

**Development Control Committee
Urgent Business procedure**

Electoral Division affected: Ribble Valley North East
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**Ribble Valley Borough: application number. LCC/2020/0013
Demolition of former chapel and hall, construction of replacement single storey school extension to provide new entrance, administration, offices, toilet facilities and additional teaching accommodation at Barrow Primary School, Old Row, Whalley Road, Barrow.**

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Executive Summary

Application – Demolition of former chapel and hall, construction of replacement single storey school extension to provide new entrance, administration, offices, toilet facilities and additional teaching accommodation at Barrow Primary School, Old Row, Whalley Road, Barrow.

Reason for Urgency

All formal meetings of the council, including meetings of the Development Control Committee, have been cancelled. However, the government still requires council's to prioritise decision-making to ensure the planning system continues to function. Therefore, it has been agreed that any planning decisions the Development Control Committee was due to consider will now be determined in accordance with the Urgent Business Procedure.

This decision is therefore being taken on behalf of the Committee by the Chief Executive or Executive Director in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order D15(1).

Recommendation – Summary

Subject to the views of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Control Committee, the Chief Executive proposes to agree that planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling commencement, working programme, hours of working, building materials, highway matters, ecology and heritage matters.

Applicant's Proposal

This application is for the demolition of the former chapel and hall sections of the existing school building and their replacement with a single storey school extension to

provide a new visitors entrance at the frontage, administration, offices, toilet facilities and additional teaching accommodation.

The replacement building would be of a similar scale to the existing chapel / hall with the exception that the building line for the new construction would be set back further from Whalley Road to accommodate a ramp and landscaping area. The ramp would account for the change of levels that currently exist between the chapel and hall and the attached building behind.

The walls would be finished with a combination of natural sandstone, reconstituted smooth stone quoins and window and door surrounds, and white rendering. Two feature windows would incorporate natural stone heads, jambs and sill surrounds recovered from the demolition of the former chapel front windows. The roof would be covered in grey artificial slate tiles. Windows would be aluminium framed and coloured white.

Description and Location of Site

Barrow Primary School is situated off Whalley Road (C549), in the village of Barrow, approximately 2km north of Whalley and 2km south of Clitheroe. The main school building is attached to a stone fronted church building that forms the frontage to Whalley Road and is adjacent to residential properties that stretch along Whalley Road including 'Old Row'. Beyond the linear development along Whalley Road is largely agricultural land. Two detached properties known as 'Wigga Vista' and 'Penrhyn' are located beyond the northern boundary of the school site at a distance of approximately 20-30m respectively. The school site also includes a large detached building that serves as a nursery. Beyond the school and agricultural land to the south east is a service station area off the A59 including industrial units and food outlets.

The school site falls within an area designated as essential open space in the Ribble Valley Local Plan.

The existing school building and adjacent chapel to be demolished as part of this proposal are non designated heritage assets.

Background

The application relates to an existing school site where the following permissions have been granted:

Planning permission was granted in 2003 for a single storey extension (ref 03/03/0372).

Planning permission was granted in July 2007 for the provision of a temporary pre-school building (ref 03/07/0501).

Planning permission was granted in July 2008 for the creation of a playground incorporating permanent play equipment and erection of sail type canopy (ref 03/08/0469).

Planning permission was granted on September 2012 for the conversion of temporary nursery building for permanent use and extension to the building (ref 03/10/0680).

Planning permission was granted on 28 March 2011 for the variation of condition 2 of permission 03/10/0680 to allow for the retention of a flat roof and existing external appearance of an existing building (ref. 03/11/0083).

Planning permission was granted on 23 January 2013 for a single storey extension, car parking area to provide 11 spaces, bicycle store and extended hard play area (ref. 03/12/1050).

Planning permission was granted on 23 January 2019 for a single storey extension to the rear of the school, a new canopy and a non-floodlit multi-use games area (ref. LCC/2018/0047).

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028

Policy DS1	Development Strategy
Policy DMG1	General Considerations
Policy DMG2	Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3	Transport and Mobility
Policy DME4	Protecting Heritage Assets
Policy DME6	Water Management
Policy DMB4	Open Space Provision

Consultations

Ribble Valley Borough Council – No objection and welcome the additional school facility.

Barrow Parish Council – Strongly object due to the proposed demolition of the chapel. Members request the design be revised to incorporate the existing chapel. Although not listed, the chapel has both historic and communal merit and is a very important part of Barrow's history. As one of the few older buildings left in Barrow, it should be preserved and every effort should be made to incorporate it into plans to extend the school.

Members are at a loss to understand why the school does not want to celebrate its origins and incorporate the village's history into its environment. There does not appear to have been any consultation with parents at the school. The impact of the proposed demolition should not be based on a remote desk study, which simply recommends a documentary record. Instead, there should be a full consultation before the application progresses to fully appreciate the effect on the wider community.

Barrow will solely comprise of separate new build housing estates with 'no soul or local significance'. There is no evidence in the application to justify the chapel's demolition.

There is an assertion that the cost of upgrading the internal areas of the chapel is significant, but no calculations are provided. Without comparison of calculations, how can the local authority properly assess the merits of demolishing a historic asset? Members request that Lancashire County Council provides sight of their alternative plans and calculations to justify the chapel's demolition.

There does not appear to be any intention to re-use any parts of the demolished chapel or hall. If cost is the driving factor in the demolition, why are materials not being reused? If Lancashire County Council is minded to approve the application, Members request that consent includes conditions to protect and reuse important architectural features of the chapel, such as the dedication stone, the quoins and the door/window surrounds/lintels. In doing this, at least some of new extension would reflect the existing street scene and provide a visible reference to the demolished buildings.

Other significant items inside the chapel, such as the framed World War 1 Roll of Honour, the War Memorial Plaques, the organ and the lectern must also be protected, and they should remain in the school as a link to the school's heritage.

Furthermore, as the parish council has highlighted to Lancashire County Council on many occasions, the school is located on a busy road and traffic often comes to a standstill at school drop off and pick up times. Parking near to the school is already a serious issue and use of a local car park will soon be withdrawn due to the commencement of yet another housing development. The plans will only aggravate the parking and highway issues in Barrow and no consideration for the loss of amenity appears to have been given to local residents during the demolition / construction phase.

If Lancashire County Council is minded to approve the application, members request that consent includes conditions for a robust Construction Management Plan, to include delivery restrictions, road cleaning schedules, traffic management controls as well as access and egress arrangements for nearby residents. These conditions must be strictly controlled so that the works have as little impact as possible on the local community.

Barrow has been subjected to highway delays for several years and further development at the school will bring prolonged disruption. In order to protect residents, please also provide reassurance that the development work at the school will not conflict with other disruptive works in the village.

Finally, members have asked for an explanation why the application for property owned by Lancashire County Council, has been prepared by Lancashire County Council but is also being determined by Lancashire County Council. Some residents have expressed opinions that any decisions might not be truly independent and in the best interests of the local community.

Lancashire County Council Archaeology Service – The scheme is accompanied by a Heritage Statement, which concludes that whilst the buildings to be demolished are of local heritage significance, this is not sufficient to justify their retention at the expense of the development. It recommends that the impact of the scheme be mitigated by the provision of a documentary record. There is broad agreement with the conclusion. It

is noted that a number of architectural features of the extant buildings, such as the dedication stone, the quoins and the door/window surrounds/lintels appear to be of some merit, and also some historical features within. There does not seem to be any intention to re-use any of these elements or the other extant building stone/slate within the new building. There may be a practical reason for this, but it would seem appropriate to retain and reuse at least some of this material in the new building, to reflect the existing street scene and provide a visible reference to the demolished buildings. A condition is recommended for an archaeological written scheme of investigation.

Lancashire County Council Highways Development Control – The principle of the increase in the pupil roll at the school was first considered in 2018 under application LCC/2018/0047 and as such the principle of the application would be acceptable.

Lancashire County Council Ecology Service – No objection. Conditions are recommended for a repeat bat survey, bat roost, and bird nesting opportunities, and avoiding bird nesting season.

Representations – The application has been advertised by site notice and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. No representations have been received.

Advice

Barrow Primary School consists of an original school building and a former chapel along with a number of modern extensions to the rear. The school grounds also contain a stand-alone nursery school. The existing main school entrance and offices are located away from the frontage and are accessed via a side footpath alleyway.

The proposal subject of this application was initially included within planning application LCC/2018/0047 for the extension and remodelling of the school to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers. However, it became apparent that further survey work was required to confirm the presence or absence of bats within the parts of the school that were proposed to be demolished. This survey work could only be undertaken between May and September in accordance with Natural England guidance and therefore, in order to avoid delay in the delivery of new classroom space, the applicant withdrew elements of the overall proposal that are now subject of this application.

The expansion of the school has already been considered acceptable in planning terms through the previous permission referred to above and therefore this application is more concerned with the acceptability of demolishing a former chapel and school hall and replacing them with a single storey school extension to provide new entrance, administration, offices, toilet facilities and additional teaching accommodation.

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 was identified through a basic needs assessment, which was undertaken to establish the future demand for primary school places in this area.

Paragraph 94 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that it is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities and local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement and to development that will widen choice in education. Also, they should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications.

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 local amenity and the environment or heritage assets. There should be no net loss of important open space including playing fields. 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 in relation to surroundings and local landscapes and landscaping.

The school site as a whole is identified as being 'Essential open space' on the allocation plan accompanying the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. However, this proposal would result in demolition of an existing building and its replacement with a similar sized structure with no overall impact on open space provision. Consequently, there would be no conflict with Policy DMB4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy relating to the protection of open space provision.

The main issue relates to the demolition of the existing buildings and their replacement with new structures of a different, more modern design.

Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that impacts on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

Policy DME 4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that 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.

The buildings to be demolished are identified as a non-designated built heritage asset, the *Jollie Memorial Church and Barrow C of E Primary School*. The original school building was built by 1893 and the Memorial Church was constructed in 1876 to replace a chapel at Wymondhouses, Pendleton, which was built in 1688 by Thomas

Jollie (1629-1703). The two sections of building are located adjacent to one another. However, it appears that they were originally separate buildings. They are both of traditional construction and form a distinctive part of the street scene along Whalley Road.

Barrow Parish Council have raised objection to the proposed demolition work. They assert that this historical feature within the village should be incorporated into the school design. Failing that, the existing stonework should be reused in the new building.

The applicant stresses that the proposed new extension would address issues with levels within the school and also around safeguarding so that visitors can be segregated from the main school areas. This cannot readily be achieved by retaining the existing buildings. A new ramped approach to the front entrance would allow the internal floor levels to be set at the same height as the existing school to avoid the need for steps and ramps within the building. The new layout would provide a secure entrance for visitors with direct access from the frontage and would house administration offices, interview spaces and meeting rooms together with additional teaching and toilet accommodation.

As it does not appear viable to retain the existing buildings, the applicant has considered reusing building materials from the former chapel and school in the new construction as suggested by the Parish Council. However, this has raised a number of issues. The applicant has stated that reusing existing walling stone would cost an additional £15,000 compared with what has been proposed. The cost would be a result of reclaiming, sorting, cutting and dressing the stone to the required size. This would also create secondary issues of noise and dust in the local area for a prolonged period of time including for operatives on site. Re-using stone quoins (corner feature stones), would generate an additional cost of £7000 and would raise the same concerns. However, the stone window surrounds from the existing chapel have now been incorporated into a revised design for the proposed new front windows. Revised drawings also provide for the retention and display of a war memorial plaque, an organ plaque and the church date stone. The organ within the old church has already been dismantled as it was found to contain asbestos materials.

The proposed extensions would be of a similar form and scale to the existing buildings on the site. Although the new extension would have a different appearance from the existing buildings due to the hipped roof design, greater use of render and more modern windows, it would incorporate elements of stone walling and some of the existing stone window surrounds to reflect the local vernacular and to retain some of the features of the existing building. Whilst, the applicant does not propose to reuse existing masonry for the sections of the walls that are faced in stone, the stone to be used would be a natural product sourced from a local quarry and therefore would be of acceptable appearance in this location. It is considered that a condition should be imposed to control the details and appearance of the materials. With the above in mind it is considered that the scale and design of the extension is acceptable and would utilise building materials that reflect the local area while also presenting as a modern functional primary school. The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that great weight should be given to expanding and altering schools while Policy DME 4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy seeks to protect listed buildings and local heritage

assets. In this case it is considered that the improvement and provision of new education facilities at Barrow Primary school would outweigh the loss of the non-designated heritage asset particularly as positive steps have been taken to retain some historical features and to provide a detailed historical record.

The applicant has provided an ecology report including details of bat emergence surveys at the school building. The report concludes that no bats were recorded emerging or entering any buildings suggesting that no active roost was present. Consequently, the impact on bats is not a concern. However, the building still has potential as a bat roost and also for use by nesting birds due to the availability of access to internal space within the building. Therefore, should permission be granted, conditions are recommended for a repeat bat survey before demolition works take place, for the provision of alternative bat roost and bird nesting opportunities, and to avoid demolition works being undertaken in the bird nesting season.

Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. The proposed development would have negligible impact on highway concerns. Lancashire County Council's Highways Development Control has commented that the traffic impacts arising from the increase in the pupil roll at the school was considered acceptable as part of the previous planning application at this school and raises no objection in this case. However, to reduce the potential impact on local residents, conditions are recommended controlling hours of working and delivery times during construction and to control cleaning of wheels during demolition and construction.

On other matters, Barrow Parish Council has asked for an explanation why this application has been prepared by Lancashire County Council but is also being determined by Lancashire County Council. The answer is simply that regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 prescribes that applications to develop land by a local authority shall be determined by the authority concerned.

Human Rights

The Human Rights Act 1998 requires the County Council to take into account the rights of the public under the European Convention on Human Rights and not to act in a manner incompatible with those rights. Article 1 of the 1st Protocol states that an individual's peaceful enjoyment of their property shall not be interfered with except as is necessary, in accordance with law and as is proportionate.

This application were it to be approved would be unlikely to generate such an impact on neighbouring properties which would breach those rights. The conditions relating to working programme, hours of working and highways would protect the rights of local residents.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development should be supported and complies with the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework and the development plan.

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, except where modified by the conditions to this permission, in accordance with the following documents:

a) Submitted Plans:

Drawing no. A40, Rev P1 - Site Location Plan - Frontage Site

Drawing no. A45, rev P2 - Proposed Plan and Elevations - Frontage Site

Reason: To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policies DMG1 and DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

3. No external materials or finishes shall be applied to the buildings until details of the building materials and insulation materials, to be used for the external elevation and the roof of the building, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. Thereafter, only those materials approved by the County Planning Authority shall be used.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area and to ensure quality of design, and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

4. Prior to the commencement of demolition works a repeat bat survey shall be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist. The recommendations of the ecologist should be followed in full. Should bats be suspected or detected to be roosting then no works shall commence until advice has been sought from an appropriately qualified person including regarding the need for a Natural England licence.

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

5. No demolition work shall take place during the bird-breeding season between 1 March and 31 July inclusive unless they have been previously checked and found clear of nesting birds in accordance with Natural England's guidance.

Reason: To protect nesting birds and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

6. Prior to the demolition of the building subject of this permission, 2 bat boxes and 2 bird boxes shall be installed on trees within the site.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and to conform with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

7. No demolition or construction development or delivery of materials to the site shall take place outside the hours of:

0800 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays),
0800 to 1400 hours on Saturday.

No demolition or construction development or delivery of materials to the site shall take place at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

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

8. The development shall be carried out in accordance with a programme of building recording and analysis works as set out in the submitted 'Written Scheme of Investigation for an Historic Building Investigation at Barrow Primary School, Barrow, Lancashire' version 1.3, dated 20 April 2020. The work shall be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional contractor to the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).

Reason: To ensure and safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological/historical importance associated with the buildings/site.

9. 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 DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

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

None

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

Not applicable.