

Heritage Statement

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective application submitted for the: *'Full application for the change of use of the building to a mixed use of residential (first floor) and facilities for educational staff, including conversion of the garage, changes to fenestration and installation of a fire escape staircase. (Retrospective)'*

1) SITE DEVELOPMENT CHRONOLOGY

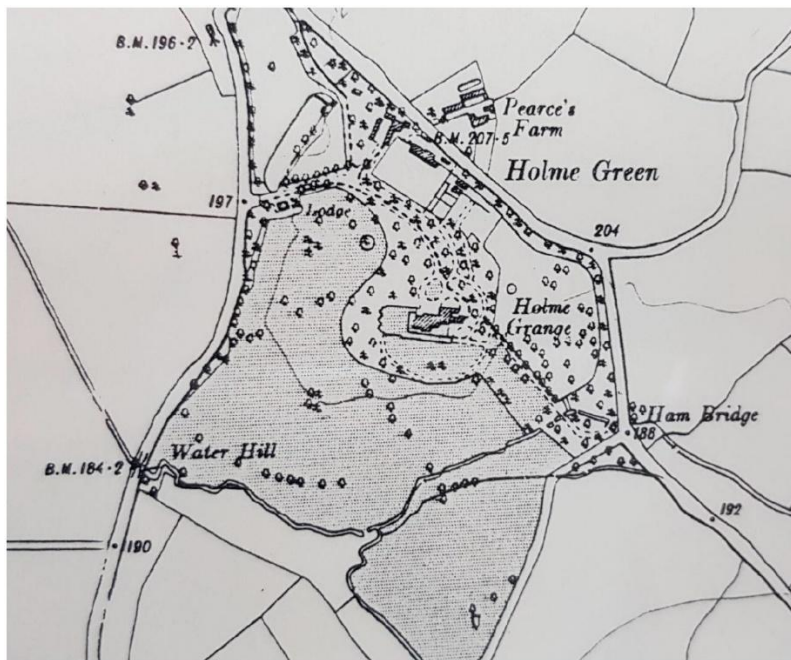
- 1.2 Holme Grange School is an independent school near Wokingham for girls and boys aged 3-16 years. The school is situated in a rural setting to the south of Wokingham town and the main entrance is from Heathlands Road on the west side of the site. The eastern boundary edge is parallel to Easthampstead Road and there is a secondary entrance (former stable entrance) to the south, leading off Redlake Lane.
- 1.3 The centre-piece of the building group is the large country house known as Holme Grange which was built in 1882-3 and became a school in 1945. The stable buildings (1881) within its site at the north end is now in separate ownership. The main house, which is now the core building of the school, was designed by Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912) for his client Bartle Goldsmid (1849-1938) and is listed Grade II.
- 1.4 The site is not within a Conservation Area. The nearest adjacent built area to the south is Holme Green, which consists of a small number of separate dwellings and a farmhouse and the immediate surrounding area outside the site boundary is open farmland. The boundary to East Hampstead Road consists of high natural screening vegetation, mature trees and high hedging. The school was founded by J. Gordon-Walker in 1945. The listed main house has retained most of the original features and internal spatial changes have been fairly limited. The original plan form has been largely maintained, and many original internal features remain. The Dining Room and Billiards room have been extended. A number of building developments have taken place incrementally within the overall site, particularly during the last 40 years, as summarised here :
- 1985 Sports Hall
 - 1998 John Graves Wing
 - 2001 John Graves Wing extension
 - 2009 Reception classroom
 - 2015 Scott Wing extension
 - 2016 Eaton Grange and new Theatre building
 - 2019 New classroom building
- 1.5 The expansion of the school facilities has been planned incrementally following the growing popularity of the school within the local community, increased pupil and staff numbers and the continuing success rates achieved by the school.

2) LOCATION & SETTING -HISTORIC AND CURRENT OS MAPS

- 2.1 The following pages contain extracts from historic local OS survey maps. They reflect the development and changes to this site starting from a map dated 1871, indicating open fields within an 'estate' prior to the construction of Holme Grange, up to the mid-20th century. The topography of the 22 acre open site rises from west to east.



1871 Ordnance Survey map. This shows the site just before Holme Grange was built.



1900 Ordnance survey (second edition.) This clearly shows the new house and the stable buildings to the North.



1912 Ordnance Survey. The woodland to the North-East and South-East of the house is larger.



1932 Revised Ordnance Survey. Some additional woodland to the East of the house.



1960 Ordnance Survey, with a few small ancillary school buildings to the North of the house.

3) HOLME GRANGE- THE LISTED BUILDING AND ITS SETTING

- 3.1 The brief Listing citation is dated January 1986 and the text (see below) refers to the location as Wokingham Without Holme Green (OS SU86NW). The grade II listing is applicable to the main house only, and also includes the gravel path and retaining wall and brick steps. The curtilage buildings have been added since the house became part of the school after 1945.

LISTING CITATION

WOKINGHAM WITHOUT HOLME GREEN

SU 86 NW 10/10 Holme Grange School II

'Large house, now a private school. 1883 by R. Norman Shaw in the Tudor vernacular style. Brick, upper floor tile hung, tiled roof with several gables and moulded bargeboards. Irregular plan. 2 storeys, several large brick chimneys and mullion and transom windows with leaded lights. Entrance front – central porch with 4-centre gothic arch, a large mullion and transom window above. To the right are two oversailing gables. On the left of the porch are two, 4-light windows breaking eaves with small hipped roofs, and to the left an at right angles to these are 2 gables of unequal pitch. Garden front – irregular: the main feature is a large projecting chimney stack with ribs and crow stepped, coped sides above eaves level. To the left of it is a two storey canted bay window with hipped roof. To the right of the chimney, at right angles is a large mullion and transom window, and gables recessed to the right of this. There is a gravelled terrace adjoining this front with a brick retaining wall, a centre flight of 6 brick steps and small piers leading down to wide lawns. '

Listing NGR:SU8274067200 Listing date 17 January 1986 Grade: II

BUILDING EXTERIOR

- 3.2 The main frontage of the house faces north and is reached by a tree-line curved avenue from Heathlands Road and terminates as a (former) oval carriage forecourt. The off-centre modest entrance is hooded by a timber canopy. While the front façade is a mixture of tile-clad and brick of gables, described by Niklaus Pevsner as 'a chaotic assembly of gables, chimneys and mullioned windows (which) must be seen to be believed'. The lower service wing on the left side projects forward, adding an informal asymmetrical composition.
- 3.3 The garden frontage to the rear is dominated by a large stepped gable which incorporated a high ribbed brick chimney. Five other lesser brick chimneys adorn the clay-tiled pitched roof. Walls are clad in brick and ornamental fish-scale hung terracotta tiles. Since the building came into school use, the former billiard Room and the Dining Room have been extended with poorly designed single-storey brick additions. The original staff quarters and service yard were placed discreetly on the North-East side of the house.
- 3.4 Windows are timber and metal with mullioned and transom frames with leaded lights and the garden façade incorporates a handsome two storey geometric bay window with external tile hanging and a faceted tiled roof. Compared to other houses by the Norman Shaw, the form and detailing is similar to other houses of his design, but the overall effect is of a modern house with fewer historic design 'references' than some of his earlier work.
- 3.5 Apart from the extensions mentioned above, the exterior of the house appears to be generally unchanged from the original construction and appears to be well maintained.

BUILDING INTERIOR

- 3.6 The main entrance and vestibule faces a large forecourt to North. The front door leads into a relatively small rectangular Vestibule. This leads the visitor into a grand timber-panelled Hall, which has a large ornamental inglenook fireplace and a grand mullion and transom bay window which extends to the roof as a gabled brick bay. From a survey plan dated 1951, it can be seen that the ground floor also included a Drawing Room, Billiard Room and Smoking Room. On the west side there was the main kitchen and ancillary service rooms in a wing which led out to a small enclosed service yard.
- 3.7 A wide and straight staircase leads from the panelled Hall to the first floor landing and on to the original generous Master suite and five former principal bedrooms. The first floor of the service wing to the East contained 5 or 6 staff bedrooms and a back staircase.
- 3.8 Survey plans dated 1951 indicate the internal layout of the house, in school use, which seemed to remain largely unchanged, except for the subdivision of some principal

rooms. The current use as a school has not led to any significant structural or spatial changes and the room layout remains generally as originally built.

- 3.9 Original bathroom and kitchen fittings and most light fittings have long since been removed or replaced, and a few rooms have been subdivided by lightweight partitions, serving as school offices. It is to the credit of the school that even before the building was protected by listing in 1986, no serious alterations had taken place to the fabric of the house and the original building remains well preserved.
- 3.10 The significance of the heritage asset derives not only from its design but also from its original setting. The estate of Holme Grange was and remains extensive. Although the transformation of Holme Grange from a private house into a large day school has not resulted in many significant physical changes to the main house, the listed building is now partially surrounded by later ancillary school buildings to the north and east, built mainly during the last 50 years. The ancillary buildings have been built largely as a compact group which preserves the original South Lawn and Back Field as open spaces. However some damage to the building's setting has already taken place by the construction of the large Sports Hall and Caudwell Hall to the north of the listed building.



The main entrance front on the North side of Holme Grange.



The garden front, to the South.

4) THE WORKS UNDERTAKEN

- 4.1 As set out above, the application seeks retrospective planning permission for works undertaken to Lawnside House in 2024, which is a 1960s built residential dwelling used upon recently by the Headmaster of the School. The building is located in the South east corner when viewed from the Lawn area of the main building.
- 4.2 The key elements of the Proposal are set out in the DAS and accompanying plans but in brief include the change of use of the building to a mixed use of residential (first floor) and on the ground floor facilities for educational staff, including conversion of the garage with some limited changes to the fenestration of the building and the installation of a fire escape staircase.

5) IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL ON THE HERITAGE ASSET

- 5.1 In considering the impact of the proposed building upon the Grade II Listed building, it is necessary to establish if or where the new development will be visible within the key views to and from the Listed building which might be harmful to the Listed building and its setting. The observations below are made in reference to the plans submitted with this application and are not replicated in this assessment.
- 5.2 The site of the Headmasters residence is approximately 10m metres from the southern elevation of the main listed building and adjacent to its garden set against the backdrop of the new canteen building which dominates this area.
- 5.3 The scale, height and mass of the residence is that of a domestic appearance being only two storey in height and very much subservient to the Listed House and other more modern buildings built nearby namely the canteen building.
- 5.4 The works undertaken internally and use of the building has no impact upon the setting of the Listed building. Externally the works undertaken to install some new windows and doors and the removal of a chimney breast are to the rear of the building away

from the main house and again are considered minor works that do not impact negatively upon the listed building or its setting.

- 5.5 The addition of an external spiral staircase to the rear of the building is well hidden from views from the Listed building and its grounds and, therefore, it is considered this aspect of the proposal has no negative impact.
- 5.6 The only change to the front of the residence is the change made that replaced the old garage door with new glazed door and side lights.

6) CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Given the context of the existing setting and school buildings, the setting of the Listed Norman Shaw house is not damaged by the works undertaken to Lawnside House. The setting of the Grade II listed building, has incremental additions of the other later buildings on the site. Some of these ancillary buildings have caused some impact upon the setting of Holme Grange by crowding the former open spaces to the north and east of the listed Grade II house. However in the context of the existing setting, the Listed Norman Shaw house will not be further affected negatively by the works already undertaken and as set out in this retrospective application.
- 6.2 It is considered that the works undertaken in this application is acceptable when considered against both National and Local planning Policies.