

**HERITAGE STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF LBC APPLICATION
FOR PROPOSED WORKS
AT WHALLEY OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL, STATION ROAD, WHALLEY**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been produced to support an anticipated listed building consent application to Ribble Valley Borough Council. It has been written by Stephen Haigh MA, on the instruction of the applicant the Whalley Educational Foundation (WEF), following site visits on 29 October and 2 November 2020, and with reference to drawings by Avalon Chartered Town Planning.
- 1.2 Whalley Old Grammar School is a grade II listed building, and lies within the Whalley Conservation Area, both of which are designated heritage assets. It also forms part of the setting of the grade II listed War Memorial. Section 16 of the NPPF addresses the historic environment, with a key paragraph being 193: *"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*
- 1.3 In summary, this statement finds that most aspects of the proposed development would not result in any harm, and some would enhance significance, but there is the potential for some to cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the identified heritage assets. However, that loss of significance would be outweighed by the public benefits accruing from the improved facilities for the educational activities hosted by the owner of the property, which is a registered charity.

2 The existing site

- 2.1 The Whalley Old Grammar School comprises a two storey building with a U-shaped plan, located just west of the junction of King Street and Station Road, at the north side of Whalley town centre (NGR: SD 73324 36429).
- 2.2 The principal elevation faces east towards the War Memorial and King Street, while the longer south side faces onto a mostly open space containing some mature trees. There is a walled yard which serves as a car park to the west, while the rear backs onto Station Road.

3 Development proposals

3.1 The external proposals comprise:

- the reinstatement of a window to the east elevation (presently a doorway created in the late 20th century)
- the reinstatement of a doorway in the south elevation (presently a window formed in the 19th century)
- the installation of railings to create an outside play area, adjacent to the south elevation
- the replacement of the existing brick extension to the west elevation, and associated changes to a small infill roof adjacent
- the blocking of an external doorway to the Craft Room, in the west elevation

3.2 The internal proposals comprise:

- the rehangng of a modern door to the pre-school WCs
- the removal of a corridor and staircase to the Headmaster's Room, with associated blocking of two ground floor doorways and reconfiguration of pre-school WCs
- the insertion of a vertical platform lift to meet DDA requirements, with associated alterations on ground and first floors
- the creation of two new doorways off the first floor corridor, with removal of a partition to create a new Pre-school Leader's Office, in place of the Headmaster's Office
- the establishment of a new classroom, to replace the existing void over the Calder Room
- the replacement of the existing first floor WC facilities off the Altham Room, with new accessible WC facilities

4 Identified heritage assets

4.1 "Old Grammar School" is a grade II listed building¹, first listed in 1986. The list entry describes it as:

Adult education centre, formerly grammar school, 1725, extended early C19 and altered probably mid-to-late C19. Sandstone rubble with hipped stone slate roof. 2 storeys. East facade has 2 bays on each side of central 2-storey gabled porch. Cross windows are rebated and chamfered with hoods. Right-hand ground-floor window now cut through by doorway. Porch has a cross window on the 1st floor with a blank shield within a plaque above. The moulded Tudor-arched door surround is C19. The left-hand return wall, facing south, has 5 bays which have cross windows with linked hoods. The central bay on the 1st floor is blank. To the left the remainder of this facade has windows of early C19 type, sashed with

¹ National Heritage List entry 1164763

glazing bars and plain stone surrounds. Inside, there are no visible features of architectural interest.

- 4.2 "War Memorial" is also a grade II listed building², first listed in 2003. The list entry describes it as:

Whalley War Memorial. 1921. Designed by Percy Worthington. Sandstone. A tall, tapering cross shaft with a gabled head over a relief of Christ, standing on a heavy square base bearing the names of the WW1 fatalities from the village; in front is an open book with the WW2 and later fatalities. The memorial is set at the top of steps within a landscaped area in front of the Grade II-listed Royal Grammar School. HISTORY: the parish council launched a war memorial appeal in January 1919; in November 1919 a design by the prominent Manchester architect Percy Worthington was accepted, based on the design of the medieval cross at Madeley, Herefordshire. It cost £800. The memorial was unveiled by General Shoubridge in September 1921. The memorial was adapted and re-dedicated in November 1948. An elegant example of the type, the war memorial has group value with the school behind and possesses civic presence.

- 4.3 The building lies within the Whalley Conservation Area, designated in 1972. An appraisal for it was produced in 2005³.

5 Historical background

- 5.1 The present building was established in 1725, as the new premises for a grammar school which had been endowed by Edward VI in 1547, but which followed a tradition of local education begun by Whalley Abbey in the 14th century. The building underwent expansion in a number of phases in the 19th century, which seem to have included the provision of a master's dwelling. It continued to function as a grammar school until about 1914, following which it became used for educational activities outside the school system.
- 5.2 The building owes much of its present external form to 19th century extensions and changes (photo 1), and the form and size of the 1725 school are not known. It does however appear to have been a rather smaller building, either rectangular or L-shaped in plan, with a south-facing front which comprised the five bays at the right-hand end of the present south elevation. The row of ground floor windows here has a continuous hoodmould, and the central opening is believed to have been the front entrance originally, later altered to form the present window (photos 2 and 3).

² National Heritage List entry 1096086

³ The Conservation Studio 2005 *Whalley Conservation Area Appraisal*

- 5.3 A major expansion took place in the early 19th century, and the building's depiction on a plan of 1839⁴, indicates that it had by then reached a size close to its present extent, although the south front appears to have continued further to the east (figure 1). Much of the west end of the building then formed the schoolmaster's accommodation, a substantial dwelling.

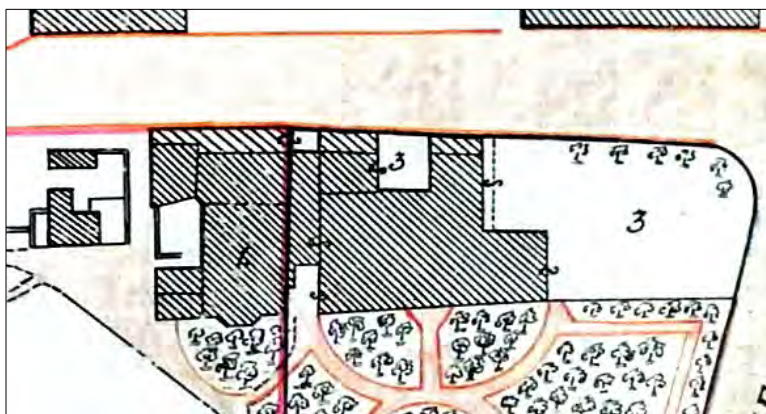


Figure 1: Extract from 1839 plan

- 5.4 The present east front and main entrance within it may have been established in 1843, according to the date-stone over the doorway, which bears the schoolmaster George Preston's name; the porch is probably slightly later, to judge from its omission from the 1848 Ordnance Survey map (figure 2)⁵. The 1843 doorway jamb has an incomplete graffito of the 1750s, and may have been re-sited here from the south elevation.



Figure 2: OS 1:10560 map, 1848

- 5.5 A plan of 1874⁶ (figure 3) shows that the porch was certainly existence by that date, and a more detailed floor plan of 1882⁷ is also useful in showing room

⁴*Plan of Land in the Township of Whalley*; copy held by WEF

⁵Lancashire, sheet 55, surveyed 1844-6 (enlarged)

⁶*Plan of the Whalley Abbey Estate 1874* Original held by WEF

⁷*Plan of Whalley Grammar School, showing the Proposed Alterations and Additions* copy held by WEF

layout and uses at that later date (figure 4). Evidently, the extension then proposed at the west end was not realised.

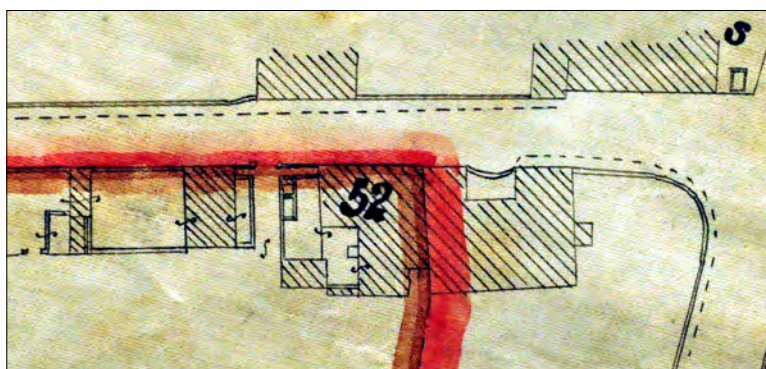


Figure 3: Extract from 1874 plan

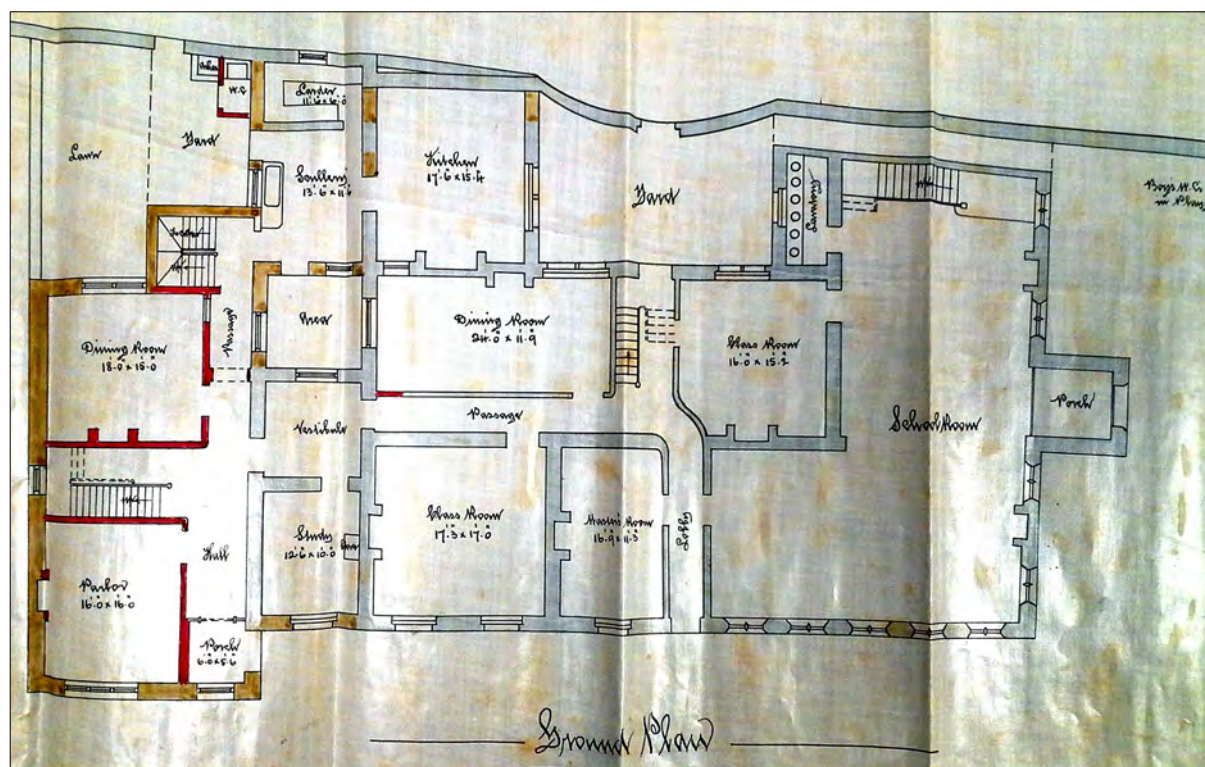


Figure 4: Ground floor plan, 1882, showing proposed alterations and additions

- 5.6 The OS 1:2500 map of 1912⁸ (figure 5) shows a different extension at the west end from that proposed in 1882, represented by the brick-built lean-to in existence today. At that date the lean-to continued to the north with an L-shaped form, but a detailed plan of 1930⁹ shows that northern part to have been demolished, leaving only the wash-house and store (figure 6). This later plan also shows that a number of internal changes throughout the building had been carried out since 1882, in particular the removal of some dividing walls.

⁸Lancashire, sheet 55.10, surveyed 1892, revised 1910 (enlarged)

⁹Ground floor plan, 1930. Copy held by WEF

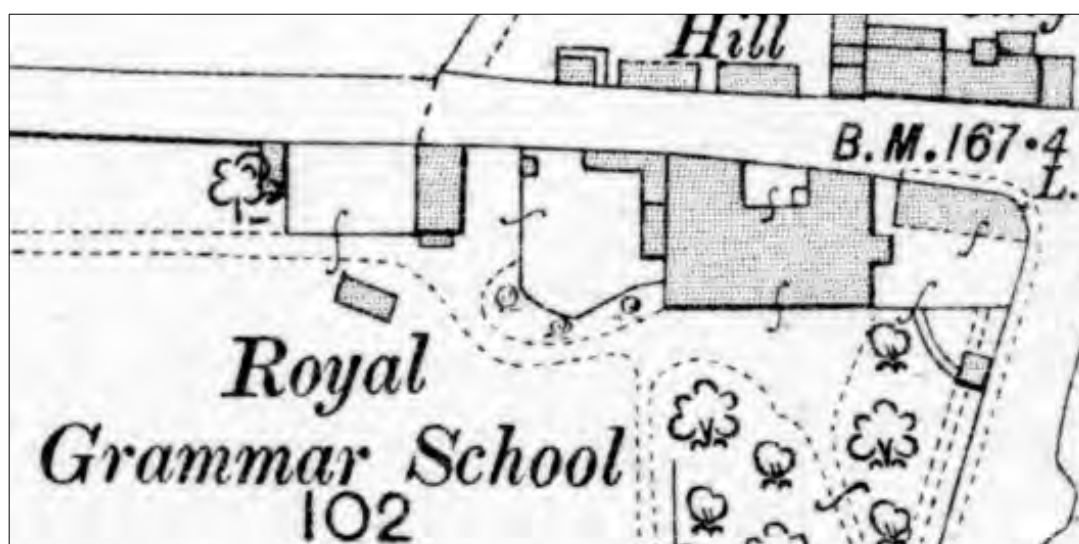


Figure 5: OS 1:2500 map, 1912

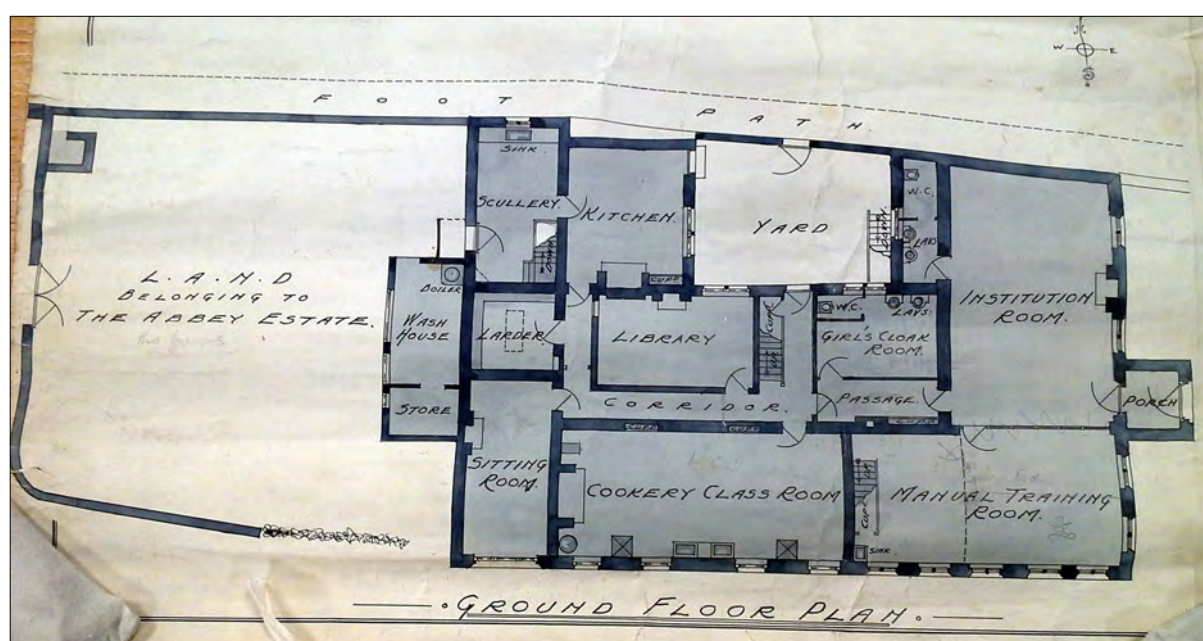


Figure 6: Ground floor plan, 1930

- 5.7 Further changes to the building have been carried out since 1930, although the essential elements of the plan-form have remained.

6 The present building

- 6.1 The exterior of the building appears to be very largely 19th century, with a small core of early 18th century fabric at the south-east corner, and the details of its windows appear to have been copied within some of the 19th century work. The western part of the building seems to have been added in the early 19th century, before 1839, some of it the private accommodation for the schoolmaster.

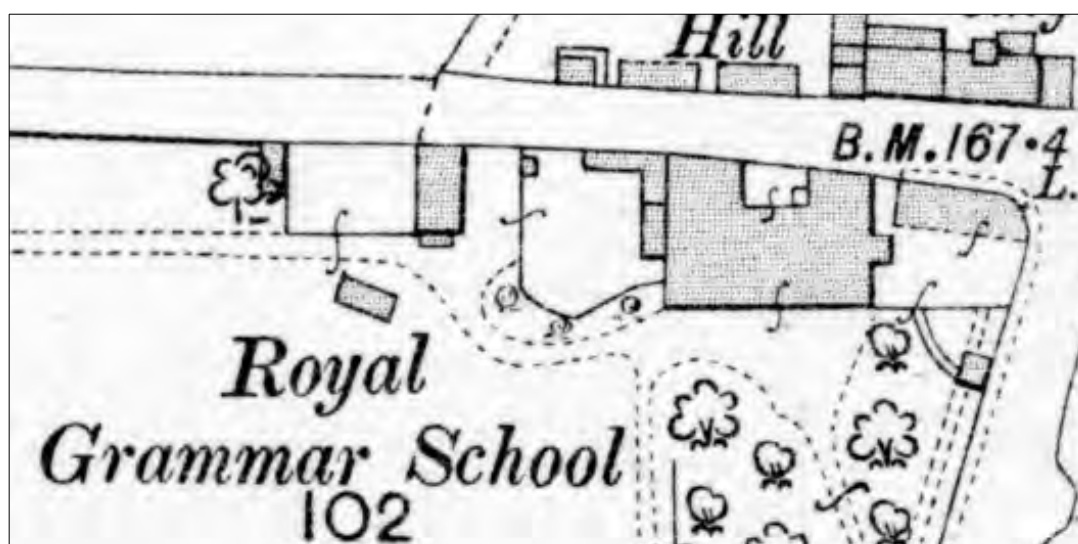


Figure 7: OS 1:2500 map, 1912

- 6.2 The interior of the building largely retains its historic divisions, but has been extensively modernised during the second half of the 20th century, as would be expected from an educational establishment which has functioned continuously. While the National Heritage List entry's sweeping statement that "*Inside, there are no visible features of architectural interest*" is something of an over-generalisation, it is true that the overall appearance internally is largely plain and modern, and lacks very few fixtures or fittings of note.

7 Statement of significance

- 7.1 The Old Grammar School has heritage significance arising predominantly from its architectural and historical interest, as a largely 19th century school building with early 18th century origin. The architectural interest derives mostly from its exterior, which is traditionally built from local sandstone, with differences in the forms of openings expressing the various phases and room uses. The east front is the most striking of the elevations, as would be expected, but appears to owe its present form largely to mid or late 19th century work, and is enhanced by its juxtaposition with the War Memorial. The south side of the former school contains some of the earliest visible fabric, in which there are four original cross-windows with hoodmould over, on both floors. These contrast strongly with the early 19th century sash windows to the left.
- 7.2 The north elevation appears wholly 19th century, albeit perhaps of different phases, and as the back is less ornate, though the fenestration around the small rear courtyard is notable. The west side contains a single storey, brick-built lean-to, roofed with corrugated iron, probably dating from the turn of the 20th century, which detracts from the building's significance.

- 7.3 In terms of setting, the open space to the south makes an important contribution to significance, and had been established as part of the garden by the early 19th century. Within it is a stone plinth for a garden ornament, currently surmounted by an ecclesiastical fragment, but a 19th century photograph shows it with an vase-shaped ornament. The War Memorial to the east is similarly important. To the west, the car park itself is not an important contributor, although its boundary walls and gateway are.
- 7.4 The interior retains some but not all of its 19th century plan-form, and has undergone piecemeal modernisation during the 20th century, and to a small degree in the 21st century. Here, significance arises principally from the two-storey Main Hall (representing the original schoolroom), with a small number of other individual areas and features, such as the staircase.

8 Impact of proposals

Exterior

- 8.1 The proposed reinstatement of the window in the east elevation would enhance significance (photo 4), as the present appearance of this doorway is obviously a modern adaptation, though it is recommended that the original jambs are moved back to their original positions, to replace the modern ones.
- 8.2 The reinstatement of a doorway in the south elevation would have a very low impact on significance, if achieved sensitively.
- 8.3 The installation of railings next to the south elevation would result in a small level of harm to significance of both the listed building and conservation area, due to their visual intrusion and slight incongruity, in relation to the adjoining early 18th century architecture, although the exact level of harm would depend on their precise form and colour, and the manner in which they were constructed in relation to the historic fabric. However, the public benefits of creating safe outdoor space for pre-school play are obviously substantial.
- 8.4 The replacement of the existing early 20th century extension to the west elevation, and associated changes to a small infill roof adjacent, have the potential to enhance heritage significance, through the replacement of a brick and corrugated iron structure, whose present appearance detracts from the building's appearance (photo 5). Although this is a plain, rear elevation, designed with considerably less regard for appearance than the other sides, the present lean-to is incongruous. Its replacement, given appropriate materials and finish, could much improve the aesthetic value of the west elevation.

Interior

- 8.5 The alterations to the two openings in the Main Hall (described above) would not have an impact on significance, if carried out sensitively, with regard for the existing wall finishes, which include a moulded plaster dado. The changes would be only the latest in a sequence of minor changes over the building's life, which it can readily withstand without detriment to significance (photos 6 and 7).
- 8.6 This is similarly true of the other proposed changes to the interior, including the re-hanging of a modern door to the pre-school WCs. The corridor and staircase to the Headmaster's Room are 20th century features of the building, and their removal would benefit significance as they currently impinge on the Calder Room (photo 8). On the first floor, the panelled partition is a very late 19th or early 20th century construction, which impinges on the cast iron fireplace (photo 9), and its removal would enhance significance.
- 8.7 The proposed vertical platform lift, with associated alterations on ground and first floors, would replace a small store established in the late 20th century (photo 9), and would require only a small area of historic partition to be removed on the first floor. This would amount to less than substantial harm, but again, the public benefits created by making the first floor accessible are clearly substantial.
- 8.8 Further public benefits would accrue from re-establishing a room on the first floor over the Calder Room. There were two adjoining rooms in this space in the 19th century, but the space is now a void above a modern suspended ceiling. A new doorway from the corridor would require the removal of historic fabric, but again this would amount to less than substantial harm. Access to the new Pre-School Leader's Office would also be achieved through a modest new doorway, instead of by means of the staircase from the ground floor, but again this new opening would mean less than substantial harm.
- 8.9 There would be no negative impact from the replacement of the existing first floor WC facilities off the Altham Room, with new accessible facilities, but there would be obvious public benefits.

9 Summary

- 9.1 The proposals comprise a number of minor, targeted changes to the historic building, all with the aim of increasing the public benefits which the Whalley Educational Foundation provides to the local community, as its *raison d'être*. The improved facilities would contribute to pre-school learning as well as adult education, partly through greater accessibility.

- 9.2 The majority of the proposals would not harm heritage significance, if undertaken with due sensitivity (perhaps controlled by condition), but a number have been identified as having the potential to cause some less than substantial harm to the listed building and conservation area. However, the harm would be outweighed by the resulting public benefits, as the over-riding aim of the proposals is to ensure the building continues in its present, optimal viable use, by enabling the WEF to fulfil its aims effectively.

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Photo 1: The east front, with war memorial to right



Photo 2: The south side. Original five bays of 1725 school at right



Photo 3: Ground floor windows, south side, one a former doorway, proposed for re-opening



Photo 4: Former window in east elevation, proposed to be re-instated



Photo 5: West elevation, with early 20th century lean-to proposed for replacement



Photo 6: Main Hall, looking north



Photo 7: South-west corner of Main Hall, with doorway proposed for reinstatement

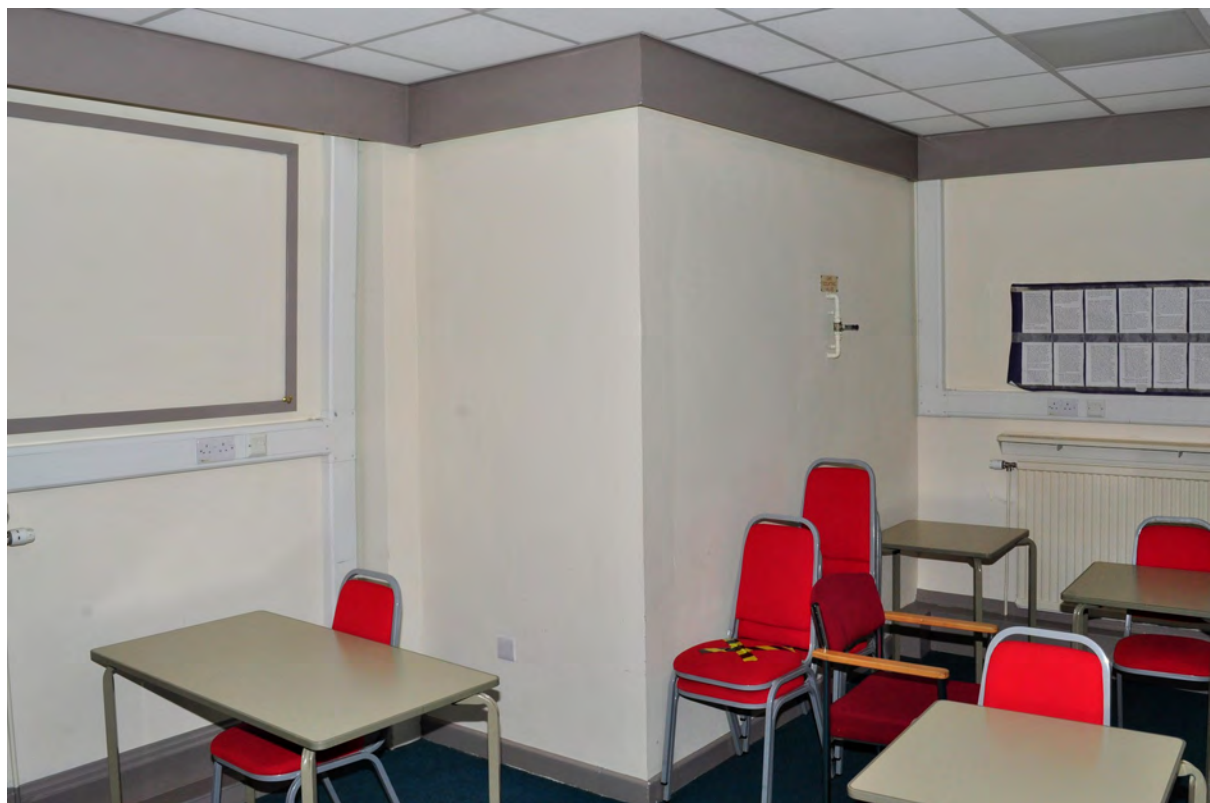


Photo 8: 20th century partition in Calder Room, proposed for removal



Photo 9: Partition in Headmaster's Room (first floor), late C19/early C20, proposed for removal



Photo 10: Modern partitions with store, proposed for platform lift