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Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning

## **Ribchester St Wilfrid's C of E Primary School**

Heritage Statement

03<sup>rd</sup> June 2026

**CASSIDY + ASHTON**

7 East Cliff, Preston, PR1 3JE

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**APPLICANT:** The School Governors of St Wilfrid's C of E Primary School

**PROJECT:** Installation of 1.5m high wall top fencing

**TITLE:** Heritage Statement

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### INTRODUCTION TO PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 Cassidy + Ashton Group Ltd. have been instructed by the School Governors of Ribchester St Wilfrid's C of E Primary School to prepare a Heritage Statement to support a full planning application for the installation of an air source heat pump and associated roof repair works at St Wilfrid's Primary School, Ribchester. The site does not comprise a listed building but does lie within the Ribchester Conservation Area and is situated adjacent to the Ribchester Roman Bath House which is designated as a Scheduled Monument.
- 1.2 This application relates to St Wilfrid's Primary School, which was built circa 1872 as a National School. The proposals comprise the installation of 1.5m high wall top fencing to the perimeter of the School. Both gates to the front of the playground are to be replaced, and the gates are to have an audio intercom system, remote controlled magnetic lock system installed to them.

### DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

- 1.3 This Statement describes the site and its surroundings before setting out the planning policy context pertaining to heritage matters, under which the application should be considered. This Heritage Statement is required due to the site's location within a Conservation Area and adjacent to a Scheduled Monument.
- 1.4 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that:
- "In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."*
- 1.5 Sufficient information will be provided within this statement to wholly address the requirements of the NPPF.
- 1.6 The conclusion is then reached that the development conforms to the relevant planning policy context, and that there are no reasons relating to heritage which would prevent planning consent from being granted.

### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

1.7 This Heritage Statement is supported by the following drawings, illustrating the extent of works proposed:

- 13852 – L01 Rev P1 - Location Plan
- 13635 – L02 Rev P1 – Proposed Plans and Elevations

## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 St Wilfrid's Primary School is located to the east of Church Street in Ribchester, Lancashire. Ribchester lies on the north bank of the River Ribble.



*Figure 1. Site Location [Source: Google Earth]*

- 2.2 The surrounding area is predominantly residential, comprising of two-storey terraced houses. To the northeast of the application site lies the remains of a roman bath house, an archaeological site which is open to the public and is a designated scheduled monument (Figure 2).
- 2.3 To the south of the school site lies the River Ribble and a public footpath (Figure 3) runs along the southern boundary of the school, between the two.



Figure 2. Ribchester Roman Bath House located to the northeast of the site [Source: C+A]



Figure 3. Side elevation of St Wilfrid's Primary School taken from the riverside [Source: C+A]



Figure 4. Front elevation of St Wilfrid's Primary School taken from the southwest [Source: C+A]

### **Ribchester Conservation Area**

- 2.4 The site falls within the Ribchester Conservation Area and therefore an analysis of the Conservation Area is included within this statement. The area was first designated on 17 July 1973.
- 2.5 The Ribchester Conservation Area consists of the main village core which comprises a range of properties and open space.
- 2.6 Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as an:
- “area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.*
- 2.7 The Ribble Valley Borough Council – Ribchester Conservation Area Appraisal provides the following description of its special architectural and historic interest:

*Ribchester Conservation Area consists of the village core centered around a small triangular area, on one side of which is the White Bull Inn, and Stydd, a rural area north-east of the main settlements which contains two churches and 18<sup>th</sup> century almshouses.*

*Ribchester village is dominated by rows of handloom weavers' cottages, many of which were built in the late eighteenth century, but some of which were also adapted from existing houses. There is a scattering of older houses in the village, many of which have seventeenth or eighteenth century datestones. There is a small amount of late nineteenth or early twentieth century development on the north side of the village, around Blackburn Road. The area also includes the excavated areas of the Roman baths and granaries, now preserved in an open area of land for display to the public, and the Roman Museum, next to the church.*

*Stydd is approached via a narrow single track road. After leading first to the Roman Catholic Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, a listed 'barn church' built in 1789, then Stydd Almshouses (1728), the road becomes a rough track that continues to the late 12<sup>th</sup> century Church of St Saviour.*

### ***Summary of special interest***

*The special interest that justifies designation of the Ribchester Conservation Area derives from the following features:*

- *Remains of Roman fort and associated outbuildings of settlement (vicus), including granaries and bath house, much of which is protected by Scheduled Monument status;*
- *The architectural and historic interest of the area's buildings, 21 of which are listed;*

- *Two grade I churches: Church of St Wilfred and Church of St Saviour, Stydd;*
- *Church of St Peter and St Paul (grade II), a 'barn church' and one of the earliest Catholic churches in Lancashire;*
- *Stydd Almshouses, listed grade II\*;*
- *Narrow, closely developed streets of former handloom weavers' settlement;*
- *Ensemble of St Wilfrid's Church, Rectory, Museum and Churchgates;*
- *Handloom weaver's cottages, including two with cellar loomshops, particularly in Church Street and Water Street;*
- *Good examples of late 19<sup>th</sup> century terraced houses along Church Street and Blackburn Road;*
- *River Ribble;*
- *The prevalent use of local building stone;*
- *Stydd, a tiny rural hamlet containing two historic churches and 18<sup>th</sup> century almshouses;*
- *Open space in front of White Bull;*
- *Views of River Ribble and surrounding landscape;*
- *Individual trees and groups of trees.*

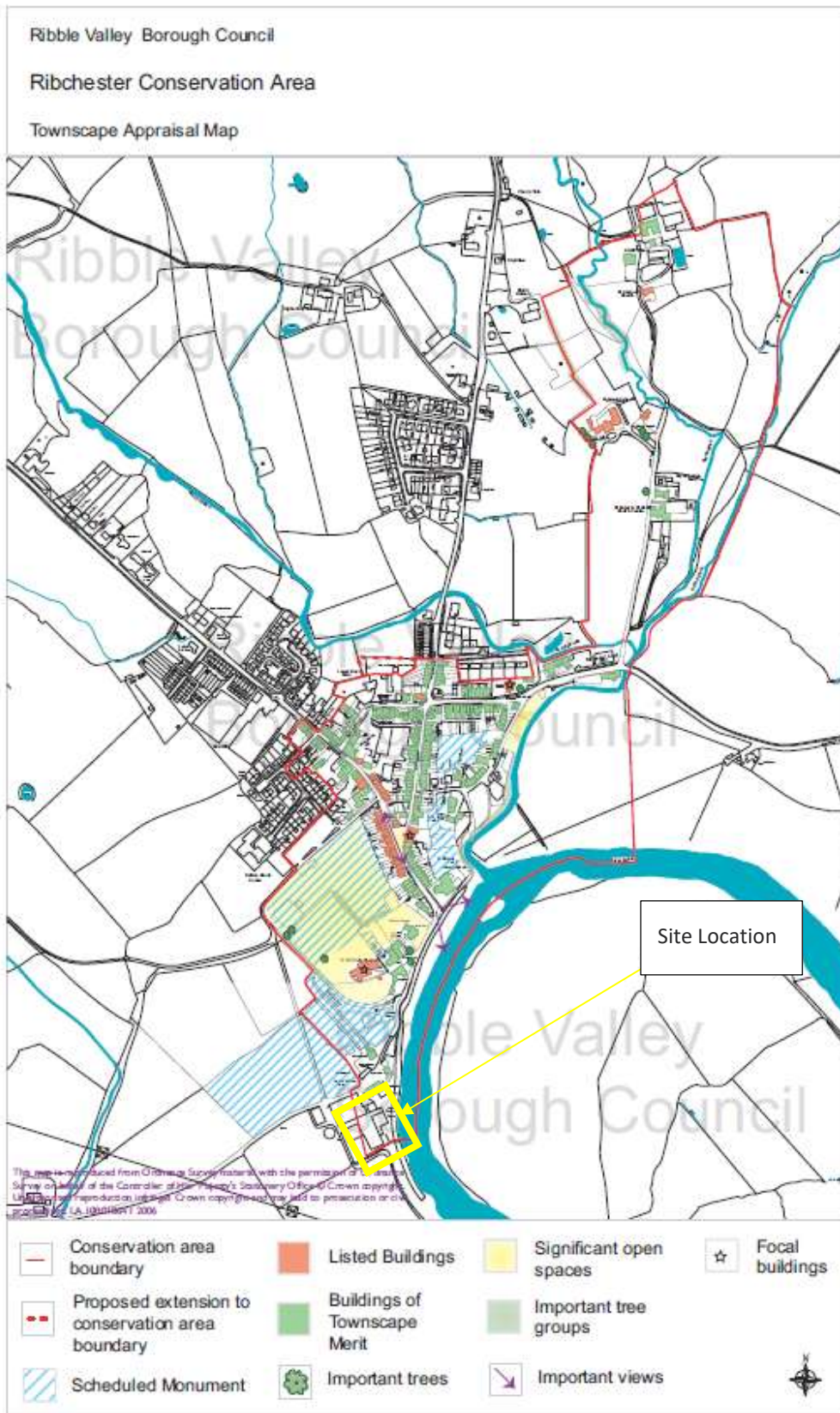


Figure 5. Ribchester Conservation Area [Source: Ribble Borough Valley Council]

### Scheduled Monument

- 2.1 The Ribchester Roman fort (Bremetennacum) is categorised as a Scheduled Monument under Heritage England with a List Entry Number of 1005110.



**Figure 6. Ribchester Roman for Scheduled Monument areas [Source: Historic England]**

- 2.2 The Scheduled Monument extend over 5 no. areas within Ribchester including a section located to the north of the application site.
- 2.3 The area to the north of the school, comprises the remains of the Roman Bath House, built around 100 AD. Primarily used by Cavalry soldiers and the local Romano-British population the baths facilitated an essential part of the daily social life. Containing hot pools and steam rooms, the baths provided a place where locals could chat, make business deals or even play board games (Source: [Lancashire County Council](#)).
- 2.4 In 225 AD the Bath House fell into disuse and over the centuries they have subject to archaeological excavations.

### Listed Buildings

- 2.5 There are 8 no. Grade II listed buildings situated approximately 70 meters from the application site comprising properties at 8-15 Church Street. They were first listed on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 1983. The listing description states the following:

*Part of a row of weavers' houses, late C18th. Squared sandstone with brick stacks and slate roof. 2 storeys with continuous plain frieze and stone gutter brackets. Windows have plain reveals and projecting sills, the doors, to the right, having plain stone surrounds. No. 8, of one bay, has sashed windows and a triangular moulded stone door hood on stone brackets, with a stone plaque over inscribed 'BPB 1795'. No. 9 has a similar door hood, modern windows, and a 2nd 1st floor window over the door. To the right is a tunnel entrance with plain stone surround and semi- circular head with projecting key and imposts. No. 12 has a 2nd, modern, 1st floor window, as does No. 13, which has cement reveals to the ground floor door and window and a tunnel entrance to the right with plain stone surround. No. 14 has cement dressings. No. 15 has plain stone surrounds, possibly of c.1900, with a tunnel entrance to the right with plain stone surround. Nos. 14 and 15, although altered, continue the facade of the row and are listed for group value.*

- 2.6 The dwellings make up part of weaver's houses which were first built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Ribchester's post medieval developments as handloom weavers' settlements marks the area's greatest period of expansion as it transitioned from a rural village into an industrial area.



Figure 7. Photograph of 8-15 Church Street [Source: C+A]

### 3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.1 St Wilfrid's Primary School aims to provide a broad, balanced and creative curriculum for children aged 4 – 11. The school has 87 no. pupils and received a 'good' rating in their lastest Ofsted report (2023).
- 3.2 The proposal seeks the installation of 1.5m cast iron fencing to the top of the boundary wall, and the replacement of associated gates. The gates are to have remote controlled magnetic locks to them and an audio intercom system. The aim of the project is to provide safeguarding and prevent the pupils from existing the premises without staff knowledge.
- 3.3 Figure 8 identifies the proposed locations of the proposed fencing. It is expected that all the panels and most of the posts will be visible from outside of the site.
- 3.4 The fence posts are to be fixed into the ground in the internal side of the playground, the posts will 'dog leg' to allow the panels to sit flush with the wall. The fence is to be black (RAL 9005) topped with decorative balls.
- 3.5 The fence will be visible from the front boundary and the riverside boundary.





*Figure 8. Photographs of proposed location of fencing on the Front and Riverside Elevations of the school*

*[Source: C+A]*

## 4.0 HERITAGE STATUS

### PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material consideration indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The Local Development Framework comprises of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008-2028 (Adopted December 2014). It sets out the strategic planning policy framework to guide development in the borough up to 2028. It also includes development management policies to assist in the determination of individual planning applications.
- 4.3 Other planning policies and guidance which are material considerations in the discussion of this proposal are:
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  - National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- 4.4 Only policies pertaining to heritage requirements are set out and assessed within this document.

### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as revised in December 2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.6 Paragraph 167 states that:
- Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of this Framework.*
- 4.7 Chapter 16 encourages the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment with the following extracts considered of relevance:
- 4.8 Paragraph 207 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Paragraph 208 continues to say that they should take this into account when

considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimize any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

4.9 Paragraph 210 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation;*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

4.10 Paragraph 212 emphasises that:

*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.*

4.11 Paragraph 215 outlines:

*Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.12 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy forms the central document of the Local Development Framework establishing the vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide the development of the area to 2028.

4.13 Under policy EN5: Heritage Assets local planning regulations outline that:

*There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. The Historic Environment and its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.*

*This will be achieved through:*

- *Recognising that the best way of ensuring the long term protection of heritage assets is to ensure a viable use that optimises opportunities for sustaining and enhancing its significance.*
- *Keeping Conservation Area Appraisals under review to ensure that any development proposals respect and safeguard the character, appearance and significance of the area.*
- *Considering any development proposals which may impact on a heritage asset or their setting through seeking benefits that conserve and enhance their significance and avoids any substantial harm to the heritage asset.*
- *Requiring all development proposals to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness/sense of place.*
- *The consideration of Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights where the exercise of such rights would harm the historic environment.*

4.14 Policy DME4 (Protecting Heritage Assets) states:

1. *Conservation Areas*

*Proposals within, or affecting views into and out of, or affecting the setting of a conservation area will be required to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance its character and appearance and those elements which contribute towards its significance. This should include considerations as to whether it conserves and enhances the special architectural and historic character of the area as set out in the relevant conservation area appraisal. Development which makes a positive contribution and conserves and enhances the character, appearance and significance of the area in terms of its location, scale, size, design and materials and existing buildings, structures, trees and open spaces will be supported.*

*In the conservation areas there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of elements that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.*

2. *Listed Buildings and other Buildings of Significant Heritage Interest*

*Alterations or extensions to listed buildings or buildings of local heritage interest, or development proposals on sites within their setting which cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset will not be supported.*

*Any proposals involving the demolition or loss of important historic fabric from listed buildings will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist.*

3. *Registered Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and Other Gardens of Significant Heritage Interest*

*Proposals which cause harm to or loss of significance to registered parks, gardens or landscapes of special historic interest, or other gardens of significant local heritage interest, including their setting, will not be supported.*

#### *4. Scheduled Monuments and Other Archaeological Remains*

*Applications for development that would result in harm to the significance of a scheduled monument or nationally important archaeological sites will not be supported.*

*Developers will be expected to investigate the significance of non-designated archaeology prior to determination of an application. Where this demonstrates that the significance is equivalent to that of designated assets, proposals which cause harm to the significance of non-designated assets will not be supported.*

*Where it can be demonstrated that the substantial public benefits of any proposals outweigh the harm to or loss of the above, the council will seek to ensure mitigation of damage through preservation of remains in situ as the preferred solution. Where this is not justified, developers will be required to make adequate provision for excavation and recording of the asset before or during excavation.*

*Proposals should also give adequate consideration of how the public understanding and appreciation of such sites could be improved.*

*In line with NPPF, Ribble Valley aims to seek positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment through the following:*

- a) Monitoring heritage assets at risk; and*
  - i) Supporting development/re-use proposals consistent with their conservation;*
  - ii) Considering use of legal powers (building preservation notices, urgent works notices) to ensure the proper preservation of listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas.*
- b) Supporting redevelopment proposals which better reveal the significance of heritage assets or their settings.*
- c) Production of design guidance.*
- d) Keeping conservation area management guidance under review.*
- e) Use of legal enforcement powers to address unauthorised works where it is expedient to do so.*
- f) Assessing the significance and opportunities for enhancement of non-designated heritage assets through the development management process.*

## 5.0 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The relevant national and local planning policies pertaining to matters of heritage are set out within the preceding chapter. These policies demonstrate the actions necessary to appropriately assess the significance of a heritage assets and the impact of any development proposals upon them.
- 5.2 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF requires applicants to identify and assess the particular significance of heritage assets or their setting and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 5.3 The significance of a heritage asset may comprise a number of factors, which are similar to the criteria for listing and including, but not restricted to:
- Age and rarity: most buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed, as are most built between 1700 and 1840
  - Architectural interest: through architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship and also important examples of particular building types and technique
  - Historic interest: encompassing buildings which illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural or military history, or close historical association with nationally-important people or events
  - Group value: especially where buildings are part of an important architectural or historic group or are a fine example of planning (such as squares, terraces and model villages)
- 5.4 Taking such factors into account, the relative significance of the elements of the site can be assessed, using the following scale:
- High significance – buildings/features which make an important contribution to the architectural and historic interest and character of the site, through age, rarity, architectural merit or historical association or group value, and whose preservation and enhancement is considered essential
  - Medium significance – those making a lesser contribution, but which nevertheless are also considered worthy of preservation or enhancement
  - Low significance – those making only a limited contribution to the site overall, although not necessarily detracting from it.

- 5.5 Taking the above methodology into account, the proposed site lies within a designated conservation area and is in close vicinity to a Scheduled Monument and Grade II listed buildings. As such, the significance of each will need to be considered.

**Ribchester Conservation Area**

- 5.6 The Ribchester Conservation Area was originally designated in 1973, and as such it can be considered of high significance with a number of features of special architectural and historical interest. The Conservation Area's Townscape Appraisal map identifies St Wilfrid's Primary School as a building of townscape merit and as such is considered to provide positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, whilst not a designated heritage asset.

**Ribchester Roman Fort**

- 5.7 The Roman Fort sites at Ribchester are Designated as scheduled monuments. As such, they are of high significance, with respect to their age and rarity, historic interest and group value.

**Listed Building**

- 5.8 A number of terraced properties on Church Street are Grade II listed as example of weaver's cottages built in the later 18<sup>th</sup> Century. These properties are therefore of high significance for their historic interest and group value.

## 6.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The NPPF sets out the current heritage policies to guide the determination of developments affecting the historic environment. Paragraph 212 requires great weight to be given to an asset's conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development upon its significance.

### Impact on Ribchester Conservation Area

- 6.2 The works will be entirely contained to the boundary of the School. The fencing will be of a similar style to fencing found throughout the village of Ribchester. It will be visible from the road, and the river.

*Figure 9. Photograph of St Wilfrid's CEPS from the southwest [Source C+A]*

- 6.3 The design of the proposal has sought to be visually sensitive and would make a positive contribution to the school by providing a means of safeguarding for the school. Given the school is adjacent to a river and a road, ensuring the children are safe is of high importance.
- 6.4 Considering the visual impact of the heat pump from the Riverside elevation, the school is separated from the public footpath by boundary treatment. The fence will be installed to the top of the stonewall and will be visible from the river.



*Figure 10. Photograph from footpath and riverside to the south of the site [Source: C+A]*



**Figure 11. Photograph from road of the front elevation [Source: google maps]**

#### **Impact on the Scheduled Monument**

- 6.5 The proposed location of the works is located approximately 70m south of the Scheduled Monument comprising an ancient Roman Bath House. When looking towards the proposed site from the Roman Bath House there is an existing wooden paneled fence acting as a boundary treatment. This limits the view of the school from the site. In any event, the existing structures of the school will block views of the Fencing from this direction. Therefore, the proposal will result in no visual or physical harm to the significance of the Roman Bath House.



*Figure 11. Photograph looking to the north of the site from the Roman Bath House [Source: C+A]*

#### **Impact on the nearby Listed Buildings**

- 6.6 The proposed site is situated approximately 70m from the Grade II listed, weaver's cottages.
- 6.7 Due to this distance and presence of existing pitched roofs at the school site the proposals would not have any impact on these buildings.

#### **National Policy**

- 6.8 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. In line with the NPPF, the air source heat pump and associated flat roof works provides a more sustainable way of heating the school, replacing its ineffective feature. The remaining roof works will also prevent further water ingress into the school building, protecting it from further damages and supporting its continuing operations.
- 6.9 It is therefore considered that the public benefits of the scheme are significant and outweigh any perceived harm to the heritage assets which in any event are neutral given this proposal is simply for the refurbishment improvement of an existing facility.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This Heritage Statement supports an application for the installation of boundary fencing and associated gates at St Wilfrid's Primary School.
- 7.2 The assessment undertaken during the preparation of this statement demonstrates that the development has a minor impact upon the Ribchester Conservation Area, and a neutral impact on the Ribchester Roman fort and the Grade II listed buildings at no's 8-15 Church Street, given that the nature of the works and the are minor in scale and will support the continued operations of the school.
- 7.3 It is therefore considered that the development complies with the relevant national and local planning policies, and for that reason, full planning consent should be granted.

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