

Ribble Valley Borough: Application Number. LCC/2018/0003

Detached new build classroom with toilets and ancillary rooms and single storey extension to existing school building to provide a new library and construction of a multi-use games area. Whalley C of E Primary School, Church Lane, Whalley, Clitheroe.

Contact for further information:
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Executive Summary

Detached new build classroom with toilets and ancillary rooms and single storey extension to existing school building to provide a new library and construction of a multi-use games area. Whalley C of E Primary School, Church Lane, Whalley, Clitheroe.

Recommendation - Summary

That planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling time limits, working programme, hours of working, building materials, fencing colour, landscaping, highway matters and archaeology scheme.

Applicant's Proposal

The application is for the erection of a detached single storey new build classroom, a single storey extension to provide a new library and creation of a multi - use games area. The development proposals would allow the yearly intake at the school to be increased from 40 to 45 pupils in each year group. This would increase the total number of pupils at the school from 280 to 315.

The detached single storey building would measure approximately 23m x 8m with a maximum height of 6m. The external elevations would consist of a combination of natural spilt faced stone finished with rendered blockwork coloured white. The building would have a pitched roof covered with slate and aluminium coated windows and doors coloured white.

The single storey extension would measure approximately 8m x 4m with a monopitch roof to a maximum height of 5m. The materials for the external elevations of the single storey extension would match the proposed new build detached classroom.

Part of the development proposal includes the creation of a multi - use games area, which would cover an area of approximately 26.5m x 18m and would include perimeter 1.2m high bow stop fencing coloured green (RAL 6005). The multi - use games area would consist of a rubber polymeric surface coloured green.

Description and Location of Site

Whalley Church of England Primary School is located 250 metres to the south of Whalley town centre approximately 3km south from Clitheroe. The existing school site consists of a single storey stone and rendered building on the northern side of the site with a hard / soft play area to the south.

The proposed detached new build classroom and single storey extension would be located on existing hardstanding areas in close proximity to the existing school buildings. Church Lane forms the northern and western sides of the site from where pedestrian access is gained. The nearest residential properties are located approximately 40m away from the proposed development on The Sands. There are also properties on the opposite side of Church Lane from the school.

The whole school site is located within the Whalley Conservation area. The southern boundary of the school is formed by the North Courtyard Range of the Whalley Abbey, a Scheduled Monument and Grade I Listed Building which is located approximately 10m away from the proposed site of the multi use games area. To the east of the school site is the Church of St Mary and all Saints which is also a Grade I Listed Building.

Background

The site is an established educational facility.

Planning permission was granted at Whalley C of E Primary School for the enclosure of the existing canopy with aluminium bi-fold doors and full height glazing including relocation of existing play train in June 2015 (Ref 3/2015/0454).

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs 7 - 14, 17, 56 - 65, 72 - 74 and 126 - 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework are relevant with regards to the definition of sustainable development, core planning principles, requiring good design, the need for new school places and impacts on heritage assets.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy

Policy DMG1 - General Considerations

Policy DS2 - Sustainable Development

Policy DME1 - Protecting Trees and Woodlands

Policy DME3 - Site and Species Protection and Conservation

Policy DME4 - Protecting Heritage Assets

Policy DMI2 - Transport Considerations
Policy EN2 - Landscape

Consultations

Ribble Valley Borough Council – The Borough Council consider that the development is very harmful to the character and appearance of the Whalley Conservation Area and the setting of Whalley Abbey. The new classroom block and MUGA would intrude into the green space adjacent to the main public access to the Abbey and would therefore impact upon the setting. The Borough Council also comment upon impacts on the root protection areas of trees which are proposed to be retained.

Whalley Parish Council - Objection raised - the development should be located elsewhere due to the lack of infrastructure in the area and the impacts the development would have on Whalley Abbey.

Sport England - No comments to make – advice should be sought from the County Council's own conservation and archaeological advisors

Historic England - No comments.

Lancashire Archaeological Advisory Service - Due to the proposed site in close proximity to heritage assets a condition should be added that prior to site clearance and preparation a programme of archaeological work with a written scheme of investigation should be submitted and approved by the local planning authority.

LCC Highways Development Control - Initially raised objection due to the additional traffic which would be generated by the proposed development. However the objection has now been removed as the applicant has submitted a transport assessment with proposed mitigation measures to offset the increase in parking demand including walking bus provision and traffic calming measures on the surrounding highway network. LCC Highways request conditions to be added for details for the construction of the site access and details for offsite highway improvements prior to the proposed development being used, a construction management plan and school travel plan.

County Ecology Service - Due to the loss of green space from the proposed multi-use games area, replacement landscaping should be secured through planning condition.

Lead Local Flood Authority - No comments received.

Representations - The application has been advertised by press, site notice and neighbouring residents have been informed by individual letter. 7 representations have been received raising objection to the development which can be summarised as follows:

- The increase of pupils resulting from the proposed development would cause disruption to the surrounding highway network and create further parking issues within the local area.
- The development should be located on another site which would reduce the impact to the local area.
- The development would have adverse impacts on Whalley Abbey and the Whalley Conservation area.

Advice

The need for the proposed development

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a detached single storey new build classroom, a single storey extension and creation of a multi - use games area at Whalley Primary School.

Lancashire County Council has a statutory duty to provide a school place to every child of statutory school age living in Lancashire. The need for the new primary school places has been identified through a basic needs assessment which has been undertaken to establish the future demand for primary school places in this area. On 5 November 2015, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools approved a capital improvement programme that would provide additional places to regularise admission numbers in areas of growth. At the time, the Langho and Whalley planning area was identified as an area where local primary schools had admission numbers that were difficult to manage and the significant level of housing development planned in the area within the next five years combined with new births would result in a shortage of primary school places. The pupil projections have been monitored and, as a result, an initial shortfall in school places is anticipated to occur from September 2018.

As a result, at a meeting on 7 December 2016, it was agreed that proposals be put forward to increase the number of pupils admitted to Reception Class at the following primary schools which serve the Whalley area:-

- Langho and Billington St Leonard's Church of England (CE) Primary School from 40 to 45 pupils from Reception Class onwards with effect from September 2018 and for each subsequent year.
- Whalley CE Primary School from 40 to 45 pupils from Reception Class onwards, with effect from September 2019 and for each subsequent year.
- Langho St Mary's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School from 40 to 45 pupils from Reception Class onwards, with effect from September 2019 and for each subsequent year.

Paragraph 72 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. It requires that Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement and to development that will widen choice in education.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that great weight should be given to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

The county council has a statutory duty to ensure a sufficient supply of school places. It aims to provide additional places at existing schools rather than commission new provision in order that new places can be delivered more quickly and to achieve best value for money by reducing infrastructure and land acquisition costs. The proposed expansion of Whalley C of E Primary School would help accommodate the need for additional school places in this area and would be supported by the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework to which great weight should be attached. However, it is also important to balance the need for the accommodation against the impacts of the development which relate to traffic and associated impacts on highway safety and residential amenity and impacts on the heritage assets adjacent to the school.

Location and design of development

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy identifies the general considerations that development proposals must comply with. This includes a high standard of building design which is sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of size, intensity, nature, scale, style and use of building materials. There should be consideration of traffic and parking issues, and there should be no adverse effect on and the environment or heritage assets. The policy also requires that consideration should be given to the likely effect on existing trees and other natural features on the site, visual appearance and relation to surroundings and local landscapes and landscaping.

The existing school site consists of a single storey building which is predominantly a traditional stone building with later additions using more modern materials such as brick and render. The school buildings are located on the northern side of the site with a hard / soft play area to the south. The proposed detached classroom block would be single storey and located on the existing playground. The extension building would be on the site of an existing flat roofed building which is located within a courtyard partially enclosed by other buildings and would therefore have very limited visual impact when seen from The Sands. The elevations and materials for both parts of the development have been chosen to match and complement elements of the existing school building and are therefore considered acceptable and would be reflective of the materials used elsewhere on the school and surrounding buildings within the Conservation Area. A condition can be included on any planning permission to control the details of building materials.

The proposed multi - use games area would provide a replacement sports facility due to the loss of the existing hard play area through the proposed new classroom. Due to the proposed site of the MUGA being located in close proximity to some trees, a tree survey has been submitted with the application which has confirmed that no trees would be lost and includes outline mitigation measures such as erecting a tree protection fence during construction to protect the retained trees. These measures could be secured through planning condition. Overall the location and scale of the development is considered acceptable in terms of its visual impact on the nearest properties.

Heritage impacts

The whole school site is located within the Whalley Conservation area and the southern boundary of the site is formed by the North Courtyard Range of Whalley Abbey which is a Scheduled Monument and Grade I Listed Building. No part of the development would directly affect the Abbey but the MUGA would be located approximately 8m away from the stone wall forming northern elevation of the Abbey. The new classroom block would be approximately 27 metres from the Abbey wall. Concerns have been raised by Ribble Valley Borough Council and local residents that the siting of the proposed development would affect the setting of the Whalley Abbey. It should be noted Historic England raised no comments when consulted on the proposed development.

Policy DME4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy requires that listed 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. Paragraph 133 - 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework states where development will lead to substantial harm or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Also 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. The National Planning Policy Framework requires that great weight be given to the conservation of heritage assets with greater weight being attached to the more important assets. Whalley Abbey is grade 1 listed which is therefore the highest level of protection.

The MUGA would occupy an area of existing grass directly adjacent to the Abbey walls. The site is screened from the main approach to the Abbey by an existing high stone wall and the main impact on setting of the Abbey is only really appreciated in views from The Sands adjacent to the existing school building. However, it is important to recognise that the proposed MUGA would be of limited scale with no high perimeter fencing or floodlighting and therefore its impact on the setting of the Abbey is considered to be limited and less than substantial

The new classroom block would have a greater presence and would perhaps have more impact on the setting of the Abbey. The location of the new classroom block has been chosen following a design process that has considered six different locations or building configurations within the school site. Whilst other locations may have reduced the potential level of harm to designated heritage assets, they were rejected as they would have adversely affected fire escapes and fire engine access or would have impacted upon an existing sewer. The proposed location for the building is located approximately 27 metres from the walls of the Abbey and would benefit from the screening provided by the existing trees all of which would be retained. Whilst there would some impact on the setting of the Abbey when viewed from locations adjacent to the school, the impacts are considered to be limited and would be less than substantial in terms of the policy set out in paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework. However, it is considered that the elevations of the building that would be most prominent (on the western side) should be faced with

stone rather than the white render currently proposed so the impacts of the new building are reduced as far as possible

Potential archaeological interest in the site could be safe-guarded through a planning condition requiring a programme of archaeological work to be submitted, comprising of a strip, map and record of the MUGA site in the first instance, with further work being undertaken if necessary. Overall no works are proposed in the scheduled area and there are no changes are proposed to the physical fabric of Whalley Abbey. Construction methods would be used to minimise the potential for indirect construction impacts as a result of vibrations. With the imposition of these conditions it is considered the development would be acceptable.

Traffic Impacts

This proposal also raises impacts in relation to traffic and impacts on highway safety and residential amenity. Objections have been raised by local residents that the increase of pupils at the school would increase dangers on the surrounding highway network particularly during school drop off and pick up times. The school currently has no parking spaces within the school site.

The school is located on The Sands / Church Lane which is a single carriageway road of variable width around the school frontage and is within a 20mph speed limit zone. There are 'school keep clear' zig-zag markings on The Sands across both site entrances and also on the opposite side of the road at the main site entrance. To the east of the school, Church Lane narrows to approximately 4m wide and forms a priority T junction with Kings Street approximately 110m from the school. King Street is the main route through Whalley village. To the west of the school, The Sands becomes Ridding Lane before passing under Whalley Viaduct and the A59 and turning north to become Broad Lane and joining the B6246 Station Road at a priority crossroads junction.

In order to assess the traffic impacts of the school, a travel survey of existing travel patterns was undertaken which states that the school currently has 274 pupils, from 204 family groups, and employs 29 members of staff. The survey shows that 73% of pupils travelled by car whilst 27% either walked or cycled. It should be noted that a breakfast club at the school is currently attended by around 40 pupils each day. The afterschool club runs from 15:25 to 18:00 and is attended by an average of 50 pupils and in addition about 30 pupils attend after school activities. The breakfast club and afterschool provision lessens the traffic impacts during peak drop off and pick up times.

Travel survey projections which have taken into consideration pupils attending breakfast and after school clubs, siblings and mode of travel, show that existing pupils generate 127 car trips (254 two-way) and 105 car trips (210 two-way) during the drop of and pick up times respectively. With the addition of the increase of pupils from the development which would be a phased increase of 5 pupils a year, the development would result in an estimated additional 14 -15 vehicle movements during peak times, once the full phase of pupils joining the school has been completed.

The school have proposed measures to reduce the traffic impacts from the proposed development. These include creating 4 parking spaces to the western boundary of the school which currently has zig zag markings which could be removed and the implementation of a walking bus and submission of school travel plan to increase awareness of parents and staff to use forms of transport other than the car to decrease the amount of vehicle movements during peak times. These matters can be the subject of planning conditions. The school are also negotiating with The Whalley Arms public house which is being converted to a Co-Op convenience store located 130m east to the school site, to provide some of their 40 - 45 parking spaces during peak times. However these proposals have not been finalised and would be outside of planning control and to which no weight can be attached.

LCC Highways Development Control initially raised objection due to the additional traffic which would be generated by the proposed development. However the objection has now been removed as the applicant has proposed mitigation measures to offset the increase in parking demand including walking bus provision and traffic calming measures on the surrounding highway network. They have also requested conditions to be added for details for the construction of the site access and full details for offsite highway improvements prior to the proposed development being used. A construction management plan and school travel plan should also be subject to planning conditions if permission is granted.

Any parking issues that are currently experienced by residents close to the school would not be made materially worse by the development as the increase in pupil numbers is not significant. The effect of the increase in pupils would probably be to extend the existing parking impacts over a wider area. During peak times parents currently park on The Sands/Church Lane as well other roads in the area including George Street, Green Park, Abbey Road, Abbey Fields and Abbots Croft. There is ample spare capacity for additional parking in the area particularly on Abbey Fields and Abbots Croft located north of the school. There is also parking available within public car parks in Whalley town centre which are only 140 metres from the school.

Overall there will be some impacts on the highway and the amenity of local residents. However, these would only occur for relatively short periods in each day and are not considered to be of such severity that the development is unacceptable. Whilst these impacts cannot be fully mitigated, due to the scale of the development it is considered that the need for the additional school places carries substantial weight which is sufficient to outweigh the highway impacts of the development.

Conclusion

The development would have some impact on the setting of Whalley Abbey. However, given the scale and design of the development, the impacts on the setting of the listed building are considered to be less than substantial. In such cases the harm has to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that great weight should be given to the need to create schools to ensure sufficient choice of school places to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Lancashire County Council has a statutory duty to provide a primary or secondary school place to every child of statutory school

age, living in Lancashire who requests one. A combination of sustained increase in the number of births together with the development of housing in the area means that as local children reach statutory school age there is a need to accommodate for the demands for school places in this area which current primary schools in the area cannot accommodate. The provision of the additional school places to which great weight should be attached coupled with the lack of alternative sites is considered to outweigh any harm to the designated heritage asset.

The impacts in terms of highways would have a comparatively short duration and are not considered to be of such severity that the development is unacceptable.

Overall through the imposition of planning conditions, the disruption to local residents from the proposed development would be minimised and would be acceptable. It is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of the policies of the Development Plan.

In view of the scale, location and nature of the development it is considered that no Convention Rights set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 would be affected.

Recommendation

That planning permission be **Granted** subject to the following conditions:

Time Limits

1. The development shall commence not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Imposed pursuant to Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Working Programme

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following documents:

a) The Planning Application received by the County Planning Authority on 18th January 2018.

b) Submitted Plans and documents:

Drawing No - A08 - Rev C / Proposed Site & Location Plan

Drawing No - A09 / Proposed Work Area 1 Plan / Section AA/BB and Elevation A

Drawing No - A12 / Proposed Work Area 4 Plan / Elevations

Drawing No - L02 - Rev E / Proposed External Works Layout

Drawing No - L04 / Proposed Extent of Tarmac Resurfacing Works

c) All schemes and programmes approved in accordance with this permission.

Reason: To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Hours of Working

3. No construction development shall take place outside the hours of:

08.00 to 18.00 hours Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays),
08.00 to 14.00 hours on Saturday.

No construction development shall take place at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

This condition shall not however operate so as to prevent the carrying out, outside of these hours, of essential repairs to plant and machinery used on the site.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Building Materials

4. No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used for the external elevations of the detached new build classroom and single storey extension have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter only those materials approved shall be used in the development.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the area and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Fencing

5. The 1.2m fencing and goal posts around the perimeter of the multi - use games area shall be coloured dark green (RAL colour code 6005) and retained in that colour thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with Policy DME4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Landscaping

6. No development shall commence until a scheme and programme of landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme and programme shall include details of location of planting, numbers, sizes and types of species, planting techniques and protection measures.

The approved landscaping works shall be undertaken in the first planting season following completion of construction works and shall thereafter be maintained for a period of five years including weed control, replacement of dead and dying trees and maintenance of protection measures.

Reason: In the interests of visual and local amenity and the local environment and to conform with Policy EN2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

7. All trees on the site shall be retained and protected from damage throughout the duration of construction works with protection measures being implemented prior to the commencement of any excavation works as detailed in the Arboricultural Development Report - Summary Conclusions and Recommendations Relating to Trees / Section 3.

Reason: To protect existing trees within or adjacent to the site in the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with Policy DME1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

8. Any trees or hedgerow which are either removed or damaged at any time during the development as provided for in this permission shall be replaced during the first available planting season following completion of the development, as defined in this permission. Any trees or hedgerows shall be replaced with trees of a similar type, number and species.

Reason: In the interests of visual and local amenity and the local environment and to conform with Policy EN2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Highway Matters

9. No development shall commence until a construction management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The construction management plan shall contain details of the following:-

- a) details for the routing of construction vehicles to the site
- b) measures to be taken to control the timing of HGV movements to avoid school opening and closing times
- c) details for the parking of construction traffic

The measures contained in the approved scheme shall be implemented at all times during the duration of construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity and to conform with Policy DMI2 of the Ribble Valley Local Plan.

10. Measures shall be taken at all times during construction works to ensure that no mud, dust or other deleterious materials are tracked onto the public highway by vehicles leaving the site.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity and to conform with Policy DMI2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

11. Within three months of the development being brought into use, a School Travel Plan, as defined by this permission, shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing

The School Travel Plan shall include details of the measures to be implemented to reduce the highway impacts of the school and to encourage sustainable modes of travel and shall include:

- a) A brief description of the school, its location and a summary of the particular transport and road safety issues at the site;
- b) Evidence and results of consultation with staff, parents and other interested parties;
- c) Targets and measures to minimise the impact of/reduce private car use for the journey to and from the site by staff, parents and other visitors;
- d) A summary of the school's current road safety policies and practices, details of any new or proposed initiatives including a planned timetable of introduction;
- e) Proposals for monitoring progress of the School Travel Plan including a timetable for its review.

The measures contained in the approved travel plan shall thereafter be implemented during the operation of the school.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to conform with Policy DMI2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

12. Within six months of the date of this permission, a scheme and programme of traffic management measures shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing. The scheme and programme shall include details of the following:-

- a) Details for the removal of the 'School Keep Clear Markings' on Church Lane and their replacement with staff parking places.
- b) Details for a raised crossing on Church Lane and additional traffic calming features to assist pedestrian movements

The traffic management measures contained in the approved scheme shall be implemented within one year of the development being brought into use.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to conform with Policy DMI2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Archaeology

13. No development or site clearance works shall take place until a scheme and programme for archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The programme of works shall include an initial phase of 'Strip, Map and Record' and the compilation of an appropriate report on the work undertaken and the results obtained.

The development shall be thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of archaeological investigation and to conform with Policy DME4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Definitions

Planting Season: The period between 1 October in any one year and 31 March in the following year.

Notes

This consent requires the construction, improvement or alteration of an access to the public highway. Under Section 184 of the Highways Act 1980, the County Council, as Highway Authority, must specify the works to be carried out. Only the Highway Authority or a contractor approved by the Highway Authority can carry out these works. Before any works to the access commence you should contact the East Area Manager quoting the planning permission reference.

Area Surveyor East: Riddings Lane, Whalley BB7 9RW
Tel: 01254 823831

The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the British Standards Institution Code of Practice for Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of Disabled People (BS8300:2009). The design of the building will also need to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations 2010. In the case of educational buildings, the applicant's attention is drawn to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the guidance prepared by the Department of Education and Skills Building Bulletin 91 (Access for the Disabled to School Buildings) and Building Bulletin 94 (Inclusive School Design).

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Ext
LCC/2018/0003	May 2018	Faiyaz Laly / Planning and Environment / 01772 538810

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate
N/A