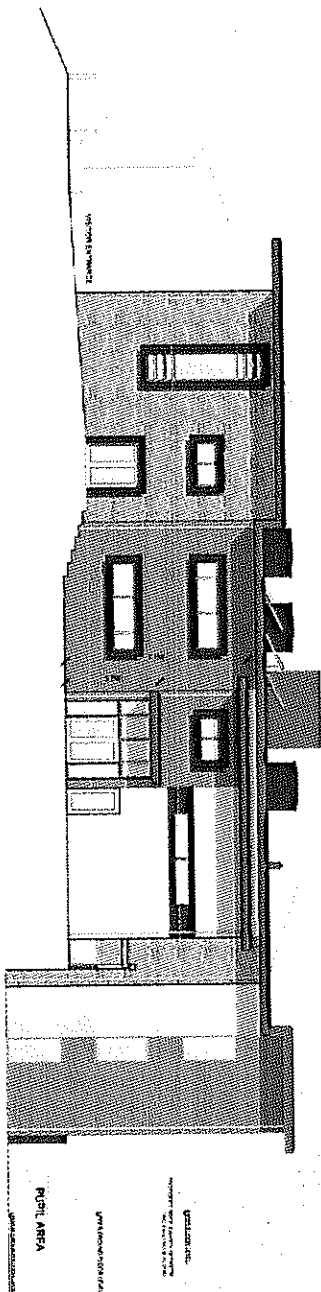
Through the use of materials and clean lines the proposal integrates well between the existing buildings. The use of four main materials breaks up the elevations and creates a balanced aesthetic. They include natural stone and render which are local to the area.

The south-west elevation includes double height sections of glazing to take advantage of the views towards Pendle Hill. The opposite, north-west elevation also includes a large section of curtain walling to assist in bringing natural daylight into the pupil entrance hall and upper levels.

The other feature of the elevations are the extruded window boxes that surround the openings. This externally creates some diversity and extrusion to the elevations as well as internally creating a natural framing effect of the view out. These boxes will be clad in a contrasting cladding system to further break the elevations and make the boxes a feature of the design.

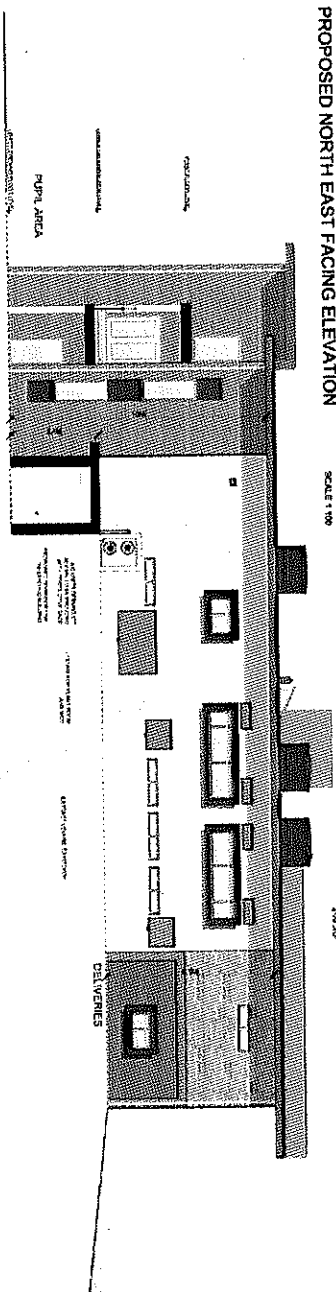
PROPOSED NORTH EAST FACING ELEVATION

SCALE 1:100



PROPOSED SOUTH WEST FACING ELEVATION

SCALE 1:100



The roofs are formed by a flat system to ensure the height of the proposal is not overpowering to the surrounding area. There are a number of roof plains which highlight the differing level of access at the required floors. This element along with a number of breaks in the main roof help to break the rigidity of the plains. The roof overhang further breaks the aesthetic and acts as a solar shading mechanism.

The proposal will be highly insulated, have a low energy consumption, introduce solar panels and use a wood chip boiler to heat the school. It will be designed to all the current regulations as well as integrate specifications with the future of education in mind.

8.0 LANDSCAPING

The proposed landscaping involves the relocation of the existing recreational area to the north-west side of the school. The existing garage will be removed to allow for extra space recreation area. This existing area will then be remarked for staff and visitors parking. The access will be widened with the removal of the tree to

the front.

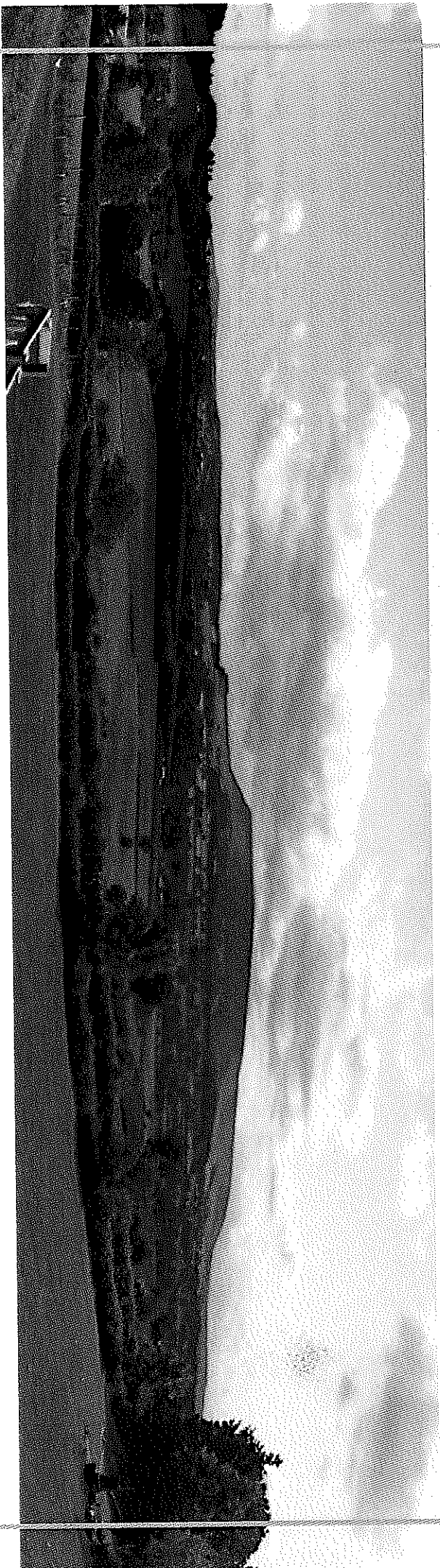
The south-west elevation will include a degree of landscaping to in order to create a ramp to the visitors entrance as well as deliveries. This will include planting to soften any visual impact.

9.0 ACCESS

The school is accessed via a Sawley Road which leads to Sawley village to the east and Grindleton to the west. Access to the proposed parking area will be by the entrance via the existing track that will be widened. The existing school bus system will remain in place and the access track to the houses past the school will be retained.

10.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion through careful consideration and analysis it is believed that the proposal provides a contemporary and innovative building which meets the school's needs for a new facility. The existing building is not fit for purpose and has become externally tired. The spaces it currently houses does not contain modern facilities necessary for current demands and educational use. The design responds to the surrounding environment and integrates successfully with the topography of the site. Through the use of traditional and contemporary materials as well as other design features the proposal seeks to create a positive aspect to the school and site.



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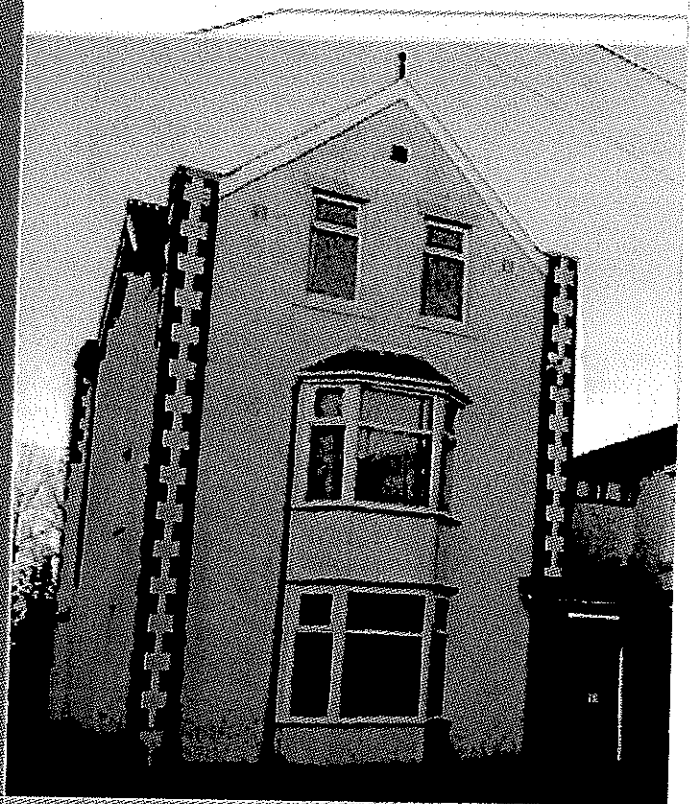
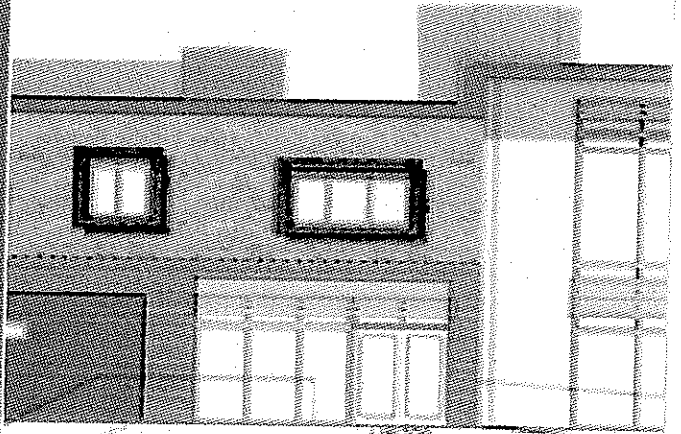
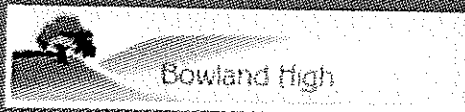
320121059P

JWPC



**Bowland High School,
Riversmead,
Grindleton, Lancashire**

**Proposed Redevelopment of
school buildings to provide**



Client:
Bowland High School

planning

support

statement

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This full planning application is submitted by Bowland High School Academy for the redevelopment of the old school buildings on site and the redevelopment of this area through the construction of a 2/3 storey building. This new building will accommodate a much needed dining hall, kitchen, open spaces, classrooms, learning resources room and other offices and plant etc. for the school. Just an importantly, the redevelopment of this central part of the school site will significantly improve internal accessibility and circulation of staff and pupils throughout the school site.
- 1.2 The School are able to make this planning application and undertake this significant development thanks to a successful bid for funding from the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund. Just over £3.3m has been secured. The Department for Education considered this bid and agreed that it merited funding, given the needs of the school and the existing outmoded infrastructure that pupils and staff currently have to work within. Having secured this funding, time is now of the essence to ensure that the project meets with the required schedules.
- 1.3 Once the design had been agreed with all stakeholders within the school, the School approached officers of Lancashire County Council (planning) and they have since visited the site and met with the School's planning agent. Following their comments and advice, the scheme has been further refined and additional survey work carried out. In addition, the school held an open evening on Monday 20th August which was attended by 12 local residents. Again, their comments and suggestions have been borne in mind during the preparation of this application.
- 1.4 This full planning application is supported by the following document:
- Design and Access Statement (Sunderland Peacock and Associates);
 - Planning Support Statement (JWPC Ltd);
 - Bat Survey (Bowland Ecology);
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Woolerton Dodwell);

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2. Site Characteristics

- 2.1 Bowland High School lies approximately 3 miles to the east of Clitheroe, within the heart of the Ribble Valley. It is a small secondary school with Academy status that draws from a wide catchment, given its rural and rather isolated location. It performs a crucial role in the wider community and provides facilities for the wider community and some other local primary schools. The school has specialist status for performing arts.
- 2.2 Bowland High School started life in the late 19th Century as a country hotel and was then used as an orphanage until 1949 when it was opened as Riversmead School. Over time, the original buildings (which are now the subject of this application) were extended and added to in a number of stages. Now, what can be considered to be the main school building lies to the south of the old part of the school. This consists of the main classroom block, a sports hall, reception area and offices. However, circulation and linkages between the separate buildings are poor and result in convoluted routes and congestion through the site for staff and pupils alike.
- 2.3 It is a specific characteristic of the school that 17.6% of the children who attend have special educational needs and much of the physical fabric of the buildings have been adapted to accommodate such pupils and visitors. However, much of the school (the older buildings in particular) is not well suited to accommodating the needs of pupils or staff with impaired mobility. The school currently has an enrolment of 560 pupils from 11 to 16 years of age.
- 2.4 Because of the origins of the old part of the school, it was never designed for the purposes of education or schooling. These buildings only provide 5 classrooms and the remainder of the space accommodates the kitchen, dining/assembly hall, offices and staff facilities. Whilst there are several attic rooms they are not used for anything other than ad hoc storage.
- 2.5 In addition, the construction of the old building is such that they are extremely inefficient in terms of heat loss. Uninsulated roofs and poor construction also lead to internal damp being evident. The current hall serves the purpose both as an assembly hall and dining hall. One specific issue in this regard is the problem of pupils queuing out of the hall and onto a stairwell at lunchtimes. This configuration also significantly limits the use of the hall for educational purposes.

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- 2.6 Further details of the condition and problems associated with the old school buildings are included within the Design and Access Statement.
- 2.7 The school buildings lie on a natural terrace above the Ribble valley floor and run in a roughly north, north-east to south, south-west orientation. The old school buildings themselves sit slightly behind a ridge and hence do not appear prominent within the landscape. The most notable feature of the building is the pyramidal roof structures and the taller tower feature in particular. Those buildings site within the centre of the site however. To the north, north-east, the school has recently constructed a new music/drama building with veranda (Ribble Valley BC Ref: 3/2008/0074) and beyond this, there is a further 2/3 storey library block.
- 2.8 The planning history of the site can be summarised as follows:

Application Number: **03/10/0495**

Proposal: CONSTRUCTION OF AN ALL WEATHER MULTI USE PLAYING SURFACE WITH 3M HIGH WELD MESH FENCING AND CONSOLIDATION AND EXTENSION OF EXISTING FOOTPATH AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING

Status: Complete

Decision: Granted

Application Number: **03/08/0074**

Proposal: DEMOLITION OF A Horsa BUILDING AND REPLACEMENT WITH A SINGLE STOREY MUSIC FACILITY COMPRISING OF MUSIC ROOM MEDIA/RECORDING ROOM 2 NO PRACTICE ROOMS RECORDING CONTROL ROOM DISABLED WC STORES PLANT ROOM AND VERANDAH

Status: Complete

Decision: Approved

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Application Number: **03/03/1000**

Proposal: ERECTION OF A SPORTS HALL FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY USE
INCORPORATING NEW VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
POINTS AND 2 NO DISABLED PARKING SPACES TOGETHER WITH
THE PROVISION OF A NEW TWO STOREY TEACHING BLOCK

Status: Complete

Decision: Approved

Application Number: **3/2001/0073**

Proposal: DEMOLITION OF 2 DEMOUNTABLE CLASSROOMS AND DEPOT
BUILDING. CREATION OF REVISED ACCESS ROAD AND NEW CAR
PARKING AREA. TWO STOREY EXTENSION TO NEW TEACHING
BLOCK

Status: Complete

Decision: Approved

- 2.9 It is relevant to note that when Ribble Valley Borough Council considered application 03/08/0074 as a consultee, it recommended that it had no objection. Officers commented as follows:

'The proposal would only be readily visible from within the confines of the site and the impact on the appearance of the open countryside would therefore be minimal. When viewed from the roadside given the substantial hedgerow and land levels, only the upper most part of building will be visible. It would provide a visual improvement upon the existing Horsa building which is in a poor state of repair. The design of the building and materials to be used will match other buildings on the site and would not have an unduly detrimental impact upon this part of the area of outstanding natural beauty.'

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3. Application Proposal

- 3.1 This full planning application seeks to secure the demolition of the old school buildings which lie in the centre of the current school campus. They extend to a total of 1255m² (GIA) over four floors (lower ground, ground, first and second). By utilising the changes in levels across the site here and by working almost entirely within the footprint of the existing buildings, the application proposes a new 2/3 storey building which will provide 1909m² (GIA) of floorspace.
- 3.2 In addition to this, there will be internal improvements to the retained buildings to aid circulation through the site. An external walkway will be erected along the northern elevation of the new entrance feature, linking to the first floor of the main school building, beyond the sports hall.
- 3.3 The final element of the application proposal is the redevelopment of the existing caretaker's building/store on the site. This 1 and 2 storey building (built into the hillside to the rear of the site) will be redeveloped. This will largely involve the refurbishment of this unusual structure but new walls will be provided at the upper level creating 58m² of 'new' floorspace. The lower level will accommodate a wood chip boiler to serve the school site whilst the upper floor will remain as a caretaker's workshop and store.
- 3.4 In addition to these elements, some minor but significant internal alterations will be made to the existing (retained) school building(s) to provide a single internal corridor that will provide integration with the new school block. The existing corridor in the main building will be extended to the north-eastern flank wall of the sports hall and an internal link provided to meet the lower ground floor of the proposed building. This will link to a lobby and the main pupil entrance. Coupled with the external walk way proposed for the upper ground floor, this will dramatically improve access, allowing pupils and staff to arrive more promptly at lessons and protected from the elements.
- 3.5 In addition, it is proposed to reconfigure the school site so that visitor parking is located on the current school yard whilst the external play area/yard for the pupils will be located to the northern side of the site which is currently used in an rather ad-hoc manner for the parking of staff and visitor cars. This will make a far more efficient use of this awkward shaped area and provide better integration and accessibility for pupils between the outside play area and

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the main entrance to the school. This will also result in an increase in car parking spaces on site to 58 spaces.

- 3.6 Full details of the design and configuration and appearance of the proposed replacement school building are included in the Design and Access Statement submitted with the application.

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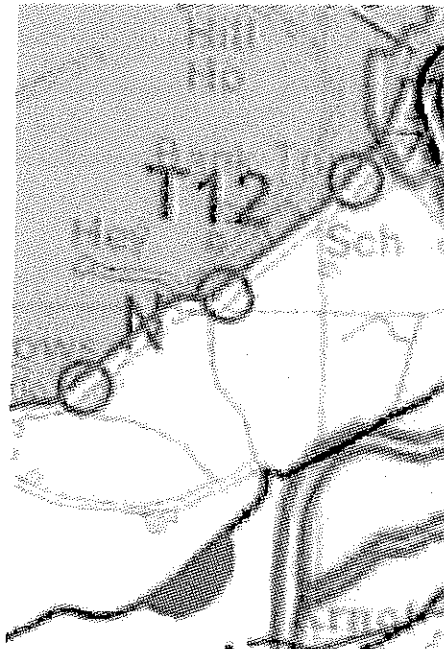
4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 The site is designated within the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan as part of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Policy ENV1 of the Local Plan seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the landscape and character of the AONB and states that development will also need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.
- 4.2 Whilst the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural environment will be the most important considerations in the assessment of development proposals, regard will also be had to the economic and social well-being of the area. This policy also states that the environmental effects of proposals will be a major consideration and the design, materials, scale, massing and landscaping of development will be important factors in deciding planning applications within the area.
- 4.3 Supporting text to this Policy, at paragraph 4.2.6 confirms that the policy does not mean that no development will be allowed in the area, and where possible, new development will be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings.
- 4.4 The Landscape Assessment in Appendix 2 of the Local Plan shows the area being within the Lowland Fringe Farmland landscape type.
- 4.5 Policy G1 concerns the design and landscaping of new development and seeks high standards based on a list of criteria, including:
- Development being sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of size, intensity and nature;
 - Developments making adequate arrangements for car parking, servicing and public utilities;
 - Materials used being sympathetic to the character of the area;
- 4.6 Policy G5 provides criteria under which planning consent will be granted for small scale developments outside of settlement boundaries, were they are:
- Essential to the local economy or the social well-being of the area; or
 - Other small scale uses appropriate to a rural area which conform to the policies of this plan.

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- 4.7 There are no policies within the Local Plan that relate to the principle of providing a replacement school building, and therefore policies relating specifically to the area and general policies relating to design are the only policies to be considered in this instance.
- 4.8 Below is an extract from the Local Plan showing the designation of the school within the AONG (in Green). The school annotation on the base map is not the actual location of the school, which in fact lies to the north of the boundary of the AONB, just under the T12¹ annotation.



Local Plan Proposals Map (South) Extract

- 4.9 In March 2012 the Government issues the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sought to distil and update advice and guidance with the previous PPGs and PPSs. The 'Golden Thread' of the document is for presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be adopted in both plan-making and decision-taking processes. For 'decision-taking' this means the following:

- Approving development which accords with the Development Plan
- Where the Development Plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, grant planning permission unless:

¹ Policy T12 was not saved and is therefore no longer adopted policy.

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- i) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework;
- ii) Specific policies in the Framework indicated development should be restricted. This may include sites designated as SSSIs, all Green Belt for example where there is specific guidance in the Framework.

4.10 It also makes clear that decisions should be made 'without delay'. The Document acknowledges that neighbourhood planning will play a critical role in the planning process.

4.11 Paragraph 17 of the Document sets out 12 core land use planning principles which will underpin plan-making and decision-taking. Amongst others it includes the following principles that planning should adhere to:

- Be genuinely plan-led;
- Not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise;
- Always seek high quality design and a good standard of amenity;
- Take account of different roles in different areas;
- Protecting the Green Belts and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value;
- Encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously re-developed (brownfield land) provided that it is not of high environmental value;
- Conserve heritage assets;
- Effectively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling etc; and

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- Take account and support local strategies to improve health, cultural and social wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

- 4.12 Within Chapter 11 it states that great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Meanwhile, the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are more significant and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.
- 4.13 In terms of design the document makes it clear that good design is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. However, local authorities should not attempt to impose particular style or particular tastes, nor should they stifle innovation, originality or initiative through instantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or style. It does note however that it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

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Planning Considerations

- 5.1 This Chapter seeks to justify the planning application proposal against policies of the Development Plan and sets out other material considerations that support it. It also addresses points made by local residents at a pre-application open evening when the proposals were presented.
- 5.2 The starting point in the determination of any planning application is the Development Plan and the policies therein. In this case the Development Plan consists of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West and the 'saved' policies of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan. In the case of the former, the Government signalled its intention to revoke the regional tier of policy in May 2010 and after several high court challenges; it will eventually be revoked once the Government has finished updating the environmental reports and undertaking additional consultation. Until that time the RSS 'may' be regarded as a material planning consideration, but the weight attributed to it should reflect this intention. In light of this, and the fact that the RSS for the North West does not include specific policies in relation to school development and policies relating to AONBs etc are now superseded by NPPF, there is little merit in considering them here.
- 5.3 The proposal has been prepared with the policies of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan in mind. Whilst the settlement strategy for the District (Policies G2 to G5) focusses most development to urban areas and larger villages and restricts development outside of these to 'small scale', the existing nature of the site is an important material planning consideration. It is necessary to consider the proposal in the context of both the building(s) it replaces and the adjoining buildings which will remain. Whilst the proposal is not 'small scale' in nature, the impact of the proposal, set against the existing impacts of the application site is not unduly apparent within the wider countryside setting.
- 5.4 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment submitted with this application assesses the character and impact of the existing school campus on the surrounding environment. It then considers the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposal. It concludes that the overall impact of the proposal on the character of the campus will be slight and not significant. On a broader scale, the proposal will not affect the character of the Forest of Bowland AONB and the visual affects of the development will not be significant overall.

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Whilst the quantum of new build floor space within the development may be more than 'small scale'; much of this replaces existing floor space within building and therefore from a visual point of view, the changes will be minor.

- 5.5 The justification text to Policy G5 does acknowledge that it the countryside is a working area and a source of many residents' livelihoods and *'If properly managed, these can be accommodated without harming the basic character of the area'*. The school is a significant part of the community and economy of this part of the Ribble Valley and whilst it may be possible to argue that if the school was proposed today in light of current Development Plan policies, it may not be allowed in this location, the fact remains that it has been present on this site for in excess of 60 years and is a significant local employer, providing an essential service to the rural community east of Clitheroe.
- 5.6 Policy ENV1 seeks to ensure that the Forest of Bowland AONB is protected, conserved and enhanced. The test of this policy is to ensure development *'contribute(s) to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area'*. The LVIA confirms that the redevelopment proposal would not have a significant visual effect upon the AONB and that its landscape character will prevail. Views into the AONB and from it will remain unaffected by this proposal in the wider context of the school campus. The proposal is therefore compliant with Policy ENV1.
- 5.7 In terms of design, materials, scale, massing and landscaping, the proposal is considered to protect and conserve the landscape and character of the area immediately outside the AONB, to the south of Sawley Road. The existing buildings that this proposal replaces are far from typical of the local architectural vernacular. Their horizontal, linear form is broken by pyramidal roof structures that appear incongruous in the landscape and reflect the building's history as a hotel and country hotel previously. Moreover, the massive scale of the sports hall and the contemporary architecture of the music/drama building in particular are a departure in terms of scale and form in comparison to the character of the area. However, they current campus lacks any coherence in terms of architecture and it is proposed that the replacement school buildings will tie these two elements together. The use of render, timber and stone is consistent with the prevailing character of the AONB and its environs. Set between a sports hall (approved in 2003) and the music/drama building (approved 2008), the proposed new school building would not cause harm to the AONB.

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- 5.8 The proposal will also be tested against Policy G1 of the Local Plan. The applicants submit that following a number of design team meeting with the school, a pre-application meeting with LCC planning officers and a public meeting, the application has been refined to ensure it proposes a high standard of design and that all technical requirements of Policy G1 are met. The above paragraphs (in relation to Policies ENV and ENV2) demonstrate compliance with parts (a), (e) and (h). Part (b) of the policy seeks to ensure that the local transport infrastructure can accommodate the proposed development.
- 5.9 Given that the school does not propose an increase in the number of pupils attending the school, there will be no net increase in traffic movements to and from the site. The school currently operates an effective Travel Plan and the management of buses and coaches to and from this rural site is carefully undertaken to minimise the impact on the highway network and the residential amenities of neighbours. The proposed increase in floorspace simply seeks to provide existing pupils and staff with accommodation of a standard required for a 21st Century Secondary School, without providing for any increase in capacity. One of the main drivers of the proposal is the need to create separate dining and assembly spaces, as well as reasonable sized kitchen space to facilitate the provision of food for the majority of pupils. As can be seen from the plans, much of the additional floorspace is set aside for ancillary use such as for a Learning Resources room and staff accommodation. Four maths classrooms will be provided which will allow the smaller existing classrooms in the main buildings to be enlarged (some have internal partitions already) in order that pupils have more space. The provision of two ICT suits is also integral to the delivery of the school's curriculum.
- 5.10 In view of the above, there will be no material impact on traffic generation or transport infrastructure. Notwithstanding the above, there is no requirement to provide additional car parking on site. However, the reconfiguration of the external spaces around the school provides an opportunity to provide a more efficient car parking layout as part of the package of improvements. Car parking levels will increase from 45 to 58 spaces. Whilst in reality, the ad hoc parking arrangements such as double parking and the use of non-allocated space for parking means that parking numbers are often higher than 45 spaces, the increase to 58 laid out spaces will allow for the safer and more efficient movement of vehicles throughout the site. The proposal is consistent with parts (b) and (c) of Policy G1 as a result.

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- 5.11 Access into and egress from the site will not be altered by this proposal and therefore it complies with Part (d) of Policy G1. The amenities of neighbouring residents or land users will not be harmed by this proposal (Part (g)) and no important open space will be lost as a result of the development (Part (i)). There are no other areas where the proposal could be considered to run contrary to any part of Policy G1 and as such, the proposal complies with the Development Plan.
- 5.12 The application proposes the efficient and effective use of a tired and outworn section of a vibrant and otherwise modern school. The re-use of this previously-developed land is, in itself a sustainable development of the type advocated by NPPF, which advocates that such proposals should be considered favourably. Moreover, the introduction of a more sustainable heating method (wood chip boiler) and Photovoltaic solar panels, coupled with highly efficient insulation and heat retention construction techniques (passive solar gain etc) will ensure that the proposed building will require less non-renewable energy. Smaller practical improvements such as the installation of PIR controlled lighting through the building will improve energy efficiency and ensure that there is no unnecessary and unwanted light emitting from the building.
- 5.13 The plans and supporting information submitted with this application clearly demonstrate the high standard of building design adopted by the applicants. It will create a modern but appropriate addition to the school campus that will be carefully integrated into the landscape and the wider Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposal is entirely consistent with good planning principles and the relevant policies of the District Wide Local Plan.

6 Summary

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- 6.1 Bowland High is a well regarded and progressive Secondary School which accommodates 560 pupils in the heart of the Ribble Valley. However, the running of the school and the welfare of pupils is currently hampered by the need to utilise tired and failing buildings constructed in the late 19 Century. This application proposes the complete redevelopment of the oldest school buildings on site which were originally constructed as a country hotel and are not fit for purpose as part of a modern educational establishment. The proposed building will provide much needed accommodation for pupils and staff including dining and kitchen facilities, a flexible hall area, ICT facilities, classrooms and ancillary offices and plant etc. Crucially it will also facilitate far better linkages between buildings of the school, speeding up the movement of pupils and staff without the need for them to exit the buildings. In addition, the reconfiguration of the car parking and yard areas allows for a greater level of on-site parking to be provided. The proposal will simply provide facilities for the existing enrolment of 560 pupils and will not lead to the future increase in pupil numbers. For many years, Bowland High has struggled to meet modern spacing and welfare standards in the existing buildings.
- 6.2 Following pre-application meetings and refinements to the scheme, the applicants have arrived at a proposal which is considered entirely acceptable and suitable for a modern rural school. This Statement has sought to test the proposal against NPPF and policies of the Development Plan and has found that the proposal is entirely compliant with policy. In addition, the applicants have submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which carefully considers the visual and landscape impacts of the replacement building when viewed from sensitive vantage points and in relation to the Forest of Bowland AONB. Again, it has found that the proposal would not have a materially harmful affect of the landscape or character of the area. In light of the compliance with the Development Plan and the lack of material considerations that could compromise the application, it is submitted that in accordance with Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act, the application should be approved.

JWPC Ltd
September 2012

