

**ST. MONICAS R.C. HIGH SCHOOL
NEW CLASSROOM EXTENSION**

DESIGN and ACCESS STATEMENT
for
ST MONICAS R.C.HIGH SCHOOL

APRIL 2009

Prepared on behalf of The Governors of St. Monica's
RC High School, Prestwich
by

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1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

St Monica's R.C. High School is a well established institute of secondary education institute within Prestwich, a town located in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, in Greater Manchester. The school is located entirely within a the secure boundary of the schools grounds and it is also located approximately 6km from Manchester City Centre.

The school has an excellent track record as a Catholic establishment and recognised as a Specialist Language College and gained its specialist status in 2003.

Due to the schools religious status, those who wish to attend the school have to be from a Catholic background and adhere to the Schools admissions requirements. St Monica's regularly tops the Bury GCSE league table, which as a state-funded establishment even achieves higher results than some the independent school .

The main problem at this school in its current form is the lack of classroom space to comfortably accommodate the existing 1110 enrolled students. Some of the existing classrooms are now too small to accommodate classes of certain subject areas and the school has in recent years upgraded and expanded various parts of the school to provide additional space.

The Fairhursts Design Group (FDG) have been asked to provide a 2 storey, classroom extension block to the rear of the school, providing a greater number of appropriately sized classrooms and storage spaces for the existing number of students. This provision is not for an anticipated growth in student numbers at school but to create a more comfortable internal environment for the school.

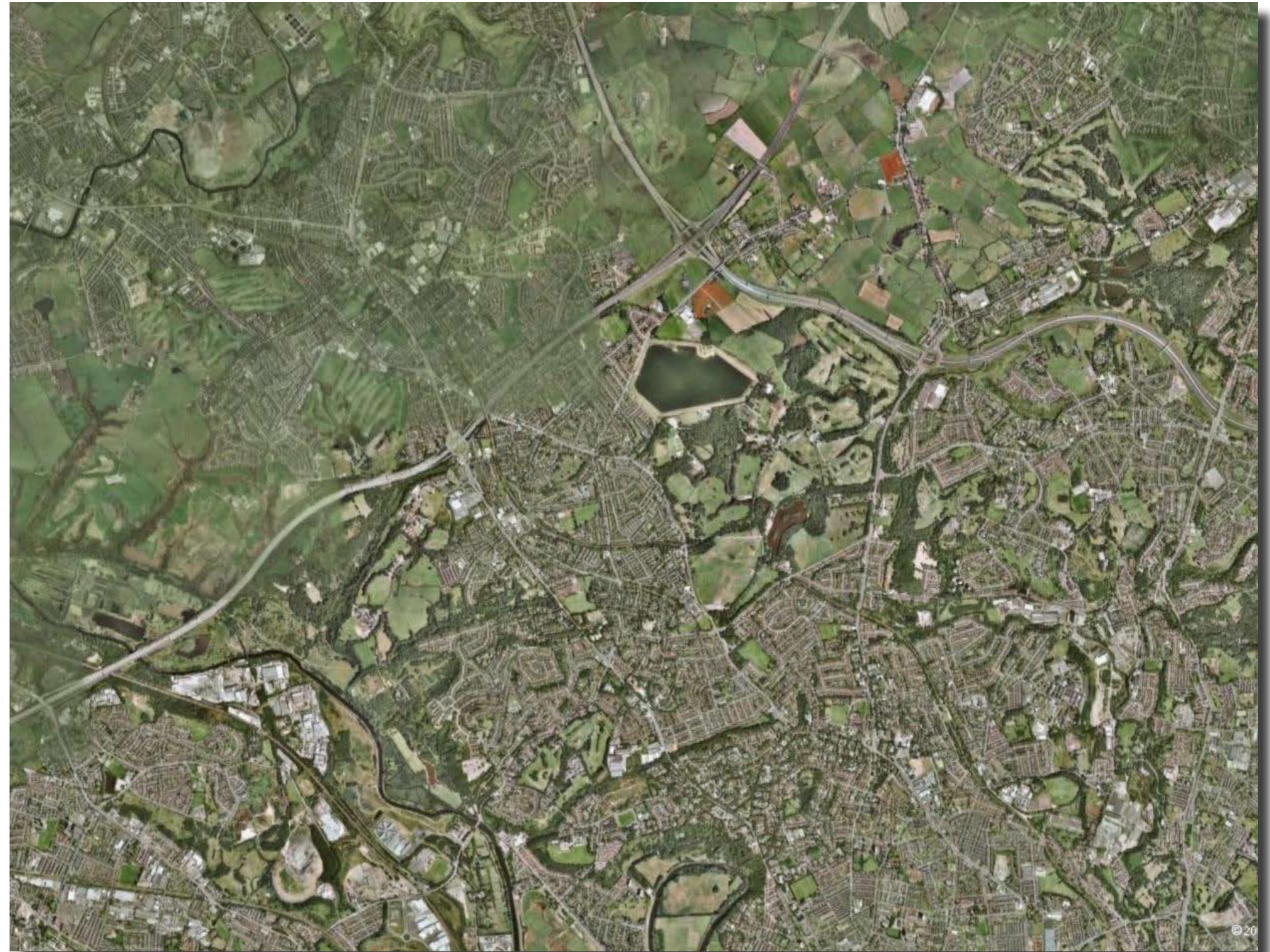


1.2 SITE HISTORY

The school is located next to Heaton Park to the East and Nazareth House to the West. Heaton Park covers a vast area and is the biggest park in Greater Manchester, and one of the biggest municipal parks in Europe.

Nazareth House functions as care home for retired clergy and overlooks the part of the schools grounds.

St Monica's R.C. High School was created when two schools, St Joseph's and St Peter's, amalgamated in 1987 and settled on the former St Peter's site.



1.3 SITE GEOGRAPHY

The development site is relatively flat and has had a new surface laid for the outdoor sports area. One tree is to be removed and the external changes in level have been overcome by proposing to move the existing steps to augment the overall design proposal allowing level access from the existing building to the new building.

A lift will allow access up to the proposed new ground floor level of the proposed classroom extension block.



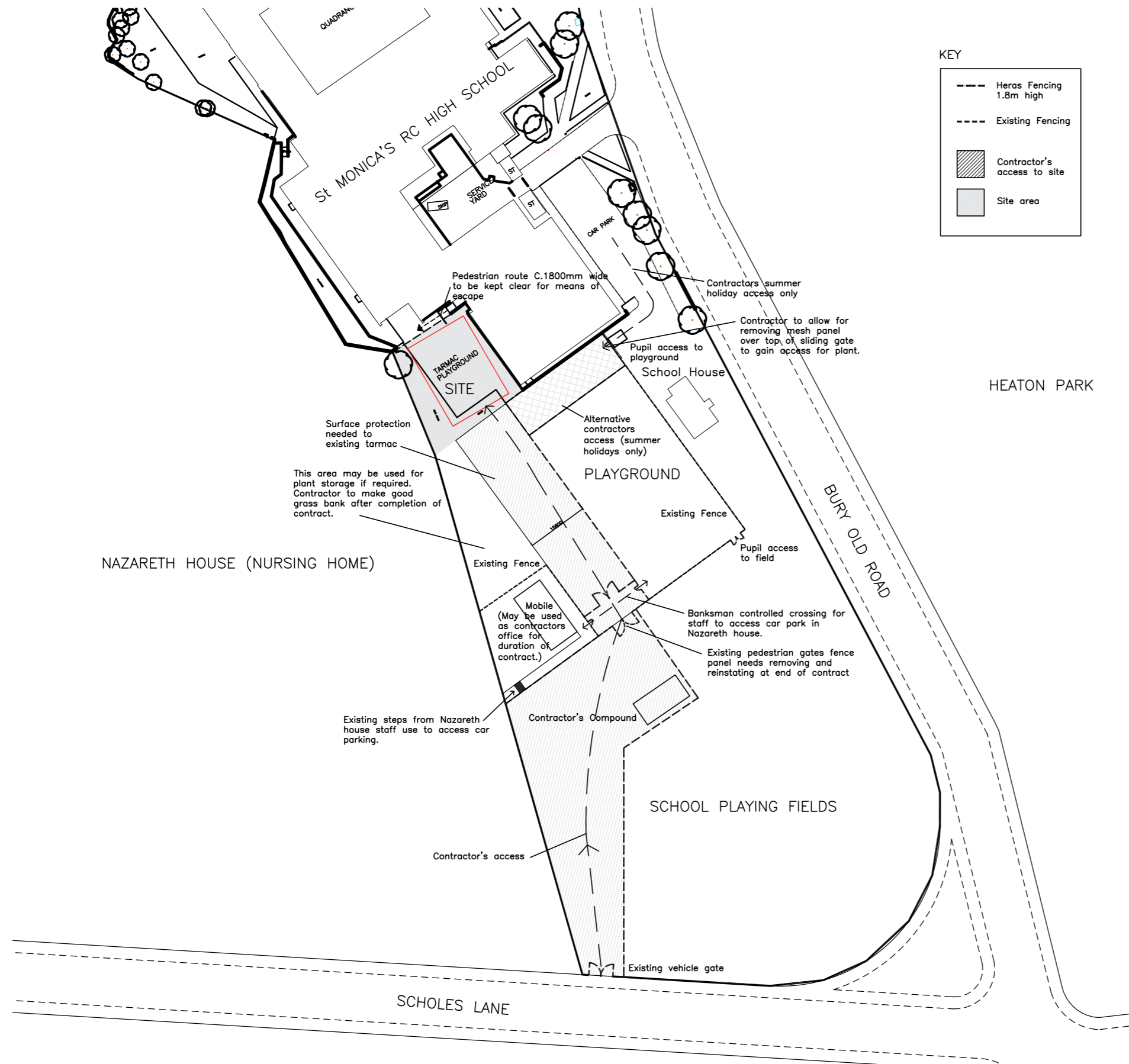
2.1 LOCATION AND CHARACTER

The site is situated in between Schole's Lane and Bury Old Road, which are two major road in this area and provide access to a number of significant surrounding areas, for example Broughton and Whitefield.

Heaton Park contains; an 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, a boating lake, an animal farm, a pitch and putt course, a golf driving range, woodlands, ornamental gardens, an observatory, an adventure playground, a Papal Monument and a volunteer-run tramway system and museum. The park is listed Grade II by English Heritage and contains nine listed buildings.

The Park also has the only flat green bowling greens in Manchester, which were built for the 2002 Commonwealth Games.





2.2 SITE CONSTRAINTS

The site does not present any major constraints but erecting the classroom extension may be the only minor constraint due to the restricted working area and the intention to work within a confined area, especially during term time.

The intention is to maintain a fully functioning school whilst the work is taking place, and to decant the users of the affected classrooms to other locations within the school.

The proposed extension will be two storeys only and the only building which will be overlooked is Nazareth House. A separating distance of 20 meters has been maintained between the buildings and due to the functional nature of a school building the extension will not be constantly occupied.



2.3 VISUAL CONTEXT

The diagram opposite highlights the location of the pictures taken of the site as it currently exists. Pictures 1-3, 9 & 11 highlight the proximity of the site boundary and the location of Nazareth House. Pictures 4 & 12 focus on the existing recently resurfaced playing surface. Pictures 5-8 highlight the existing sports hall, and picture 10 shows the walkway which runs adjacent to the sports highlighting the current level changes between the outside ground level and the ground level associated with the sports hall.





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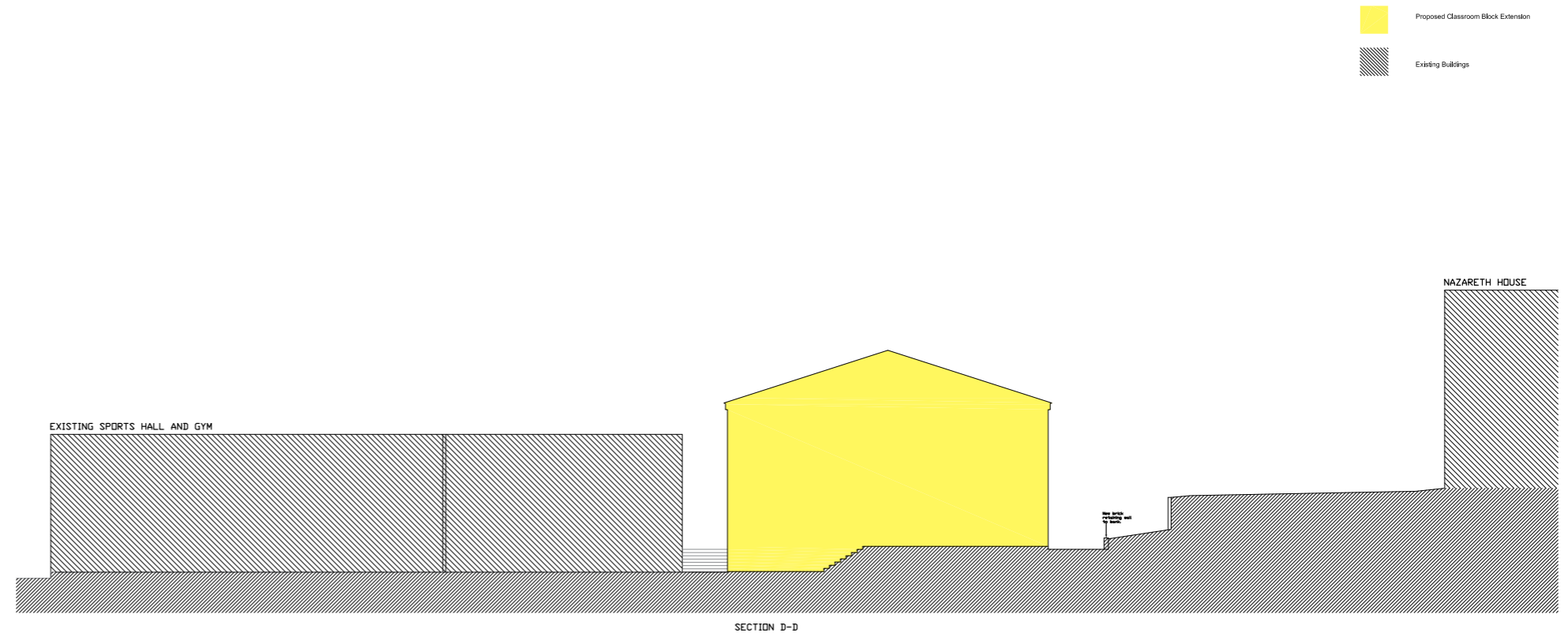
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2.4 MASSING & SCALE

The drawings opposite highlight the scale of the extension and its relationship with the existing school building. The scale of the extension directly relates to the existing sports hall adjacent and the scale and proportion of the proposed windows have be designed to sympathetically respond to the existing school.

The existing school has had a number of additions internally and externally, all of which have enhanced and uplifted the internal and external environments.

The recent additions and upgrades have respected the existing and surrounding fabric, and the proposed Classroom Extension is intended not only provide additional teaching space, but also add to the schools visual characteristics.



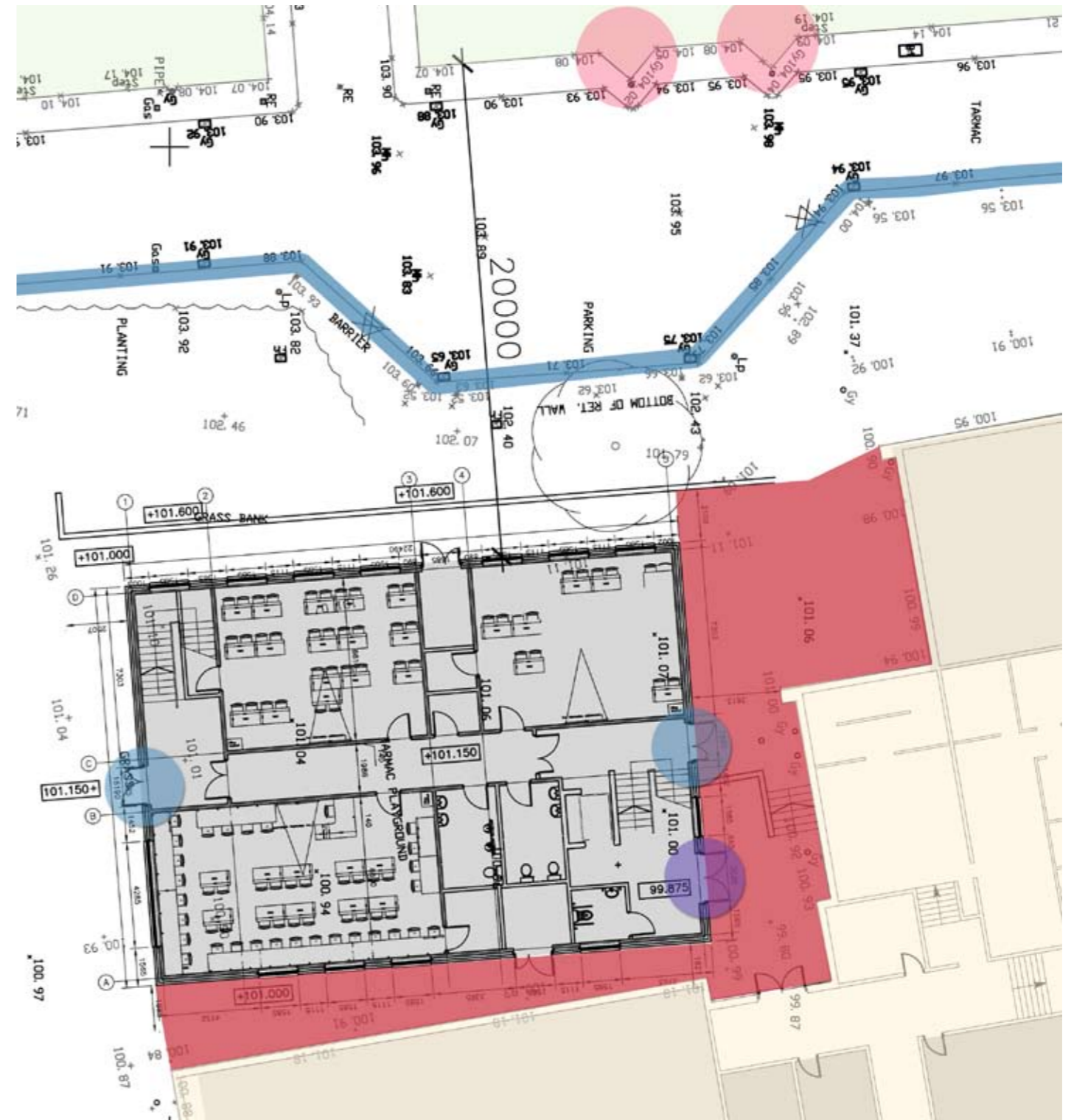
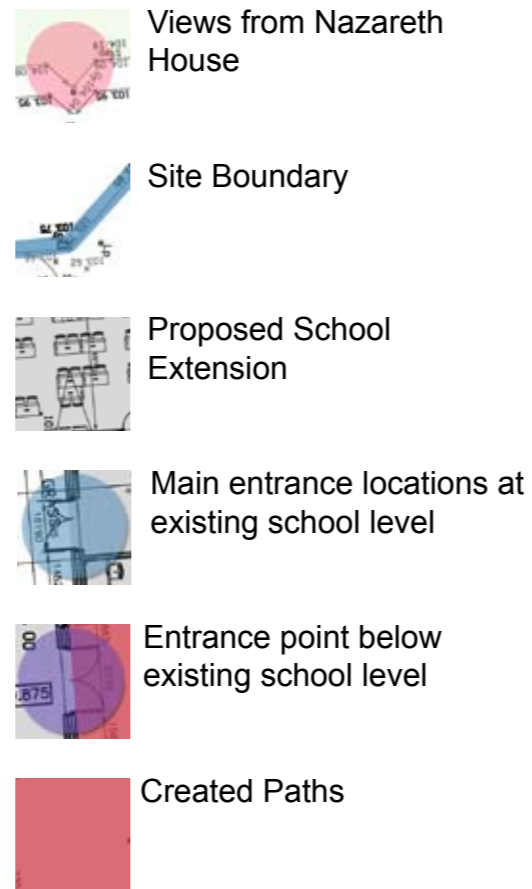
2.5 EXISTING SITE ISSUES SECURITY

We have proposed a Classroom Extension that is safe, accessible, and does not provoke crime and disorder. The majority of the crime committed in this area can be described as petty crime with theft being the most serious crime to take place within the school grounds. This has been addressed by the installation of CCTV cameras around the site which are monitored by key members of staff.

The existing perimeter fence provides adequate security to deter intruders from entering the school grounds but additions to the security will be required to accommodate the proposed Classroom Extension.

The narrow path created will require additional lighting and additional CCTV cameras may need to be installed to ensure the site is adequately monitored.

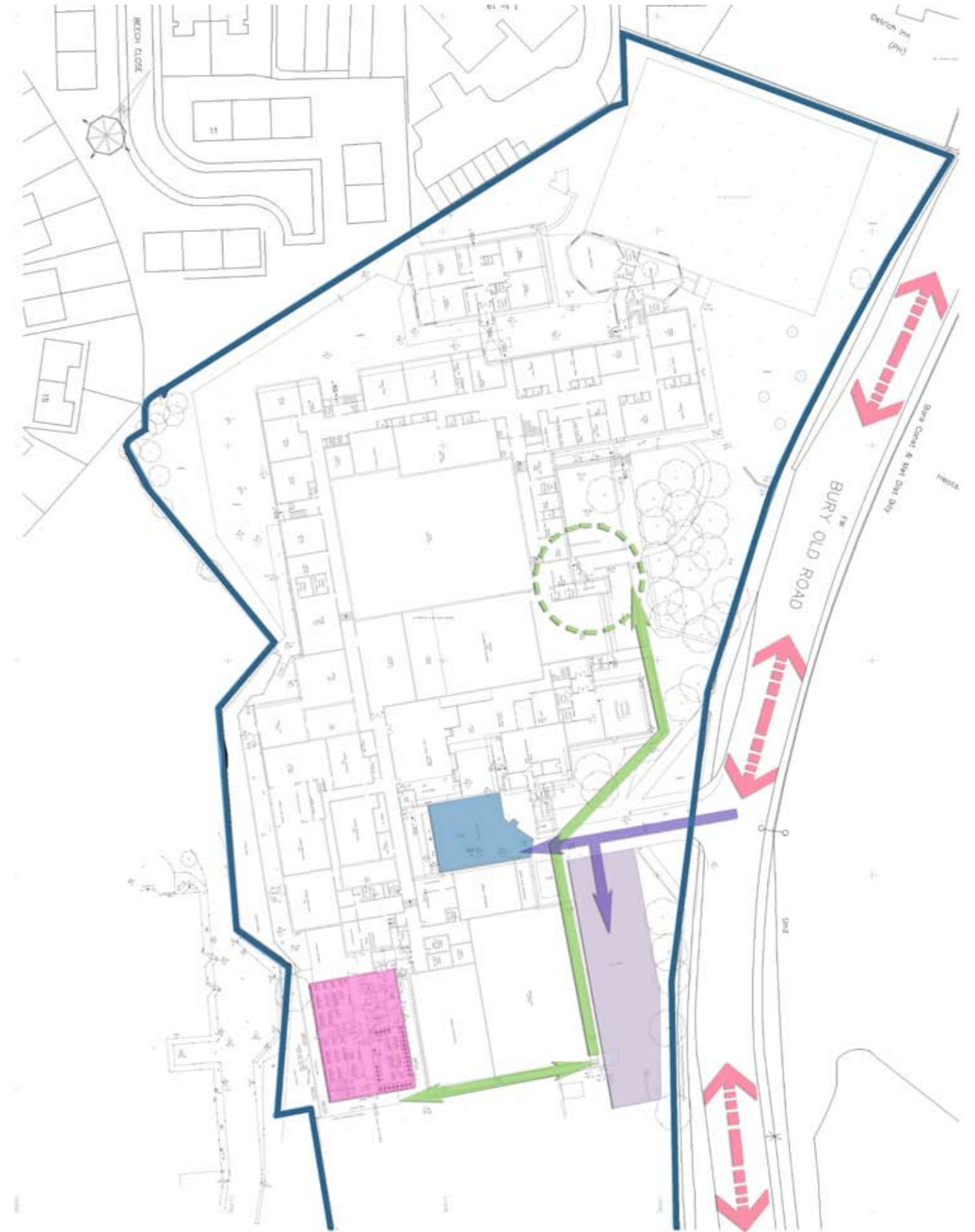
The diagram opposite highlights the proposed Classroom Extension with the area shown in red highlighting the new paths created. These areas will need additional surveillance and possibly a gate to prevent access when the school is closed.



2.6 MOVEMENT & ACCESS

The diagram opposite highlights the primary movement patterns around the site.

- Main School Access 
- Proposed Extension 
- Existing Service Yard 
- Existing Car Park 
- Main Vehicular Movement 
- Primary pedestrian movement for access 
- Site Boundary 

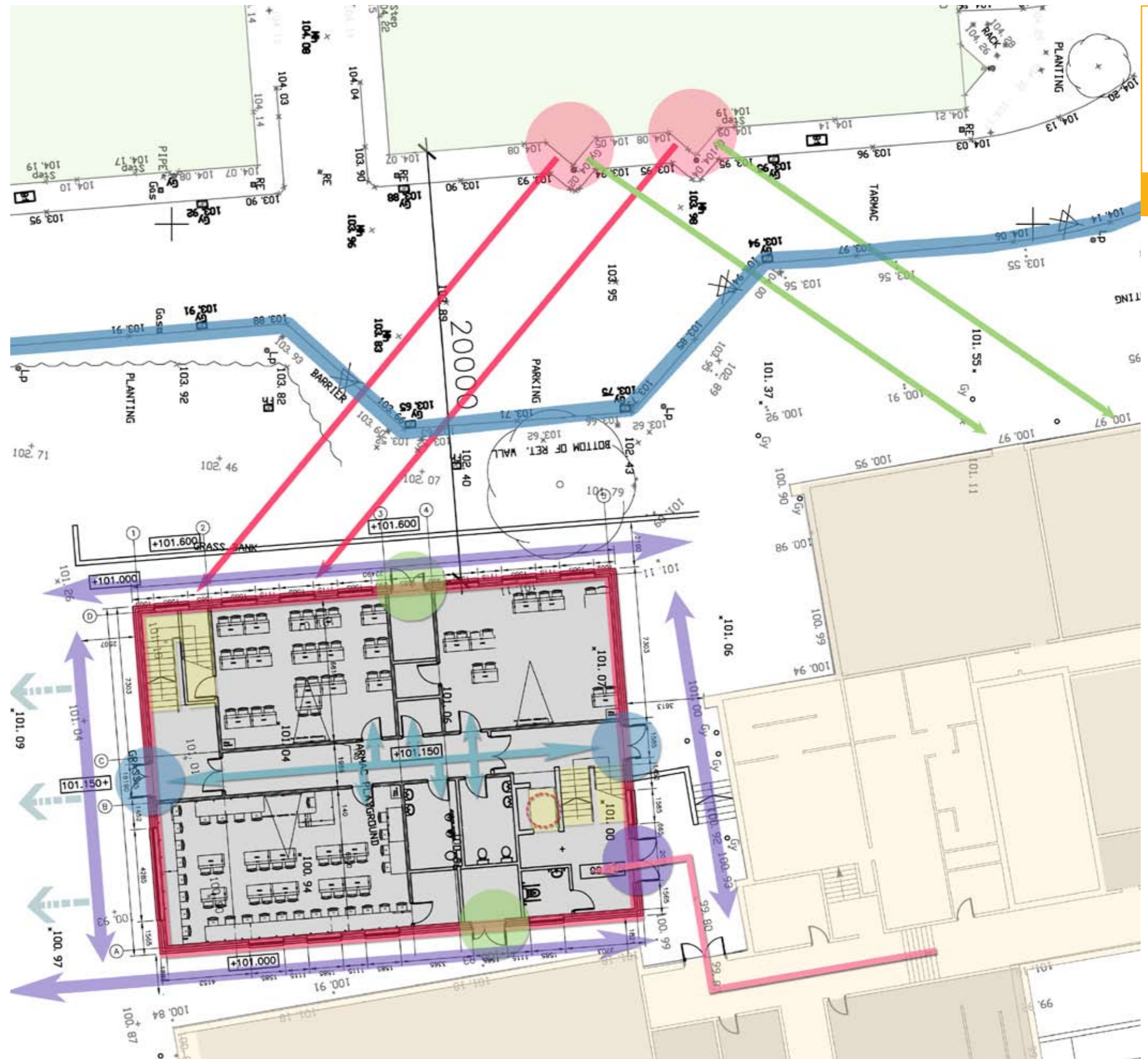
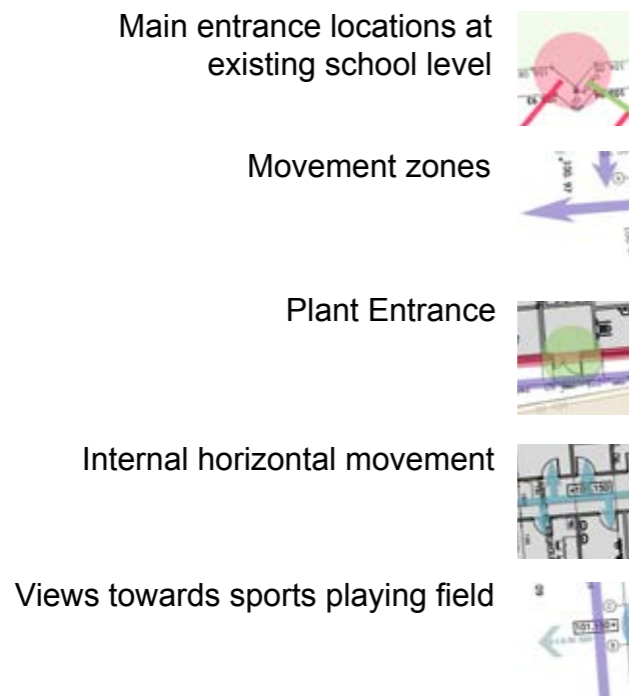


2.6 MOVEMENT & ACCESS

The existing external circulation will remain and classroom extension block will have an external access point as it is not physically joined to the existing school building.

Cycle and vehicular provisions will remain as existing and existing links to public transportation will remain

The existing school building has a number of level changes and the Classroom Extension provides access on two levels to account for the external existing ground levels. A lift has been provided within the Classroom Extension to accommodate wheelchair users and people with other disabilities, allowing them to move freely around the building and have adequate access from the existing school building.



2.7 LAND USE

Land uses in the area and local plan allocation for the site. Site and context zoning.

- Park 
- Existing School 
- Mainly Residential 



2.8 PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

The proposal is to provide additional classroom space for an existing secondary school and therefore the main intention is to provide an improved community facility.

According to the Bury UDP (Unitary Development Plan) which was adopted in 1997 the following policies apply:

- CF1 - PROPOSALS FOR NEW AND IMPROVED COMMUNITY FACILITIES Proposals for new and improved community facilities will generally be looked on favourably by the Council.
- CF2 - EDUCATION LAND AND BUILDINGS Proposals for the provision, improvement and dual use of educational facilities.

The proposal is providing a new community/educational facility which improves the internal environment of the existing educational facility by creating additional space for teaching the existing population of students.



3.1 DESIGN PROCESS - MAJOR CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The key constraints for the proposal are: the height of the extension and the proximity of the extension to Nazareth house.

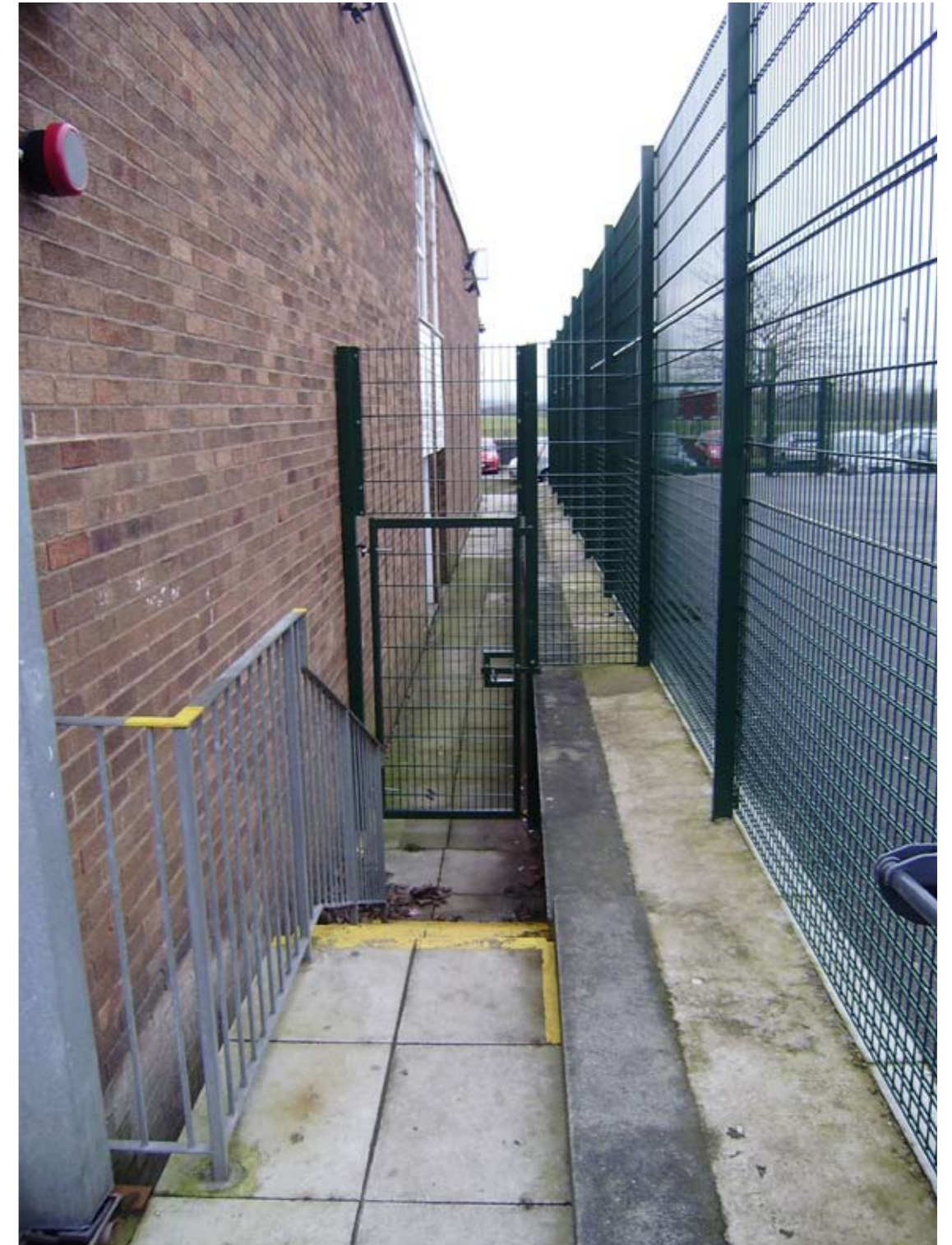
The site is quite flat but there is a level change which is accommodated by the internal lift. The site does not offer views of merit due to its location within the school grounds, it will form a template for future development.

The existing sports playing area may be described as an obstacle as it has been recently resurfaced and courts have been marked for various sporting activities. A strategy has been proposed to insure minimal disturbance to the surface and maintain access to all required parts of the existing building.

The site is located away from the main entrance but will be a continuation of the schools drive to create a better learning environment.

The main opportunity is to create a building which links to the existing school building and can continue the uplifting process.

The picture opposite highlights the existing level change on-site and the gate which also forms part of the existing security measures.



3.2 KEY DRIVERS

The main key driver is the schools desire to maintain its status as one of the leading secondary educational institutes in the area and provide its students with the best learning environment.

This enables St. Monica's School to remain as a community which encourages all its members to exercise discipline, respect, tolerance and understanding in the search for knowledge and happiness.

Currently the school is struggling to comfortably accommodate the existing number of students and the new Classroom Extension will provide additional classroom accommodation.

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY OF G.C.S.E. RESULTS 2006/2007

Pupils entered for 5 or more G.C.S.E.s			Pupils achieving 5 or more A* - C Grades		
National	St Monica's	L.E.A.	St Monica's	L.E.A.	National
94.5%	100%	98.4%	85.8%	62.5%	61.5%

Pupils achieving 5 or more A* - G Grades			Pupils entered for 1 or more G.C.S.E.s		
National	St Monica's	L.E.A.	St Monica's	L.E.A.	National
91.6%	100%	95.7%	100%	100%	99.8%

Pupils achieving 1 or more A* - G Grades			Pupils who failed to obtain any Grades at A* - G		
National	St Monica's	L.E.A.	National	St Monica's	L.E.A.
99.1%	100%	100%	0.9%	NIL	NIL

Capped Average Points Score (Section 96)		
St. Monica's	L.E.A.	National
363.0	306.9	302.4

S.E.N. Examination Results 2006/2007

27 pupils, from this year group were identified as having a Special Need at the time of the G.C.S.E. examinations. They were entered for a total of 235 (147 boys, 88 girls G.C.S.E. examinations.

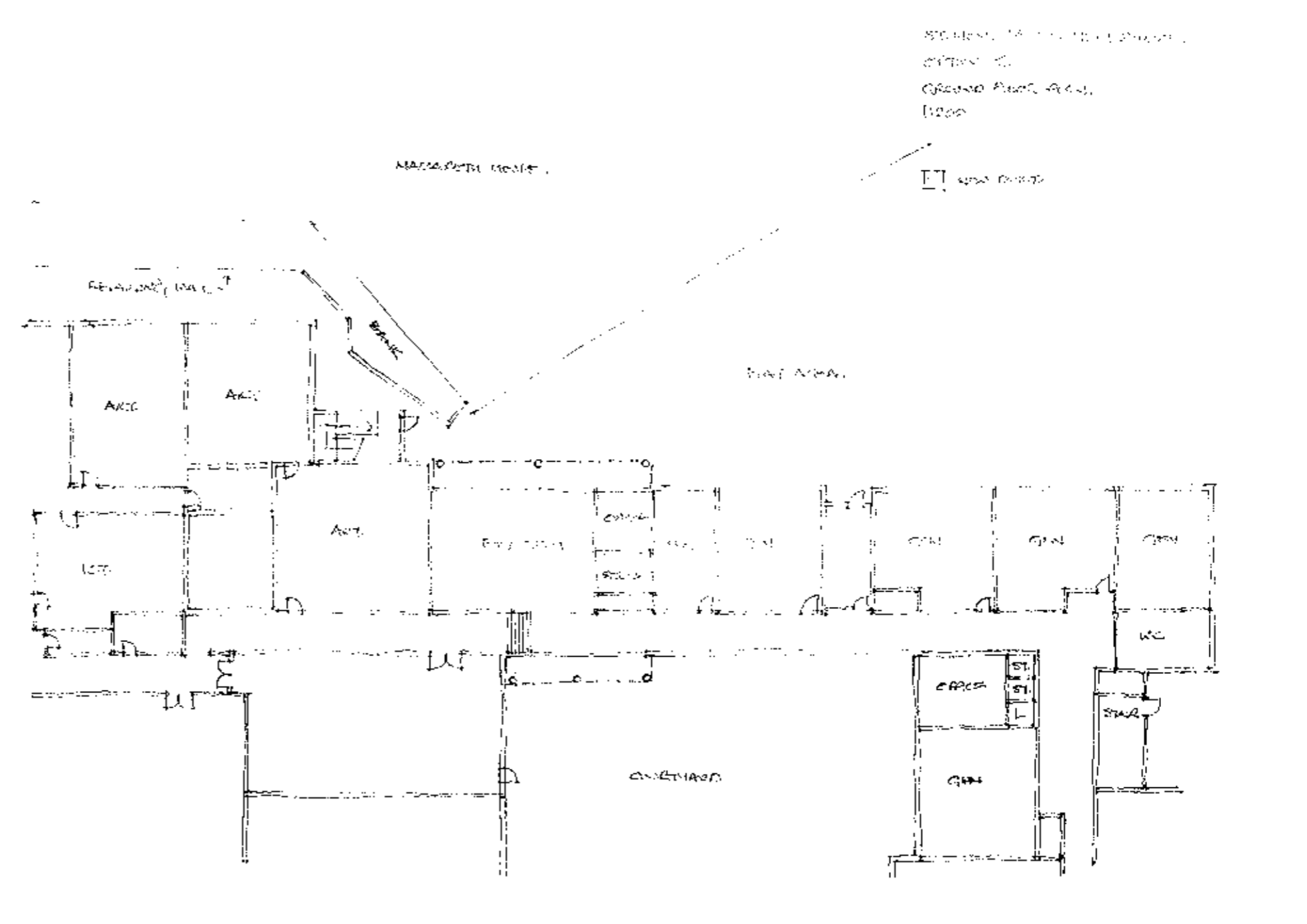
The 5 A*-C pass rate was 44.44%
The 5 A*-G pass rate was 100%

3.3 OPTION STUDIES

Option 1

This proposal takes advantage of part of the existing school being single storey. The ground floor provides access to a new upper level providing the additional classroom spaces required.

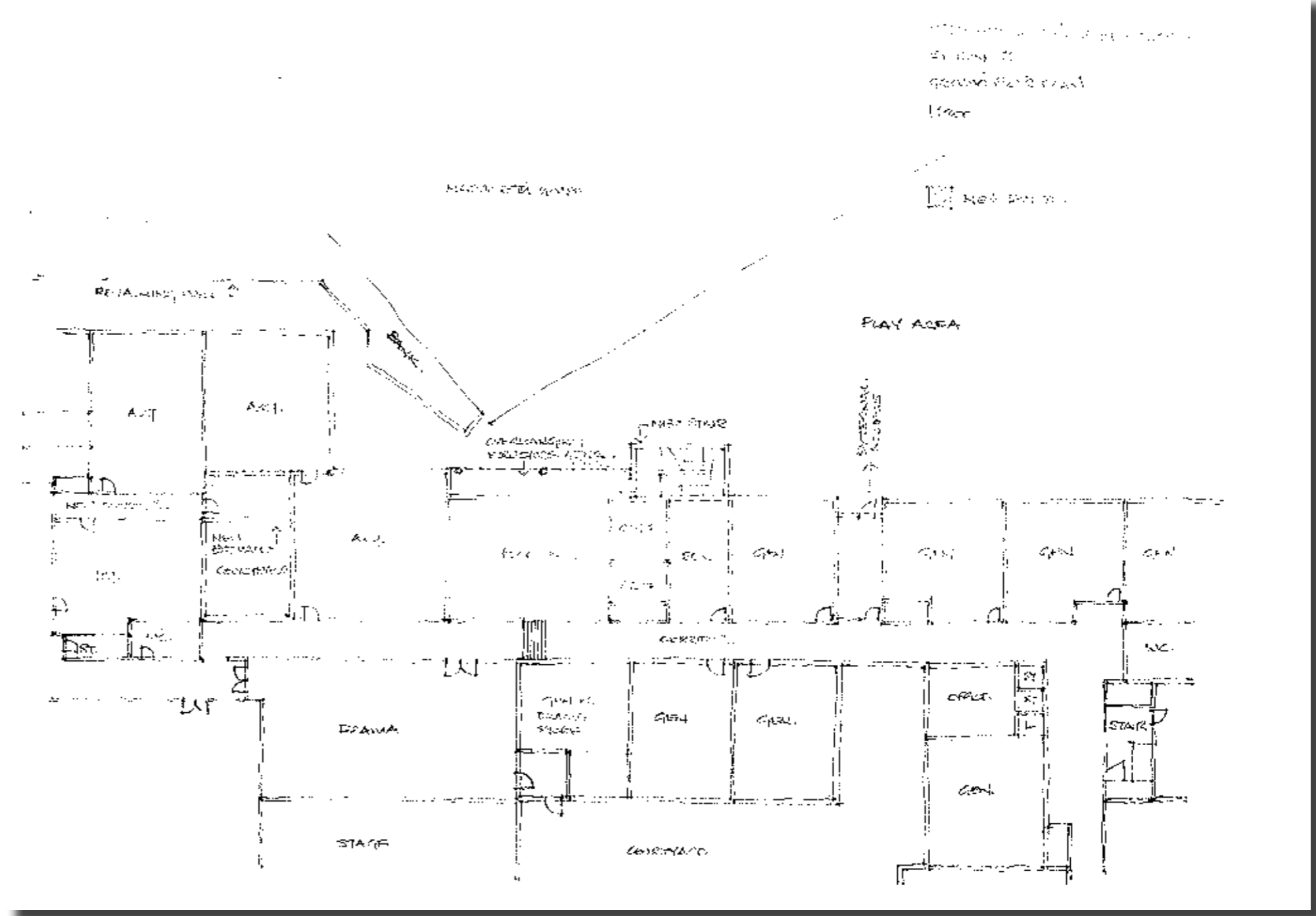
This option will have minimal impact in terms of the land take required and allows a direct link to the existing building at first floor level, maintaining horizontal movement at this level.



3.3 OPTION STUDIES

Option 2

This proposal again takes advantage of part of the existing school building being single storey. New classroom units are also provided in part of the courtyard, with the extended first floor providing the additional classroom requirements. Again this proposal is placed to the rear of the existing school building.

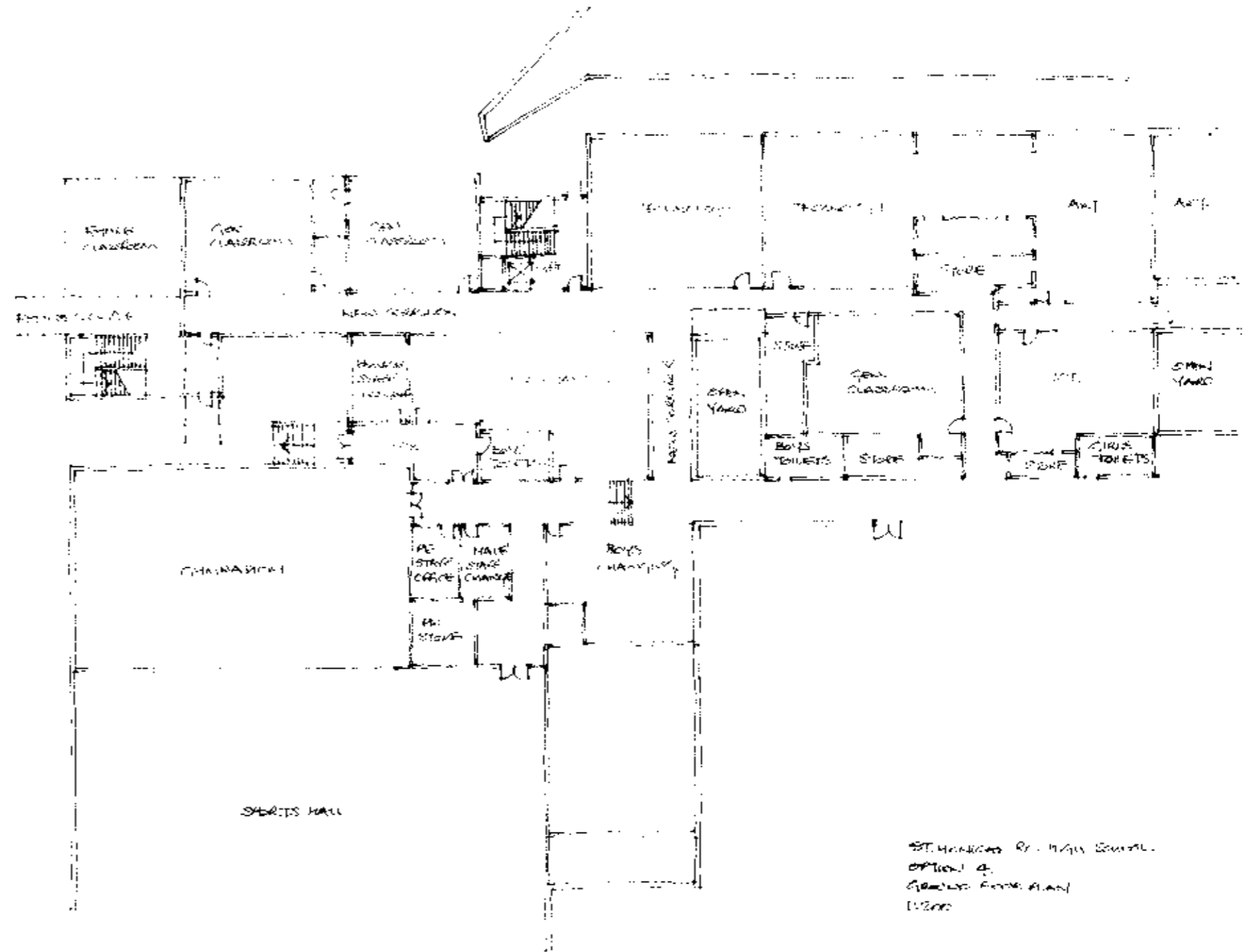


3.3 OPTION STUDIES

Option 4

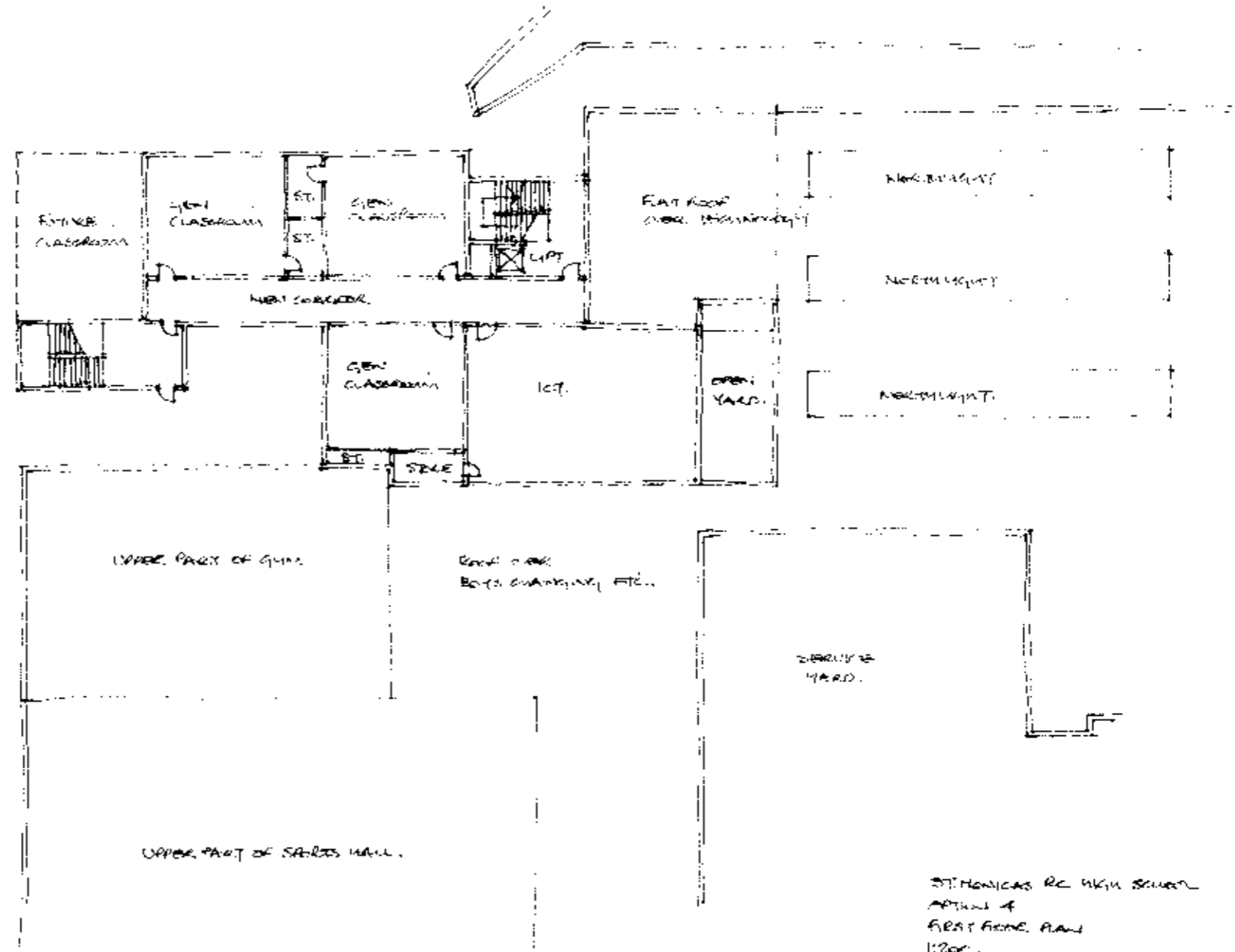
This option presents an alternative approach to providing additional classrooms by only partially building on top of the existing school building.

A new lift is introduced and direct links to the existing school building are only maintained at ground floor level, with the first floor providing no access to the existing school building.



3.3 OPTION STUDIES

Option 4

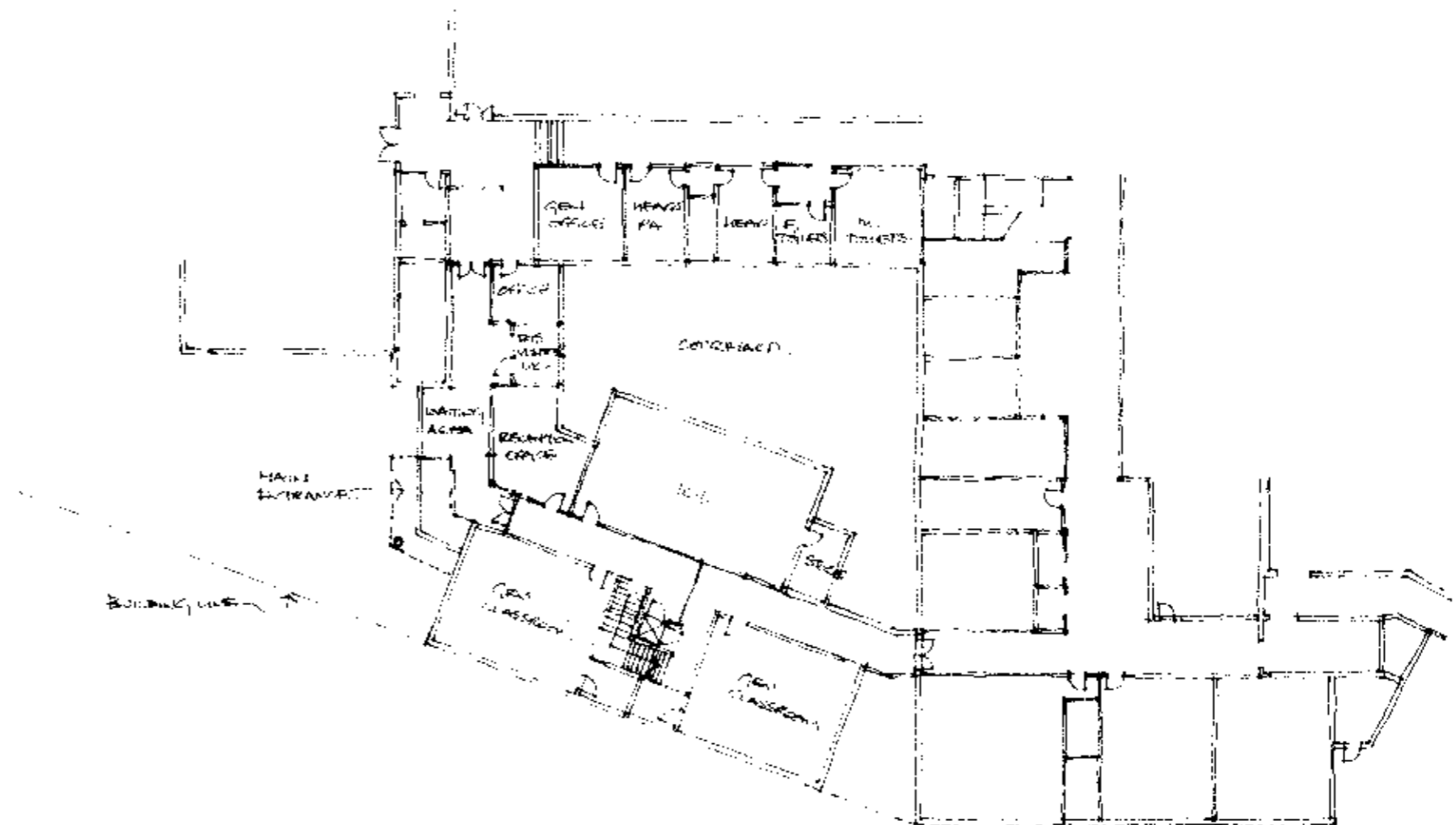


3.3 OPTION STUDIES

Option 5

This option 6 re-configures the existing area around schools main entrance to create a prominent approach to the building and reorganise the existing classroom layout to provide larger teaching spaces and greater fluidity to the flow of horizontal movement. Rationalising the present vertical movement by providing a central stair for this part of the building.

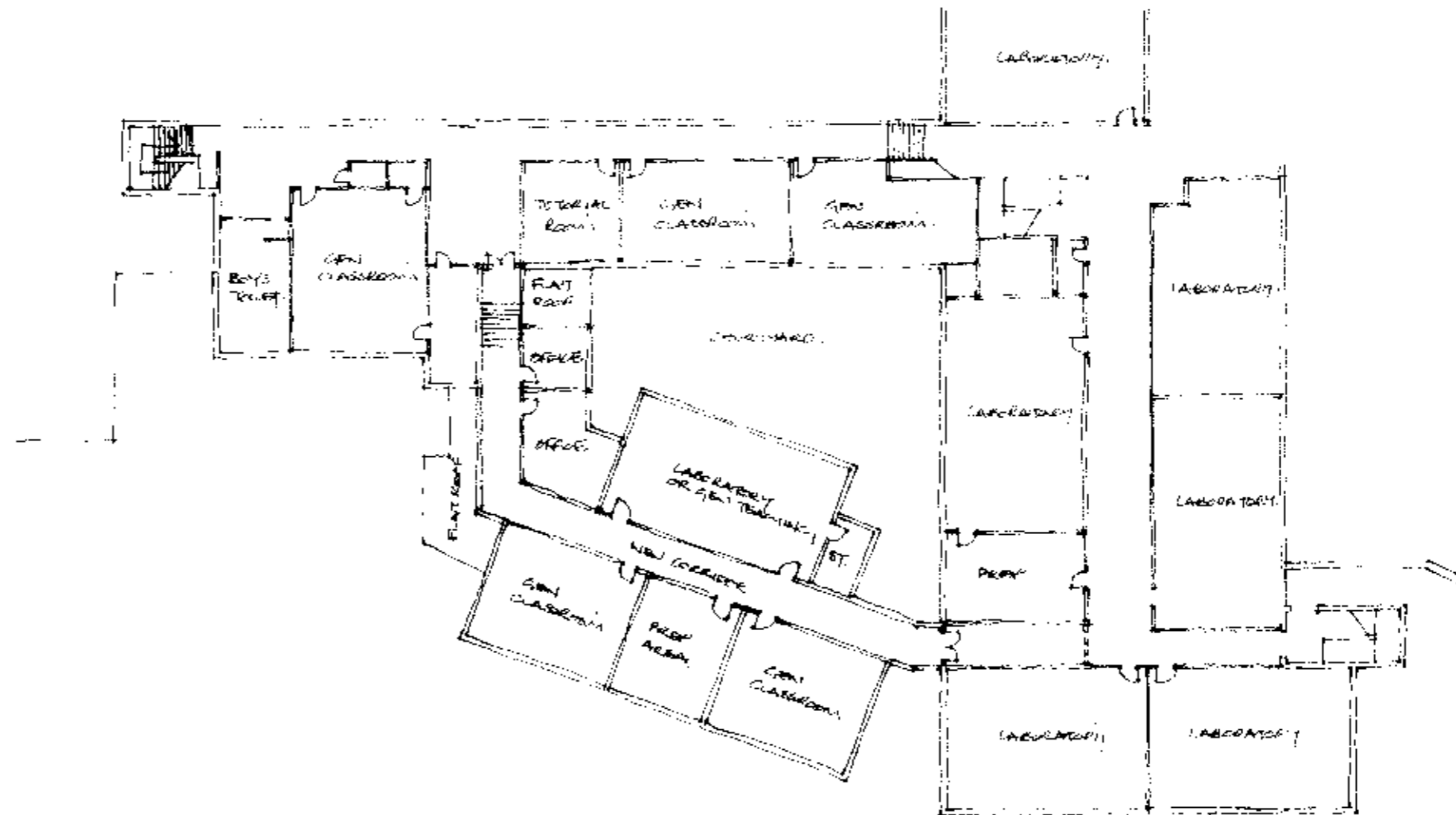
The first floor builds on the form proposed for the ground floor integrating the extension with the existing building.



ST. MONICA'S R.C. HIGH SCHOOL
OPTION 5
GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1:200

3.3 OPTION STUDIES

Option 5



ST. MONICA'S R.C. HIGH SCHOOL
OPTION 5
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
1:200

3.3 OPTION STUDIES

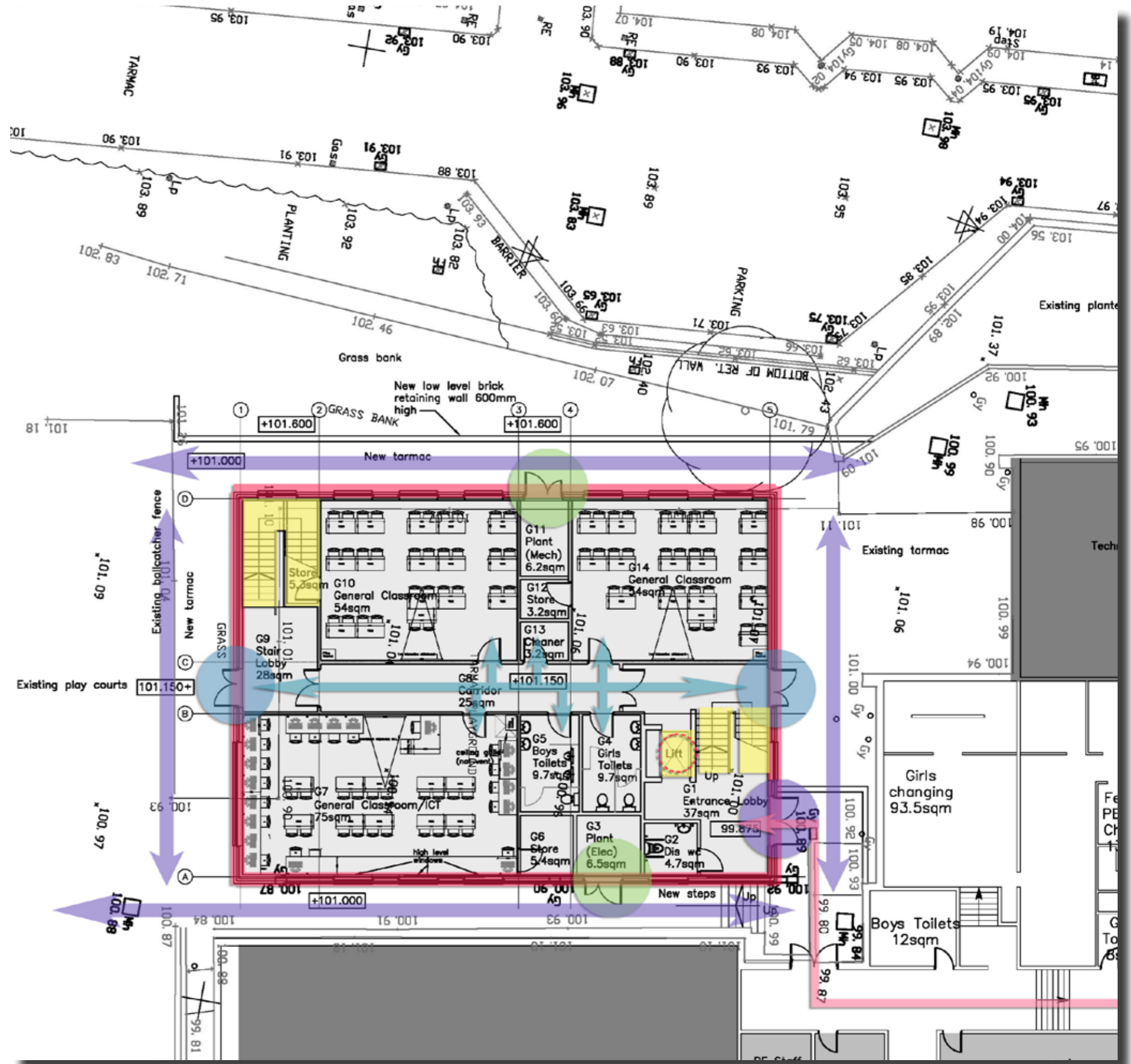
Option 6

Option 6 builds on the previously discussed options creating a single unit separated from the existing school. The Classroom Extension unit has separate entrances accessible from either from three different locations. Due to the existing level of the site and the existing ground floor level of the school there are two entrances to the extension which can be considered as main entrances, one of which is accessed on the same level as part of the existing corridor within the existing building.

The entrance doors to the Classroom Extension will also have assisted opening devices to ensure those with difficulties are able to easily enter and exist the building.

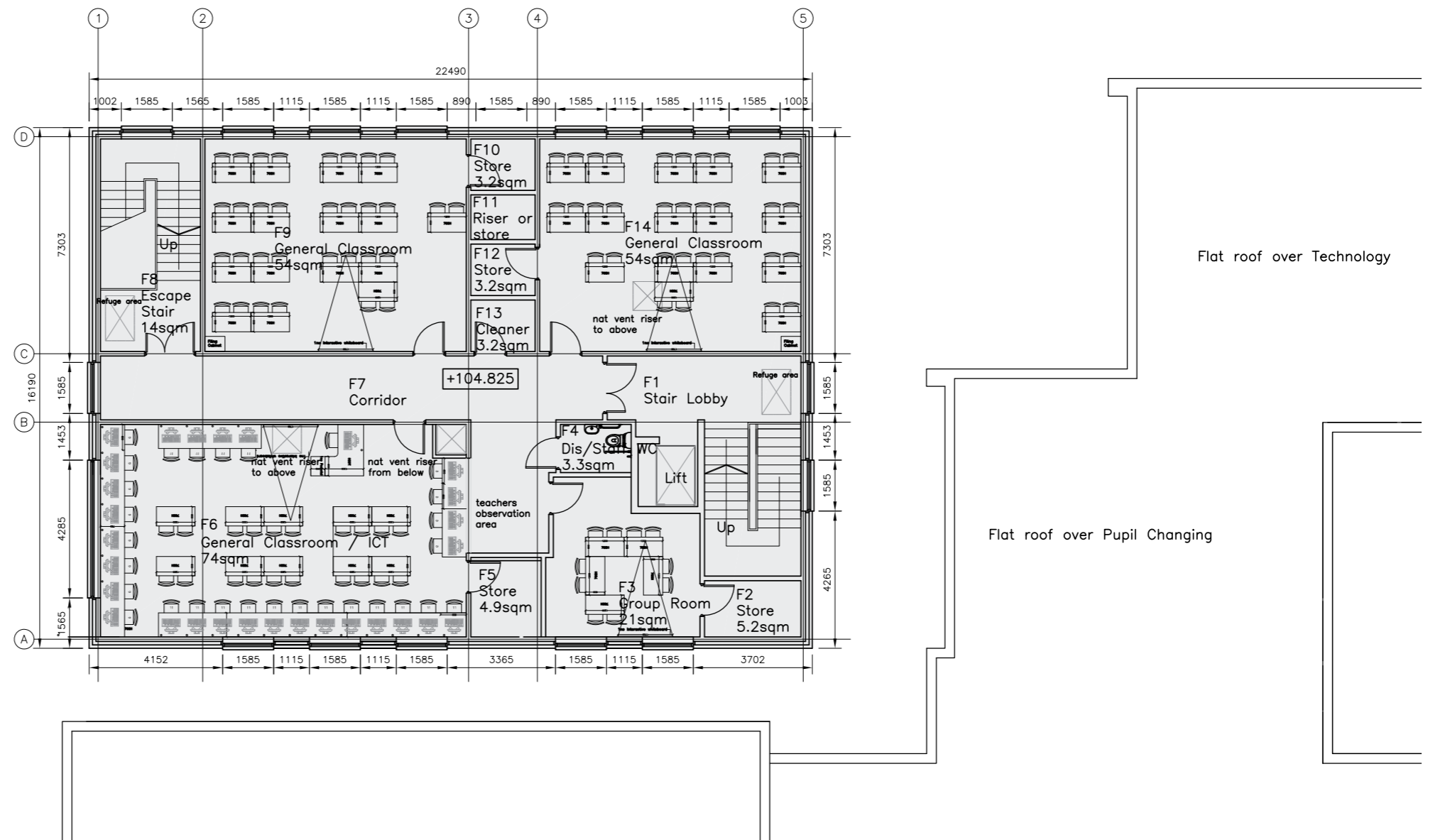
A lift is provided to allow all users of the building to easily access all locations and the first floor provides almost the same facilities as the ground floor but a link to the existing building is not maintained at this level.

Due to the close proximity of Nazareth House this option has been changed to that proposed allowing a distance of 20m be maintained between Nazareth House and the proposed Classroom Extension.








3.3 OPTION STUDIES

Option 6



4.1 USE AND LAYOUT

Ground floor plan showing the general arrangement of the spaces within the Classroom Extension

- General Classrooms 
- Plant Rooms 
- Store Rooms 
- Toilets 
- Horizontal/Vertical Circulation 



4.1 USE AND LAYOUT

First floor plan showing the general arrangement of the spaces within the Classroom Extension

- General Classrooms 
- Riser/Store 
- Observation Space 
- Store 
- Toilets 
- Horizontal/Vertical Circulation 



4.2 SCALE/MASSING AND ELEVATIONAL TREATMENT

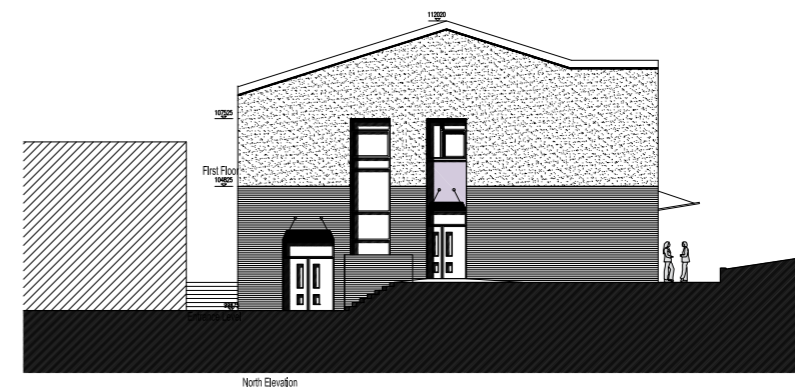
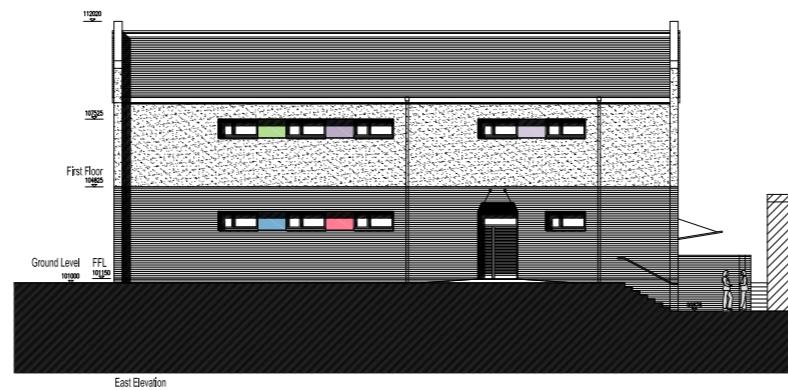
The scale and massing of the proposed Classroom Extension respects the existing school building. The extension provides an additional two storeys of accommodation in keeping with the existing height of the main school building and also surrounding buildings.

The proposed massing ensures the building does not dramatically effect the current views gained from Nazareth House and the extension is positioned to ensure it is at least 20m from away from Nazareth House. Due to the positioning of the extension Nazareth House is the only surrounding building outside the schools boundary which needs to be addressed due to its proximity to the school.

The extension also sets a template for future built additions to the main school building or buildings proposed within the schools grounds. A Sixth Form Block is the next proposed addition after the Classroom Extension.

The proposed elevations have been composed to enhance and respect the existing environment and provide a continuation to the pallet of materials already used on the main school building. The proposed materials are as follows:

- Brick walls to match the existing brickwork
- Coloured panels
- Aluminium/windows
- Concrete roof tiles
- Part render to external walls



NOTES / REVISIONS

- Brickwork to match existing
- White Render
- Concrete Tiles
- Aluminium Windows
- Coloured Panel
- Existing Buildings
- Opaque Glazing



4.3 CREATING SPACES

This diagram highlights the spaces around the building which have been created due to the positioning of the Classroom Extension. This space is currently an area essentially used as part of the outdoor play space, leading to the newly resurfaced sports field.

The intention is to ensure the enclosed spaces are well lit, free flowing, and comfortable spaces to move through, especially the spaces around the proposed main entrance for the new classroom extension. This is the transitional space which leads you from the existing building to the new building with a sense of continuity.

The new space adjacent to the existing gymnasium and enclosed by the proposed new Classroom Extension will be well lit and constantly monitored to ensure the integrity of the space.



Exit Points



Entrance Points

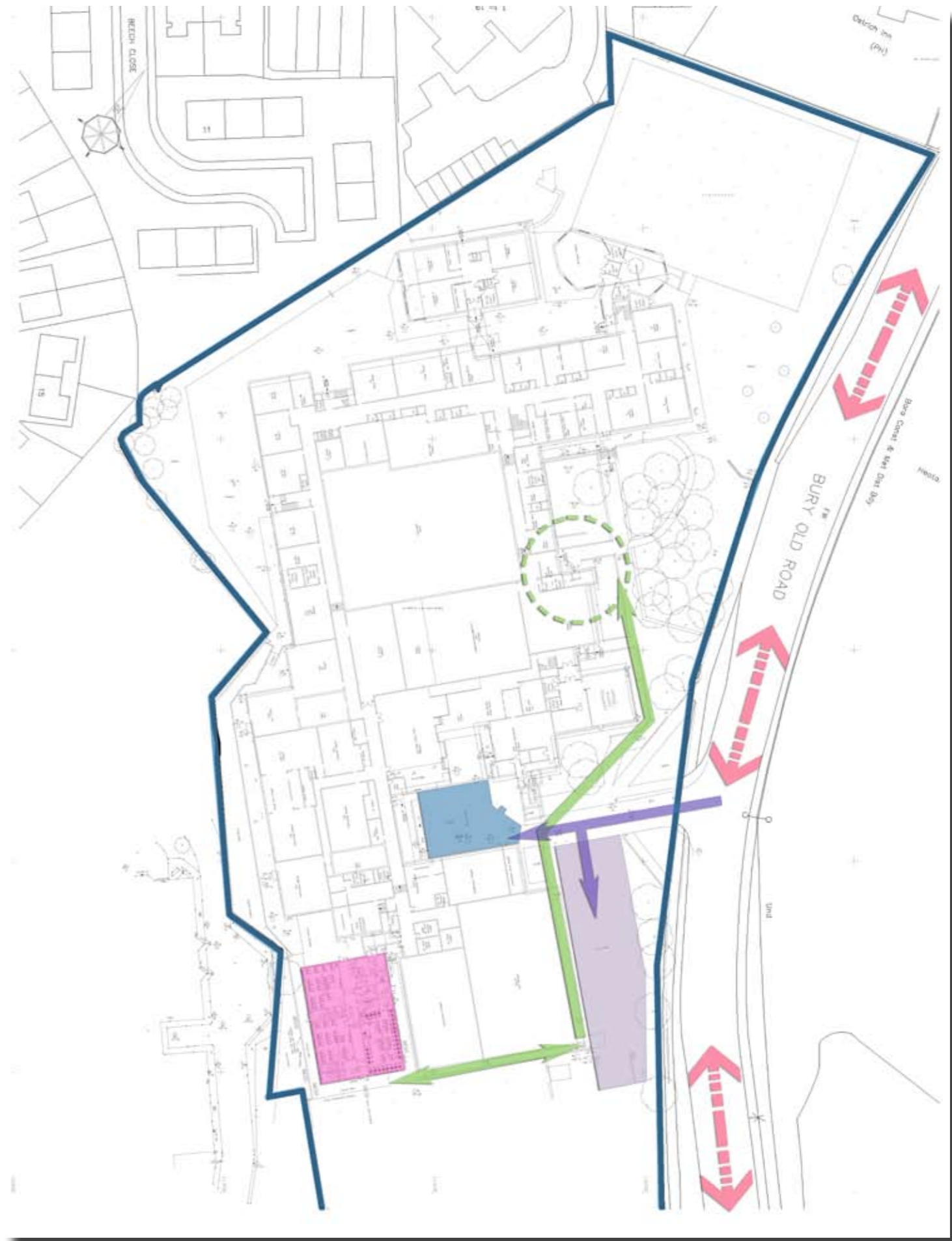
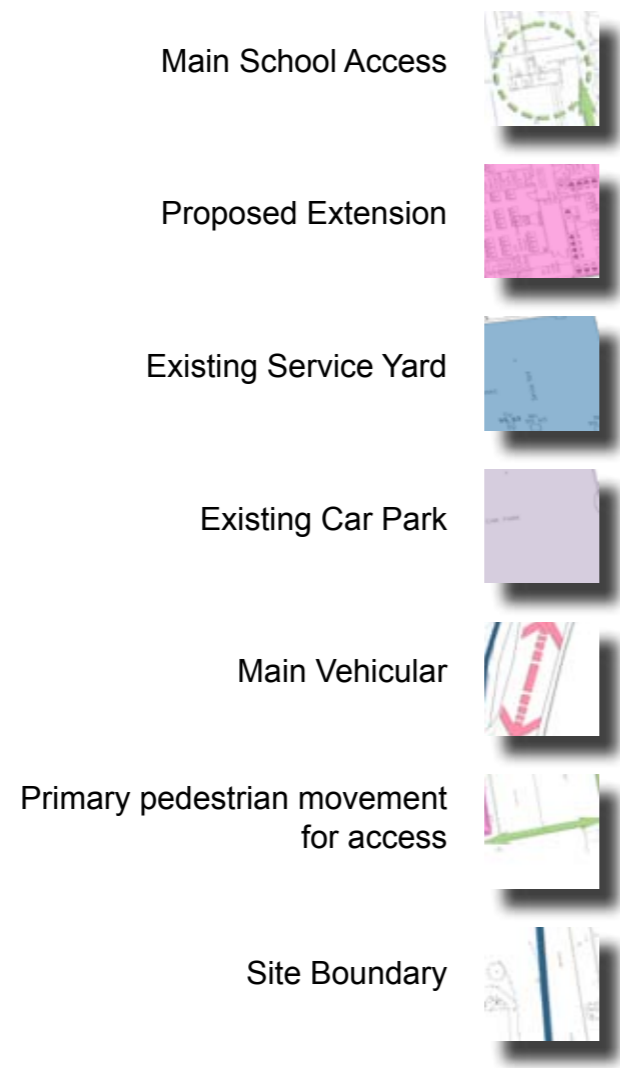


External Space Created



4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

The access strategy will remain as existing as the Classroom Extension is proposed not to increase the number students but to provide a better experience for the students and staff.



6.0 SUMMARY

The proposal for the Classroom Extension will allow the school to create a better environment for its students and staff. This proposal is not to provide greater space for additional students, but allows the school to grow by continuing the high standard of classroom provision, acting as a template for the schools next project.





7.0 APPENDIX

The Design and Access Statement forms part of the Full Planning Application for the Classroom Extension Block at St. Monica's R.C. High School.

To support this statement the following also accompanies this statement:

- Drawings as Shown on Drawing Register
- Part A of the Crime Impact Assessment by the G.M.P Architectural Liaison Unit.
- Ground Investigation has been carried out by Ian Farmer Associates
- 'Report on Tree' by Rowbottom's Tree Service Ltd.