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## HERITAGE STATEMENT

Conversion of existing office building to five residential apartments with roof and dormer extensions.



**Evolution House**

**53-59 Peach Street**

**Wokingham**

**RG40 1XP**

September 2026

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## 1. Introduction

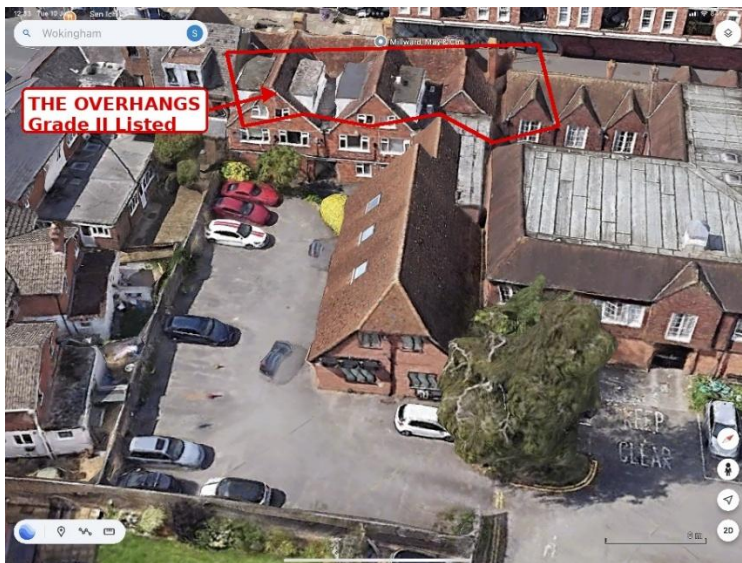
This Heritage Statement accompanies the full planning application for the conversion of Evolution House from office use to five residential apartments, together with alterations to the roof and the formation of flat-roof dormer extensions.

The statement has been prepared in response to Wokingham Borough Council's pre-application advice (reference 252283), which identifies the site as lying within Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area and in close association with the Grade II listed building known as The Overhangs at 53, 55, 55A, 57 and 59 Peach Street.

The purpose of this statement is to identify the significance of the relevant heritage assets, describe the relationship of Evolution House to those assets, and assess the effect of the proposed works on their significance and setting.

## 2. Heritage Assets and Significance

### 2.1 The Overhangs – Grade II listed building



The Overhangs is included on the National Heritage List for England at Grade II under List Entry No. 1303438. Historic England records the building as a row of cottages, now offices, dating from the early sixteenth century and altered and extended in the mid-twentieth century.

Its principal significance derives from the surviving early timber-framed fabric, jettied Peach Street frontage, historic roof form, surviving structural framing and its contribution to the historic character of Peach Street. Historic England's list description also expressly records twentieth-century extensions to the rear.



The historic Peach Street frontage is therefore of high architectural and historic interest. The rear parts of the site have a more altered character and make a lesser contribution to the significance of the listed building than the historic Peach Street frontage.

## 2.2 Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area

The site lies within Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area. Peach Street forms part of the historic town structure and retains a mixed architectural character, including early timber-framed buildings, nineteenth-century development and later twentieth-century additions.

## 3. Site Location and Proposed Development

3.1 Evolution House is positioned behind the Peach Street frontage and is primarily viewed from the EastHampstead Road car park rather than from Peach Street itself. It is a later office building of red brick construction with a tiled half-hipped roof.

The Council's pre-application response records a long history of alteration and office development at the site, including listed building and planning permissions granted in 1982 for office development and car parking, a 1987 approval involving retention of a façade and construction of a two-storey office building, and later refurbishment permissions. This history demonstrates the extent of twentieth-century alteration and development to the rear of the listed frontage.

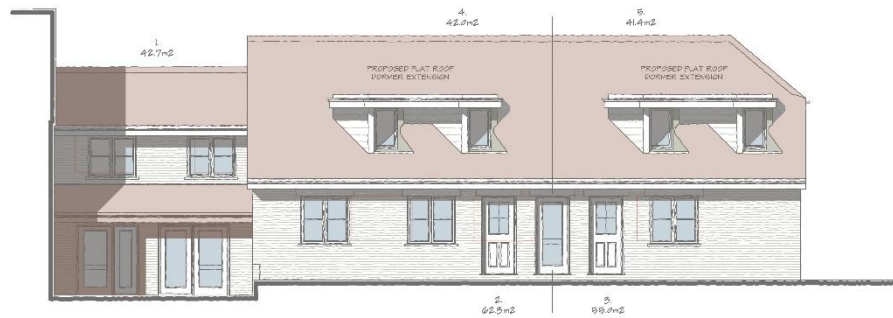
3.2 The Proposed Development: The proposal converts the existing office building to five one-bedroom apartments and alters the roof to provide usable residential accommodation. Flat-roof dormer extensions are introduced within the roof slopes, together with revised fenestration.

The proposal does not materially enlarge the building footprint towards the listed Peach Street frontage. The works are concentrated on the later building to the rear and are principally visible from the car park and adjoining rear areas.

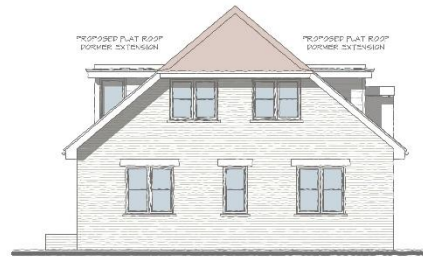
The architectural approach retains a simple roof form and uses materials intended to relate to the existing building and surrounding townscape.



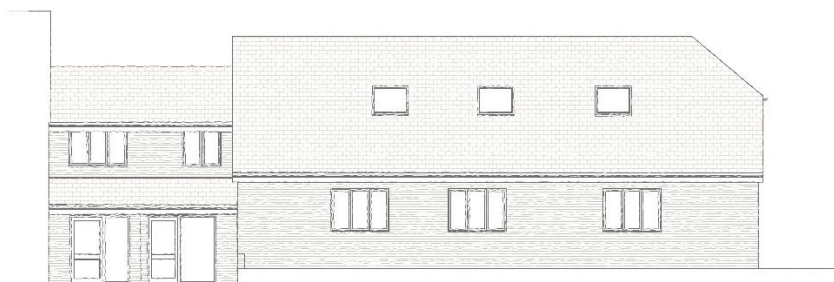
## Proposed and Existing Elevations



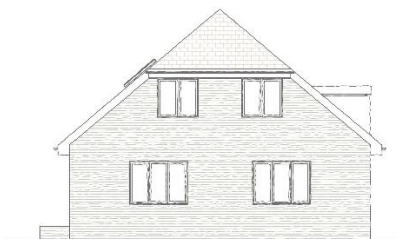
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION - (FRONT)



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION - (SIDE)



SOUTH WEST ELEVATION - (FRONT)



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION - (SIDE)



## 4. Assessment of Heritage Impact

### 4.1 Effect on the listed building

The principal significance of The Overhangs is concentrated in its early fabric and historic Peach Street frontage. Evolution House is located to the rear of that frontage and is associated with the later phases of development which have already altered the historic rear setting.

The proposed works do not remove or alter the historic timber-framed frontage, its jettied form, or other identified significant fabric of The Overhangs. The development is confined to the later building behind the listed frontage.

Views from Peach Street towards Evolution House are very limited because the listed frontage and intervening built form screen the application building. The proposal therefore does not compete visually with the principal elevation of The Overhangs or materially alter the way in which the listed building is appreciated from Peach Street.

The roof alterations will be visible from the rear car park and some adjoining properties, but this part of the setting is already characterised by later additions, service areas, parking and twentieth-century development. In that context, the proposed roof changes are considered to result in no material harm to the architectural or historic significance of the listed building.

### 4.2 Effect on the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area contains a varied townscape in which historic buildings coexist with later commercial and residential development. The application building is not a prominent element of the Peach Street scene and has a limited role in defining the special character of the Conservation Area.

The proposal retains and reuses the existing building rather than introducing a substantially larger freestanding building. The scale of the dormers and roof alterations is proportionate to the existing building and reflects the established variety of roof forms found within the surrounding town centre.

The proposed residential use is also consistent with the mixed-use character of the area and with the established pattern of residential accommodation in and around Peach Street. On this basis, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area.

## 5. Conclusion

The Overhangs is a heritage asset of clear significance, principally for its early timber-framed fabric, jettied Peach Street frontage and contribution to the historic townscape. Evolution House occupies a secondary, rear position within a part of the site already substantially altered by twentieth-century development.



The proposed works are confined to Evolution House and do not alter the significant historic fabric of The Overhangs. The proposal remains largely screened from Peach Street, does not materially change the appreciation of the listed frontage and is compatible with the mixed architectural character of the Conservation Area.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to preserve the significance and setting of the Grade II listed building and to preserve the character and appearance of Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area. No unacceptable heritage harm is identified.