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Tycoon hopes to buy and transform school into Muslim centre

A multi-millionaire property tycoon said he had made a bid to save his former school.

Yousuf Bhailok, who also owns a number of landmark buildings across the city, tabled a £900,000 offer for the former Park School on Moor Park, to turn it into a boys' school.

Site owner Preston College has

already accepted an offer from a rival bidder, with planning permission already secured to redevelop the site. But Mr Bhailok insisted his offer remained on the table, and said the building should remain a centre for education.

He said he was still open to talks with college officials to

discuss his plans to turn it into a Muslim school for boys.

Mr Bhailok, who studied at the school for three years until 1975, said: "Until a deal has been finalised, there is still an opportunity to change its mind.

"I realise the college has a duty to get maximum value for its assets, but it inherited the school from the city as a building for educational use, and I believe it has a duty to keep it this way. My own bid is above the college's own guide price, and I believe is a fair offer, and I want to provide a facility which is not in Preston.

"At the moment, a lot of the boys have to go to Bolton for their studies. This would provide a service which is not present."

A Preston College spokesman confirmed it had a bid "under offer" for the site and said that the successful bidder would decide what is built on the site.

In October, the college secured planning permission to demolish the Edwardian building and replace it with 30 three-storey homes.

Coun David Borrow, who represents the Moor Park ward on the council, said he had concerns about the impact a new school in the area would have on existing schools in the area.

He said: "What we risk doing is taking away hundreds of potential pupils from the schools in the area and damage the viability of them.

"It would be a shame to lose an attractive building but I would much rather that than it was left to sit empty."

He added during the consultation into the planning permission last year there were "very few objections" to plans to demolish it from people living on neighbouring St Thomas' Road.

Mr Bhailok already owns the former Harris orphanage on Garstang Road, Fulwood, the Harris Institute in Avenham and the former Sharoe Green hospital building on Watling Street Road in Fulwood.

UK licence lost by Press TV

Iranian news network Press TV had its licence revoked by the media regulator Ofcom and will no longer be allowed to broadcast in the country.

The state broadcaster's English language outlet had breached several broadcasting licence rules over editorial control of the channel, Ofcom said.

Press TV also failed to pay a £100,000 fine imposed last year.

The channel called the decision "a clear example of censorship". It will be removed from Sky on 20 January.

The £100,000 fine was imposed last year after the network broadcast an interview with imprisoned Newsweek and Channel 4 journalist Maziar Bahari, which the Ofcom said had been conducted under duress.

Ofcom said Press TV had "indicated it is unwilling and unable to pay".

It was during the investigation into the Bahari interview that the media regulator formed the impression that editorial decisions on the channel were being controlled by the offices in Tehran, instead of the UK.

Press TV was given the opportunity to respond and make the relevant amendments needed to comply with the broadcasting code, but "failed to make the necessary application", Ofcom said.

In a statement issued to the BBC, Press TV's newsroom director Mr Hamid Emadi said: "We asked Ofcom if Press TV Limited did not have control over the broadcast, why was it getting fined, if it did have control, why would the licence be revoked?"

"Ofcom contradictions are nothing new for Press TV. The British government's tool to control the media has, on several occasions, changed its decisions regarding Press TV in its two-year campaign against the alternative news channel."

The statement also claimed that Ofcom, which it called "the media arm of the Royal family", had failed to respond to a letter sent by its Chief Executive earlier this month.

Press TV channel launched in 2007 to break what Iran's state broadcaster called a Western "stranglehold" over the world's media.



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The Muslim Weekly Prayer Timetable

Jan/Feb'12	Fajr Begins	Sunrise	Dhuhr	'Asr 1st Mithl	'Asr 2nd Mithl	Maghrib	'Isha
27	6:08	7:46	12:18	2:18	2:53	4:44	6:16
28	6:07	7:45	12:19	2:20	2:55	4:46	6:18
29	6:05	7:44	12:19	2:21	2:56	4:48	6:19
30	6:04	7:42	12:19	2:23	2:58	4:49	6:21
31	6:03	7:41	12:19	2:24	3:00	4:51	6:22
01	6:01	7:39	12:19	2:25	3:02	4:53	6:24
02	6:00	7:38	12:19	2:27	3:03	4:55	6:26

'Asr: 2 Mithl - time according to Hanafi opinion; 1 Mithl - time according to other scholars' opinions

Supplied by the East London Mosque