

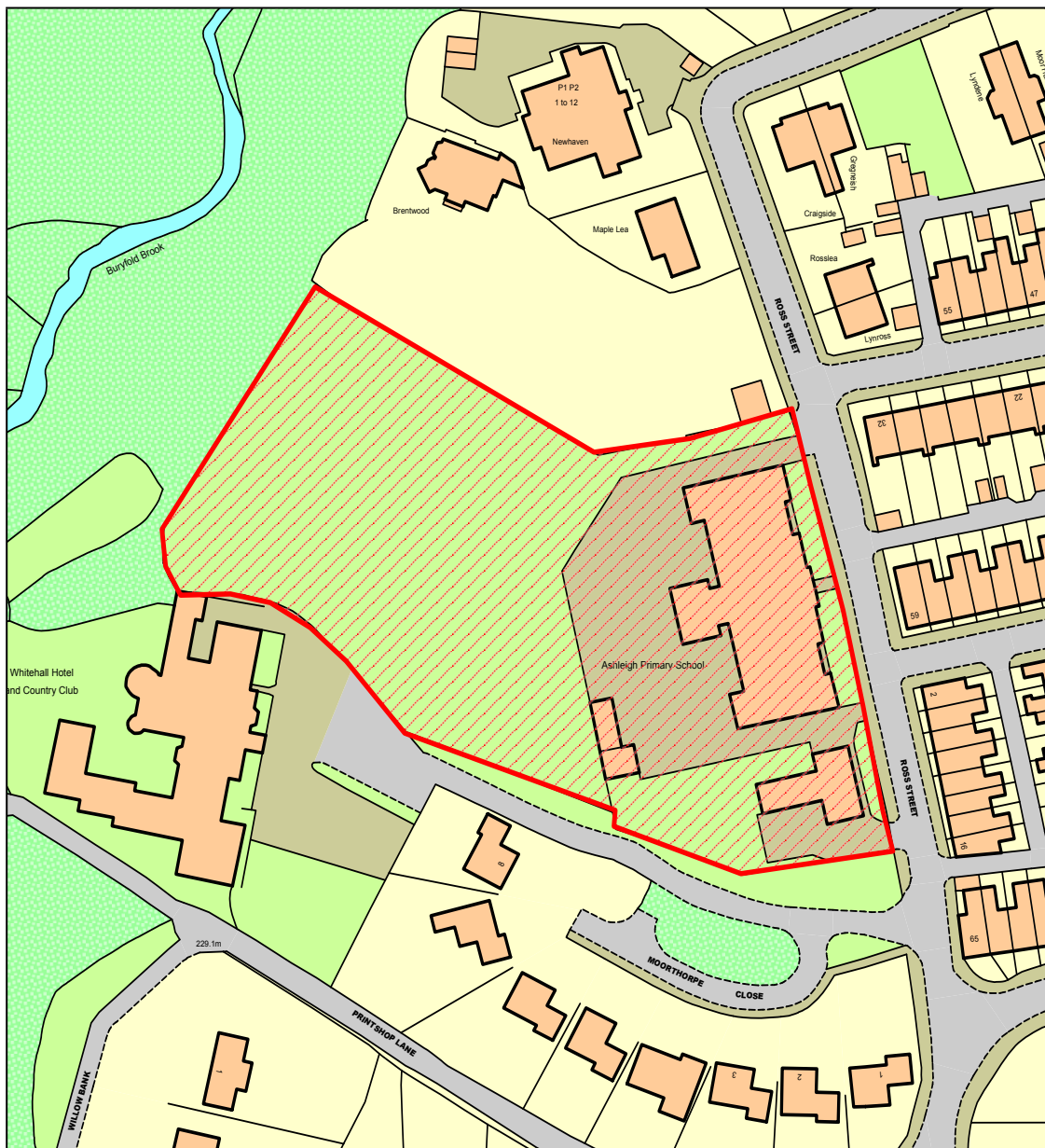
**Proposed development: Full Planning Application (Regulation 4) for Replacement of windows to main school hall of primary school**

**Site address:  
Ashleigh Primary School  
Ross Street  
Darwen  
BB3 2JT**

**Applicant: Mr Ian Mathews**

**Ward: Darwen South**

**Councillor Kevin Connor  
Councillor Neil Slater  
Councillor Lillian Salton**



## **1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION**

**APPROVE – Subject to conditions set out in paragraph 4.1 of this report.**

## **2.0 KEY ISSUES/SUMMARY OF PLANNING BALANCE**

- 2.1 The application is presented to Committee for determination due to the interest of the Local Authority as applicants and land owners of the school; in accordance with Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.
- 2.2 The proposal seeks to replace the large timber framed windows in the central element of the building which serves the main entrance and school hall with UPVC frames. The 1914 school building built in local stone and slate with its magnificent arched windows facing Ross Street, is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.
- 2.3 Paragraph 197 of the Framework requires the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset to be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
  - 2.1.1 In understanding the importance of this school within the community it serves, and in trying to minimise the further harm that would be caused to the historic building by replacing the last large arched timber window in the building with UPVC double glazed frames, and to set a standard which can be replicated and enhanced in future renovations of the school, the LPA has sought thinner framed mullions and openers minimise to some degree the harm caused by replacing the 12 timber windows.
  - 2.1.2 In assessing the proposal in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 197 of the Framework, whilst harm would occur to the heritage asset by the replacement of timber window frames with the thinner UPVC now proposed, the harm would not be substantial and is consequently outweighed by the public benefits arising from the proposal by continuing using the building for the primary school.
  - 2.1.3 Therefore, subject to using the agreed 20mm thinner UPVC frames, the proposal is considered to comply with the requirements of Local Plan Part 2, Policy 39 and Paragraph 197 of the Framework. It is thus recommended that the application be approved subject to conditioning the size of the agreed window frames.

## **3.0 RATIONALE**

### **3.1 Site and Surroundings**

- 3.1.1 The application relates to Ashleigh Primary School which is located on the west side of Ross Street within the Whitehall area of Darwen. The school faces the gable end of terraced properties on Devon Street and the rear alley serving terraced properties on Cyprus Street.
- 3.1.2 The school buildings appear to date from the early 1900's and is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. Over the main entrance door it has a date stone with 1914 inscribed on it.

### **3.2 Proposed Development**

- 3.2.1 Permission is sought to remove the existing large timber window in the central section of the building comprising of 12 glazed windows set between stone mullions and replace the timber glazed windows with white UPVC.
- 3.2.2 Permission is required due to the proximity of the school building to the sites boundary, in accordance with the requirements of Part 7, Class M of the The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, as amended.
- 3.2.3 Following negotiations with the

### **3.3 Development Plan**

- 3.3.1 The Development Plan comprises the Core Strategy and adopted Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies. In determining the current proposal the following are considered to be the most relevant policies:

#### 3.3.2 Core Strategy

Policy CS11: Facilities and Services

Policy CS16: Form and Design of New Development

Policy CS17: Built and Cultural Heritage

#### Local Plan Part 2

Policy 11: Design

Policy 39: Heritage

### **3.4 Other Material Planning Considerations**

- 3.4.1 National Planning Policy Framework

Of relevance is section 16 of The Framework, which sets out those local planning authorities should be conserving and enhancing the historic environment and recognising the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities.

### **3.5 Assessment**

3.5.1 The traditional school buildings are considered to be non-designated heritage assets. The buildings, dated 1914 make a valuable contribution to this section of Ross Street.

3.5.2 Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework concerns itself with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 192 of the Framework states:

*“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

*a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

*b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*

*c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

3.5.3 Paragraph 197 of the Framework states:

*“The effect of an application 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.”*

3.5.4 Local Plan Part 2 Policy 39 states:

*“Development with the potential to affect any designated or non-designated heritage asset, either directly or indirectly including by reference to their setting, will be required to sustain or enhance the significance of the asset....”*

3.5.5 Policy 39 also states:

*“2. Development that will negatively impact on the significance of an asset will only be permitted where the impact is outweighed by the public benefit arising from the development...”*

3.5.6 This traditional school building has three large arched windows in each of its three sections. This central main window is the most prominent of the three elements given its large arched window forms the raised main entrance to the school and extends around the entrance door. The historic timber windows which serve the main hall in the school are very slender between each of the stone mullions. The stone mullions within the impressive arch are therefore

the prominent feature of the window as intended when the school was built 104 years ago.

- 3.5.7 It is widely recognised in heritage circles that the introduction of UPVC in historic buildings detracts from the historic significance, character and appearance of historic buildings due to their wider frames and plastic shiny appearance.
- 3.5.8 It is evident from the replacement of the same arched windows in the road facing gables on either side of the main entrance that the UPVC installed is wholly unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the building and the stone mullions in which wide UPVC frames have previously been installed as they appear overly dominant in comparison to the timber windows in the central archway, subject to this application.
- 3.5.9 In understanding the importance of this school within the community it serves, and in trying to minimise the further harm that would be caused to the historic building by replacing the last large arched timber window in the building with UPVC double glazed frames, and to set a standard which can be replicated and enhanced in future renovations of the school, Officers have secured thinner framed mullions and openers, which are now widely available on the market.
- 3.5.10 In the interests of minimising the impact of further wide framed UPVC windows being installed in the building the Council's Principal Building Surveyor has agreed to use these thinner frames. The thinner frames reduce the width of the plastic transoms and mullions by 20mm on the face. The thinner frames therefore would to some degree minimise the harm caused by replacing the 12 timber windows.
- 3.5.11 In assessing the proposal in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 197 of the Framework, whilst harm would occur to the heritage asset by the replacement of timber window frames with UPVC, the harm would not be substantial and consequently is outweighed by the public benefits arising from the proposal due to the continuing use of the primary school for local children.
- 3.5.12 Therefore, subject to using the agreed 20mm thinner UPVC frames, the proposal is considered to comply with the requirements of Local Plan Part 2, Policy 39 and Paragraph 197 of the Framework. It is thus recommended that the application be approved subject to conditioning the size of the agreed window frames.

## **4.0 RECOMMENDATION**

### **4.1 Approve subject to:**

Conditions which relate to the following matters:

- Approved plans, and the,
- Agreed windows,

**5.0 PLANNING HISTORY**

No planning history is available for this site.

**6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

6.1 4 neighbours were consulted by letter. No representations have been received in relation to the application.

**7.0 CONTACT OFFICER:** Claire Booth

**8.0 DATE PREPARED:** 04 October 2018