

Peter Hitchen Architects

Peter Hitchen Architects Ltd

Marathon House
The Sidings Business Park
Whalley
Lancashire
BB7 9SE
16 February 2026

**HERITAGE STATEMENT AND METHOD STATEMENT
STONE CLEANING AND REPOINTING
AT
WHALLEY OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL, STATION ROAD, WHALLEY**

Introduction

This heritage statement has been produced to support the listed building consent application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for the stone cleaning and re-pointing of the north, east and south facades following the listed building consent granted in 2021 (3/2021/0351) for the various alterations.

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."

In summary, this statement finds that the proposed works would not result in any harm and that loss of significance would be outweighed by the public benefits accruing from the improved appearance of the building.

The existing site

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)

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.

Development proposals

The proposal comprises:

The demolition of the brick extension complete to the west elevation

The replacement of the existing brick extension to the west elevation, and associated changes to a small infill roof adjacent

Identified heritage assets

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

"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.

The building lies within the Whalley Conservation Area, designated in 1972. An appraisal for it was produced in 2005.

Historical background

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.

The building owes much of its present external form to 19th century extensions and changes, 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

A major expansion took place in the early 19th century, and the building's depiction on a plan of 1839, 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

Much of the west end of the building then formed the schoolmaster's accommodation, a substantial dwelling.

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. The 1843 doorway jamb has an incomplete graffito of the 1750s, and may have been re-sited here from the south elevation.

The OS 1:2500 map of 1912 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 1930 shows that northern part to have been demolished, leaving only the wash-house and store. 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.

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

The present building

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.

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.

Statement of significance

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.

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 extension recently constructed, which has significantly improved this façade when compared to the previous brick lean to which had a corrugated iron roof.

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.

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.

Method statement for the stone cleaning

The proposal initially involves the full scaffold erection and methodical protection of the north, south and eastern facades with full sheet coverings. All window and door openings will be fully masked and protected to all elevations. The work will be phased.

The method of cleaning is a low pressure soft abrasive system to gently swirl away surface contaminants without damaging the substrate. The system incorporates crushed recycled glass pellets to aid with the cleaning.

This method is especially effective for removing carbon sulphation, which has formed as a black crust on the sandstone in polluted environments. This method can clean thoroughly without damaging the natural surface texture or aged patina that gives the building its character.

The current pointing to the building is a mix of mortar types and the proposal is to repoint using a 6:1:1 mix (6 sand, 1 cement and 1 lime) as the recently completed west elevation demonstrates. Finishes for mortar jointing, to match existing.

Impact of the proposal

The stone cleaning and repointing, has the potential to enhance heritage significance and will much improve the aesthetic value of the elevations.

The proposal would not harm heritage significance enabling the WEF to fulfil its aims to maintain the building fabric effectively due to historic issues with maintenance of the structure.



