

Chimney's Link Town Centre Enhancement Scheme

Fishguard Junior School - Level 1 Building
Recording

Pembrokeshire County Council

26 October 2017

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Table of contents

Chapter	Pages
1. Introduction	4
1.1. Background	4
1.2. Summary of Proposed Works	4
1.3. Report Scope and Methodology	4
1.4. Site Location	6
2. Historical Background	6
3. Building Description	7
3.1. Site Layout	7
3.2. External	8
3.3. Internal	9
4. Conclusion	10
Appendix A. Photographic Record	11
Appendix B. Locations of Photographs	21

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Atkins Limited has submitted a full planning application on behalf of Pembrokeshire County Council – Transportation & Environment (hereafter referred to as 'PCC') for the redevelopment of land within the town centre of Fishguard, Pembrokeshire. The proposals, known as Chimney's Link Town Centre Enhancement Scheme (hereafter referred to as the 'Scheme') provides a new link road, bus focal point and public realm improvements, and has been proposed in light of a development allocation for the area included in the Local Development Plan (2013).

One area where work is proposed is the demolition of the former Fishguard Junior School building located within the Fishguard Conservation Area and demolition of the former school canteen and three associated outbuildings located adjacent to the Conservation Area.

1.2. Summary of Proposed Works

The Junior School is not a statutory listed building nor is the canteen nor any of the outbuildings. However, they are recorded on the Dyfed Historic Environment Record (HER) as a non-designated heritage asset, reference PRN 20116. As the school is located within the Fishguard Conservation Area an application for Conservation Area Consent (CAC) (Reference 14/1012/CA) was submitted for its demolition and approved by the Welsh Government in August 2015.

The demolition of the former Fishguard Junior School, canteen and its outbuildings is required to facilitate construction of the Scheme, including the redevelopment of the school site.

A method statement for the demolition of the school has been produced in satisfaction of condition 19 (5) of the CAC (14/1012/CA) which sets out the work for the demolition and site clearance of the school, including:

- Complete demolition of buildings on the site, including the removal of floor slabs and grubbing up of existing footings and foundations;
- Removal of all hard standings and hard surfaces.

1.3. Report Scope and Methodology

A building recording of the school is required to discharge condition 19 (6) of the CAC (14/1012/CA):

(6) Prior to the commencement of works for the demolition of the building, an appropriate building and photographic survey of the existing buildings shall be carried out in accordance with guidelines provided by the local planning authority's archaeological advisors – The Dyfed Archaeological Trust – Heritage Management, and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No works shall commence until written confirmation that the photographic survey has been

deposited with the regional Historic Environment Record (held and maintained by the Dyfed Archaeological Trust, the Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6AF) and that proof of that deposit has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

In addition, the Historic Environment Appraisal compiled by Dyfed Archaeological Trust in September 2017, submitted as an addendum to the Heritage Statement in support of the full planning application, also recommended a programme of building recording be carried out prior to the demolition of the school.

A Level 1 Building Recording, in accordance with Historic England's guidance, detailed in '*Understanding Historic Buildings – A Guide to Good Recording Practice*' (May 2016) has been undertaken. Cadw currently does not have its own guidance for good practice in historic building recording, however consideration of the building's value and significance does take into account guidance on assessing significance included in *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales* (2011). The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (December 2014) has also been taken into account.

In accordance with a Level 1 building recording, a photographic record has been undertaken of the building focusing on the principal exterior elevations along with any key internal and external features of significant interest. A more detailed descriptive building recording would entail more extensive internal inspection of the building and this has not been considered safe due to the condition of the building remaining derelict for some considerable time. Photographs were taken on a digital SLR camera and, for the purposes of compiling this report, have been saved in a jpeg format. The photographic record included general views of the buildings, oblique and elevation views and any specific features that add to the understanding of the building's design, development and use. Photographs of the building can be found in 4. Appendix A. The location of the interior and exterior photos are shown in Figures B1 and B2 in 4. Appendix B

This photographic record was undertaken by Fiona Deaton, Principal Built Heritage Consultant for Atkins, during site walkovers in September and October 2016.

1.3.1. Consultation

In response to the Conservation Area Consent application for the demolition of the school, Cadw's Inspector of Historic Buildings, identified that the frontage of the former school building has character and is important to the street scene, whereas the modern ancillary buildings to the rear are of no real historic value.

In email correspondence between Mike Ings, Senior Planning Archaeologist at Dyfed Archaeological Trust, and Ana Stuermer, Senior Planner at Atkins, on 5 October 2016, Mr Ings confirmed a building recording in accordance with a Level 1 as defined by Historic England would be satisfactory, with the interior recording only where original features survive.

1.4. Site Location

The former Fishguard Junior School is located within Fishguard Town Centre, between the A40 (High Street) and A487 (West Street) trunk roads, with the point of access to the school from the latter. The building sits within a parcel of land generally bounded by the properties of West Street to the north and east, the properties of High Street to the south, and the Co-Op supermarket on High Street to the west (Figure 1). The school building is surrounded by an area of hard standing (largely asphalt), with the canteen and outbuildings to the rear. To the south of the building is an area of open undeveloped land which was the school playing field. The school buildings and land immediately around them are currently not publicly accessible.

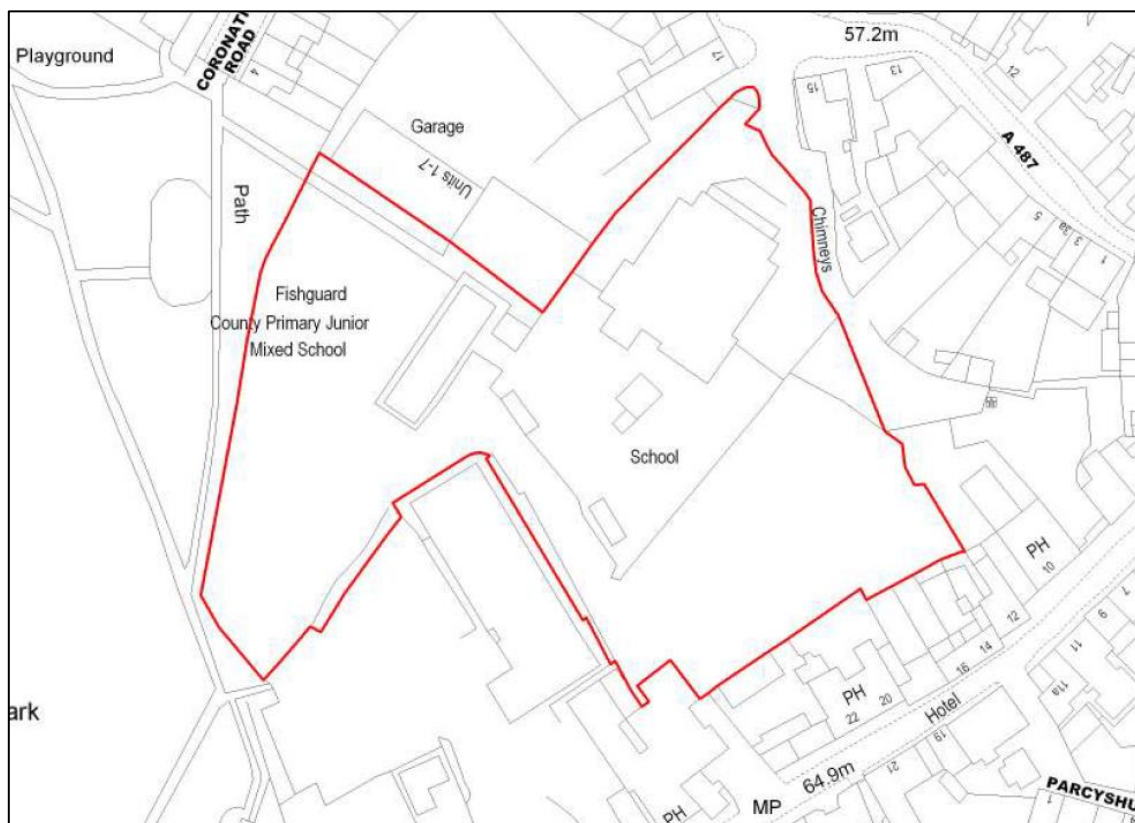


Figure 1. Site location plan of the former Fishguard Junior School

2. Historical Background

Fishguard comprises two distinct areas; the main town and Lower Fishguard. The former Fishguard Junior School is located in the main town, which also includes the parish church of St Mary's, Market Square and High Street along with various modern developments.

Fishguard expanded along what is now the High Street as its role as a market town and fishing port developed. A number of Fishguard's buildings date to the eighteenth century when various trades flourished, including boat building and rope making. The arrival of the railway in the nineteenth century gave rise to further development and expansion. Traditional

industries declined during the twentieth century, with the town developing instead as a tourist destination.

The historic development of the area around the Junior School is revealed in the historic Ordnance Survey Maps. The earliest example dating from 1889 shows the site of the school as undeveloped land, consisting of a large enclosed field bordered by the plots of the properties along West Street and High Street, with the garden plot to the rear of the Ship & Anchor public house on High Street forming the south-western boundary of the Site. Little change had occurred in the mapping of 1907, and the school was built the following year.

The junior school was approved by the Board of Managers of the County Education Authority for Fishguard and Goodwick on 7 November 1907, with full permission being granted on 2 June 1908. The architect and surveyor was D. Edward Thomas of Haverfordwest. Construction commenced in 1908 and the building was opened on 6 October 1909. The school is first shown on the OS map of 1937, located in the northern half of the enclosed field, with the southern half the site remaining open ground which has remained open and undeveloped to the present day, acting as the playing field for the school.

A series of later additions and alterations have been made to the school building as well as the construction of a number of ancillary buildings to the rear of the main building, some of which remain extant. These additions and alterations are identified in more detail below in Section 3.2.

Fishguard Junior School closed in 2011, with pupils moving to the new Ysgol Glannau Gwaun. The building has remained redundant since the school's closure.

The historic maps are reproduced in the Heritage Statement submitted in support of the planning application (Ref. 17/0422/PA), which also provides further detail and background on the history of the school.

3. Building Description

3.1. Site Layout

The former Fishguard Junior School is aligned north-east to south-west, with the main entrance facing West Street, with the rear of the building facing south-west. The design of the school reflects the function of the building and comprises essentially five parts. At the north-eastern end of the school, the entrance leads into an entrance hall area comprising cloak rooms with the headmaster's room in between, while the main body of the school comprises a main hall with classrooms off it on either side, essentially forming three parallel spaces, as reflected in the pitched roofs (see Plate 1). To the rear (south-western) part of the school are other rooms aligned largely perpendicular to the main body, consisting originally further classrooms, cloakrooms and staff room.

The apparent segregation of the entrances would suggest that the school was originally segregated internally, with the northern half for girls and the southern half for boys, their respective classrooms leading onto the central hall servicing the entire school.

A number of later additions were made to the rear of the school, with a small number of post-war ancillary buildings being constructed. These appear to have included store rooms, toilets and extra classroom space, with an additional separate infants school building to the west, latterly the school canteen. A pitched roof extension to the very rear of the main body of the school has been added at some point post-1976, evidenced by the different heights in the pitched roofs (see Plate 7).

On the HER, two air raid shelters are identified as being located within the area to the south-west of the school building. Both these structures have been demolished since they were recorded on the HER following the survey in 1994.

3.2. External

The former Fishguard Junior School comprises a single storey building, constructed of Goodwick brick coated in pebble dash render (Plate 1). Though the entire building is a single storey, the main body of the school consists of a double height storey, with the gable ends of the roof pitches set above the lower roofs of the entrance hall rooms when viewing the front elevation from West Street (as visible in Plates 1 and 2). The render on the north-eastern entrance elevation has been painted a distinctive pastel pink, with the majority of the rest of the school white-washed; some of the additional buildings to the rear have been painted in other pastel colours.

The principle façade is the north-eastern elevation, forming the main entrance of the school facing towards West Street (Plate 2). The entrance elevation is symmetrical, comprising single storey entrance hall rooms aligned perpendicular to the double height storey of the main body of the school, which forms three gable ends behind. This elevation comprises a projecting central bay, with two entrance doorways either side atop sets of steps. Each doorway is set within a decorative archway, adorned above with “BOYS” (for the south entrance) and “GIRLS” (for the north entrance), indicating the original segregation within the building (Plate 3). Behind, the parapet of the entrance partly obscures two pitched roofs aligned perpendicular to the main body of the building. The main body from this elevation comprises three gable ends, the central of which features a large segmented arched window, separated into three parts. This central gable features steps at the base and halfway up each pitch, while at the top is the truncated base of the original school bell-cote.

The entrance elevation features a number of neo-classical details, including pilasters adorning the doorways and window of the central gable end, and faux keystones above the same elements. Each gable end also features the date of construction in an embossed diamond plate (Plate 4).

The north and south elevations of the main body of the school building both consist of six bays of unadorned eight-light windows (Plates 5 and 6). Compared to the façade of the front entrance, the side elevations are unremarkable with no decoration or detailing.

At the rear of the main body of the school is a range of pitched roof buildings (Plate 7), arranged perpendicular to the main body, with the gable ends of the three pitched roofs above, as displayed over the front entrance elevation. This range appears in particularly poor condition, with windows boarded up and damage to masonry. There appears to be a small connecting section of the building between the main body and these pitched roof elements, indicated by a small flat-roofed section of building with prominent fascias.

The majority of the school has pitched roofs of Welsh slate, with some isolated areas of flat roofs in between. It would appear that none of the roofs have had later additions, and the building does not incorporate any chimneys. The drain downpipes serving the pitches and valleys of the roofs appear to be original cast iron, with a number of the rainwater hoppers decorated with the date of the school's opening (Plate 8).

A number of ancillary buildings are located within the school boundary to the rear of the school building (Plates 7 and 9). These have been added at a later date, and appear to have consisted of store rooms, canteen, toilets and extra classroom space. They are largely constructed of painted brick or concrete breeze block, with a mixture of flat and pitched roofs, and are in similarly poor condition to those buildings at the rear of the main body of the school. To the west of the Junior School complex is the later infant school building (later the school canteen), post Second World War, which is still extant (Plate 10), and again in poor condition with windows and doors boarded up. This building is flat roofed, and appears to be constructed of concrete, with similar pebble dash render to the Junior School.

The entrance to the main school is fronted by a stone wall which remains extant (Plate 11), topped with concrete coping stones a number of which are missing. The original gates and one of the gateposts have also been removed. To the north side of the school's principal elevation a set of modern metal gates marks the entrance to the school site from West Street at the time of the closure of the school. The school is bounded on the north side by a modern timber fence (possibly contemporary with the aforementioned gates), and on the south side by a modern metal mesh fence (at the eastern end of the boundary) and a tall stone wall (see Plate 12) in the same style as that at the front of the school (at the western end of the boundary). This stone wall includes an opening from the asphalt playground to the rear of the school buildings into the open space of the former playing field.

The original windows throughout the school have been replaced with uPVC window frames. A number of features have also been removed over time, including the bell-cote atop the central gable end of the entrance elevation, and the spiked finials along the roof ridges. Towards the rear of the building, it appears that some neo-classical detailing may possibly have been removed from around the windows (for example as visible in Plate 12). The exterior of the building has undergone a number of additions in places, in the form of brackets for hanging baskets, security lights and alarm boxes.

3.3. Internal

Though the interior has undergone a number of additions and alterations, some original features remain, while the original layout of classrooms appears to be largely retained. The arched windows from the central hall to classrooms on either side survive, as do some of the original doorframes (Plate 13). Within the hall itself, areas of glazed tiling has also been

retained (Plate 14). Some areas of the original parquet flooring appears to survive in situ (see Plates 13 and 14); this has been covered in carpet in places, and elsewhere removed or damaged by water ingress. The majority of the interior has seen the later installation of dropped ceilings; in the hall corbel features survive (Plate 15, also visible in Plate 13), the bases of the original roof frame structure which survives hidden above the later ceiling (Plate 16), while in the classrooms the later ceiling has truncated the upper parts of the windows (Plate 17). Gym equipment and frames (folding to the side of the room for storage) survive in the hall (visible in Plate 13), though later additions have been made, for example the addition of an access ramp to the front of the raised stage/dais area at the west end of the hall (Plate 18). A number of the classrooms feature original fitted timber panelled cupboards (Plate 19).

The interior is in a poor condition and is not weather tight, with pools of water present throughout the building during the site walkover when undertaken in October 2016.

4. Conclusion

The former Fishguard Junior School represents an example of a vernacular Edwardian school-building of the period with a surviving original school main entrance and some neo-classical detailing. Though the entrance façade is striking in its style and arrangement, the rest of the school is unremarkable architecturally. The school building has undergone a series of alterations and additions since its construction, with the rear of the school in particular having seen the addition of an extension and numerous ancillary buildings added in the immediate vicinity. The interior of the main building has also been altered, though there are some original elements which survive such as glazed tiling and internal doors and windows. Since the building became redundant, the condition of the fabric appears to have further deteriorated with both the interior and exterior in poor condition.

The building's north-east main elevation is a notable feature of views out of the Conservation Area from West Street. However, in its current derelict state, the school has a negative impact on the setting of the Conservation Area, as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Appendix A. Photographic Record



Plate 1. The former Fishguard Junior School, viewed from the north-east on West Street.



Plate 2. The former Fishguard Junior School, entrance (north-eastern) elevation



Plate 3. Entrance doorway(s) in front elevation, showing segregated entrances



Plate 4. Entrance elevation, detail of date plate on central gable end



Plate 5. The former Fishguard Junior School, southern elevation



Plate 6. The former Fishguard Junior School, northern elevation



Plate 7. The former Fishguard Junior School, rear of school from the west. Note the difference in the height of the later pitched roof extension.



Plate 8. Detail of downpipe rainwater hopper, showing decorative date imprint



Plate 9. Later ancillary buildings to the rear of the former Fishguard Junior School, viewed from the south.



Plate 10. Later infant school building, subsequently used as the school canteen, to the west of the Junior School buildings.



Plate 11. Stone wall on north-western boundary of the Junior School.



Plate 12. The former Fishguard Junior School from the south, showing southern boundary wall to playground and opening into former playing field. Note the apparent evidence of the removal of neo-classical features from around the south-facing window on the gable end.



Plate 13. Central hall, showing arched windows and original timber doorframes to classrooms. Note the survival in parts of the original parquet flooring.



Plate 14. Central hall, surviving original glazed tiling.



Plate 15. Central hall, surviving corbel beneath later inserted dropped ceiling.



Plate 16. Central hall, original roof structure visible above later inserted dropped ceiling.



Plate 17. Classroom, showing original window truncated by later inserted dropped ceiling.



Plate 18. Central hall, west end showing addition of stage/dais and access ramp.



Plate 19. Original fitted timber panel cupboard in a classroom.

Appendix B. Locations of Photographs

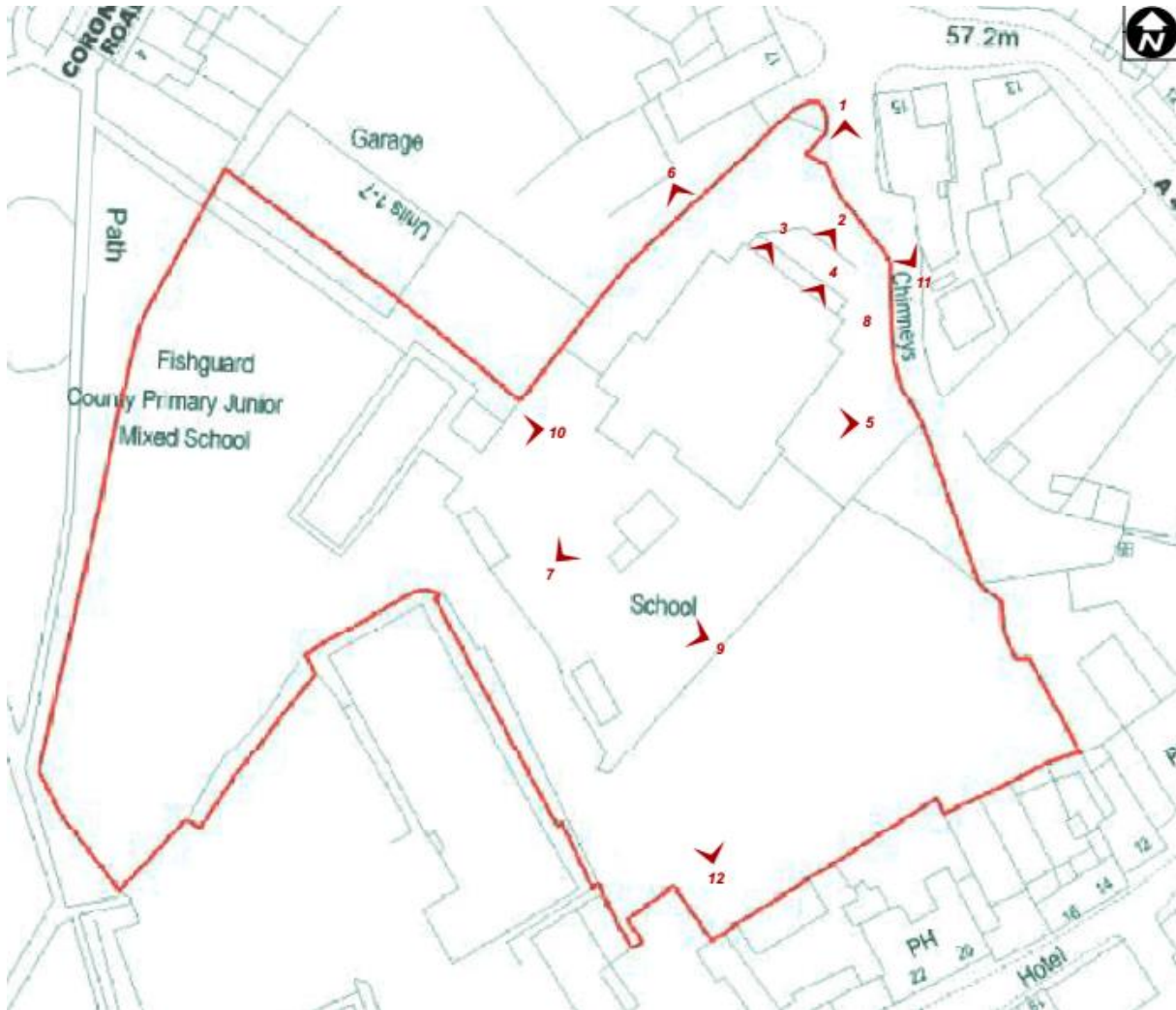


Figure B1. Location of exterior photographs

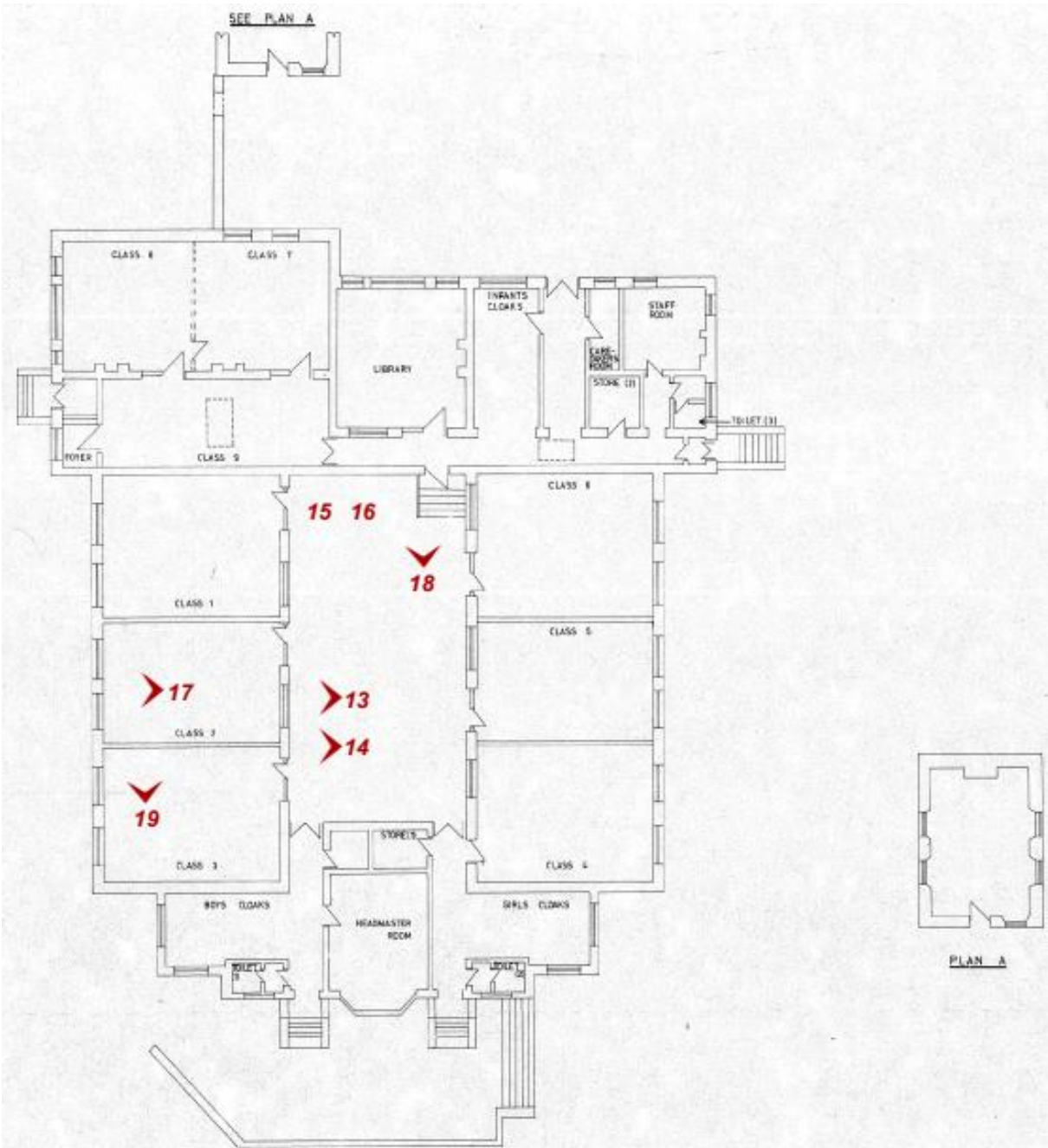


Figure B2. Location of interior photographs, shown on plan of school interior prior to rear (south-west) extension.

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