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Planning Statement

Holme Grange School, Heathlands Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 3AL

Background to Proposed Scheme

The school was founded in 1945 in the beautiful setting of a Grade II Listed building built by Norman Shaw in 1883. Since then the school has thrived and grown from a Boys school of 40 pupils to a mixed independent education facility, with over 600 students. Additional facilities including Nursery, Library, Design and Technology, Sports Hall, Forest school, Music, Arts and design centre have been built with remodelling on the site to provide a dynamic and stimulating educational environment.

The School required additional staff space and, therefore, works were undertaken to Lawnside House to accommodate facilities for meeting rooms, reception area, print room etc. with the upper floors accessible by the internal staircase and a new external fire escape staircase. This area to remain as a sleeping accommodation with kitchen, bathroom, lounge etc. The works were undertaken in 2024 and, so this application seeks to regularise the current use of the building from ancillary residential to staff accommodation and residential on the upper floor.

Planning Justification

Having reviewed the Local Plan policies, it our opinion that this proposal will have no material impact on the character of the School or surrounding area given that the building is within the centre of the wider site and will still function as a valuable resource for the School. In addition, the location of the building and its new use will not impact upon the amenity of surrounding residents as they are some distance away from the building. The proposed external changes are considered minor with the addition of a spiral staircase, new windows and doors as detailed on the plans. These are considered to have no impact upon the setting of the main Listed School building which will remain the dominant building on site.

We confirm that the works undertaken have had no impact upon any ecological features including trees and shrubs in the area.

We look forward to discussing the proposal with officers and believe that the proposal complies with all relevant Local Plan policies and should be granted planning permission.