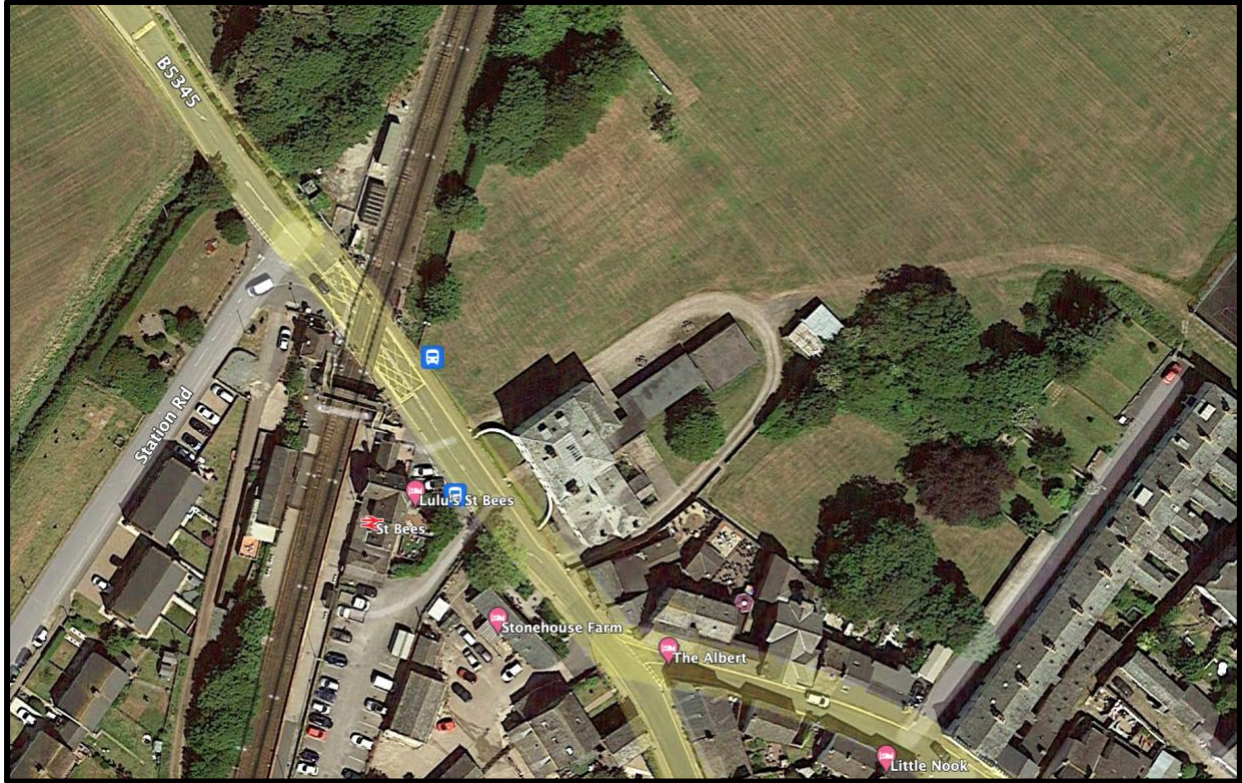


## **Flood Risk Assessment – Grindal House, Main Street, St Bees**

**Proposal:** Change of use to children's nursery



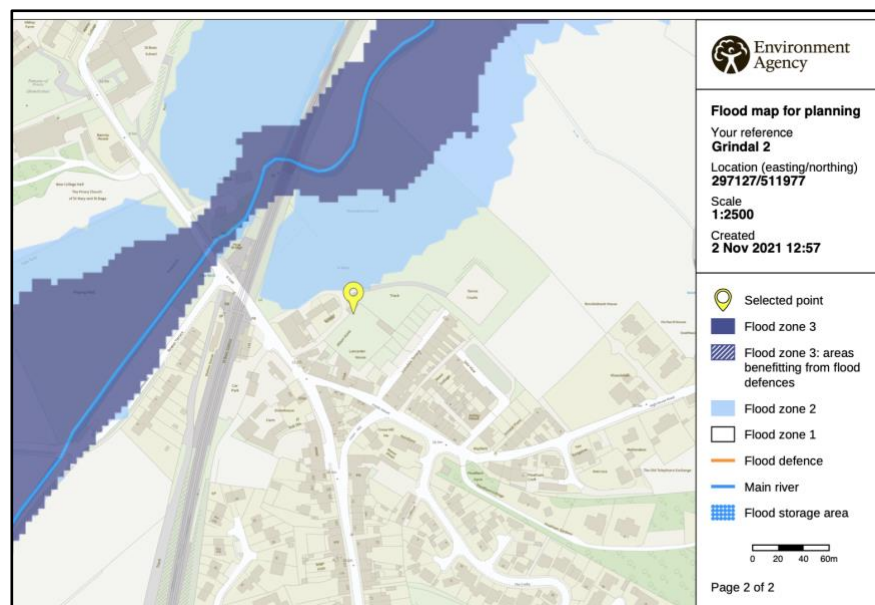
Ms K Robertson  
November 2021

SRE Associates - Planning and Development Consultancy



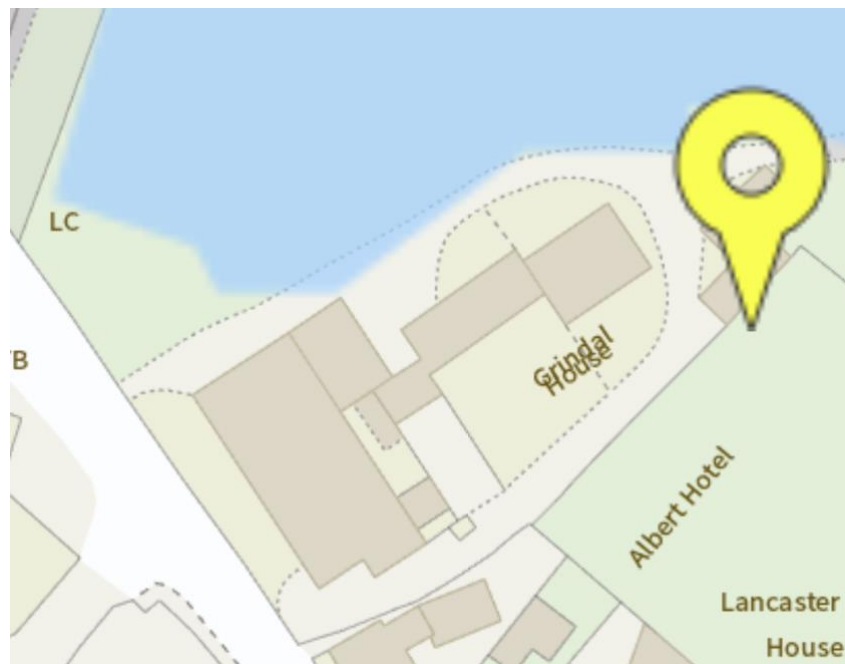
## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared on behalf of Ms Kayleigh Robertson in support of an application for a change of use planning permission for a children's nursery at Grindal House, Main Street, St Bees.
- 1.2 The FRA is required for the planning application as a portion of the site is located within the Environment Agency (EA) designated Flood Zone 2.
- 1.3 The EA guidance on FRA's states *a flood risk assessment should also be appropriate to the scale, nature and location of the development. For example, where the development is an extension to an existing house (for which planning permission is required) which would not significantly increase the number of people present in an area at risk of flooding, the local planning authority would generally need a less detailed assessment to be able to reach an informed decision on the planning application.*
- 1.4 The site is located near to Pow Beck, which is to the west and northwest of the application site.
- 1.5 A short section of the existing access around the property to the northwest, which will be utilised as the new vehicular access, is the only part of the site is within Flood Zone 2. No part of the site is within the Flood Zone 3 area. No part of the building is within Flood Zone 2.



Environment Agency Flood Zone Map – St Bees

- 1.6 The proposed use in the building is located on an area of the site that has not previously flooded at any stage and is not within the Flood Zones 2 & 3. The ground floor level is set at a higher ground level, so is not only outside of the higher category but also benefits from that. The building has been in the current ownership for over 70 years, and they have no experience of the building flooding.
- 1.7 The vehicular exit to the site, while, being designated as within a flood zone 2, has not flooded over or been in any way impassable in the existing owner's experience of owning the property Grindal House. Therefore, the proposed new use will not be in any way adversely by the nearby Flood Zone designations. This area of the site is specifically detailed on the map below:



- 1.8 The existing has pedestrian access points in areas outside of the Flood Zone 2 area, and therefore ensuring that people will be able to always leave the building safely, and therefore there is no danger from flooding associated with the proposed use.
- 1.9 The proposed use as a children's nursery, is very close in type of use as the existing, being a building associated with a secondary school, utilised for classrooms and boarding accommodation.
- 1.10 The site is also located in a 2 hectare area of grassed land, some of which forms part of the designated Flood Zone 2 and, further outside the site into Flood Zone 3. This will remain as existing with the proposed application.
- 1.11 To conclude, the Flood Zone designation does not negatively impact on the proposed change of use and the proposal will not impact on the surface water run off in the near vicinity.
- Simon Blacker MRTPI

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### **Sequential Test – Grindal House, Main Street, St Bees**

- 1.1 The use is specific to St Bees village given that is where the use is currently located.
- 1.2 The application property is the only commercial property currently for sale in the village of St Bees.
- 1.3 There are no other types of property suitable for the use for sale in the village.
- 1.4 There are no site allocations in the Local Plan appropriate to this use.
- 1.5 Therefore, it is concluded that as there are no alternative sites, nothing has been identified that has a lower risk of flooding than the proposed site.

## **Exceptions Test – Grindal House, Main Street, St Bees**

- 1.1 The Exception Test, as set out in Paragraph 160 of the National Planning Policy Framework is a method to demonstrate and help ensure that flood risk to people and property will be managed satisfactorily, while allowing necessary development to go ahead in situations where suitable sites at lower risk of flooding are not available.
- 1.2 Essentially, the 2 parts to the Test require proposed development to show that it will provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk, and that it will be safe for its lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible reduce flood risk overall.
- 1.3 The wider sustainability benefits are explained by the current use. The existing business has been successfully run in the village for several years but needs a permanent location due to the current location having a lease that end soon. The nursery has provided a valuable community service to people within the village, and enables families to have childcare within walking distance rather than having to make a car journey to Whitehaven or Egremont, where the nearest alternative nurseries are located. The size of St Bees as a village requires such a use due to the population numbers. This outweighs the very minimal flood risk to a small area of the vehicular access.
- 1.4 The actual use of the property will be safe for its lifetime, as the building is not located within the medium category, Flood Zone 2. The building has several pedestrian access points, that are all not located within a Flood Zone. The ground floor of the building is also set at a higher level than the surrounding land within Flood Zone 2, due to the site topography.
- 1.5 It will not increase flooding elsewhere as the building will not be extended and the large, grassed area in Flood Zone 2 will be retained.