



Planning Statement In Support of Listed Building Consent Application

Application Site: Hurstpierpoint College, College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex BN6 9JS

Local Planning Authority: Mid Sussex District Council

Application Type: Listed Building Consent

Applicant: Hurstpierpoint College Limited

Date: 28/03/2025

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a Listed Building Consent application for minor internal and external works to the vestibule area of a Grade II listed building at Hurstpierpoint College. The works aim to improve accessibility and provide level access between key circulation routes—specifically the vestibule, cloisters, inner and outer quadrangles, and the chapel—while preserving the building’s architectural and historic significance.

This statement should be read alongside the submitted Design and Access Statement, drawings AL100–AL304, and supporting heritage documentation.

2. Site and Heritage Context

Hurstpierpoint College is a historic independent, co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged 4–18. Founded in 1849, the College moved to its present site in 1853. It is located approximately 1.8km north of Hurstpierpoint village and 4.7km south-west of Burgess Hill, in a largely rural setting with views towards the South Downs to the south.

The College buildings are arranged around two quadrangles and include a chapel, boarding houses, and academic blocks. The main structures were designed by R.C. Carpenter in the Gothic Revival style and completed by William Slater and R.H. Carpenter. The architecture is characterised by knapped flint walls with limestone dressings, clay tiled roofs, trefoil-headed windows, and prominent buttressing.

The campus was designed to emulate the collegiate models of Oxford and Cambridge, with cloistered walkways and formal axial connections between buildings. The chapel and hall sit at the northern side of the inner quadrangle, forming a significant visual and ceremonial axis.

The vestibule at the centre of this application is a key internal route linking the outer quadrangle and car park to the inner cloisters and chapel. Its lower internal floor level currently interrupts inclusive movement between these areas.

The buildings were listed Grade II on 26 June 1980 due to their architectural merit, historical significance in the Woodard school movement, and their positive contribution to the rural landscape of the parish. The College remains a valued local institution and major local employer, with over 1,100 pupils and approximately 400 staff, many of whom reside on site. Hurstpierpoint College is a historic independent school founded in 1849 and located on its present site since 1853. Designed by R.C. Carpenter and later completed by William Slater and R.H. Carpenter, the school was laid out in the Gothic Revival style to emulate the collegiate structures of Oxford and Cambridge. The buildings feature knapped flint with limestone dressings, clay tiled roofs, and are arranged around inner and outer quadrangles.

The vestibule, which forms part of the primary route between the outer quadrangle and the chapel via the cloisters, is integral to the internal circulation of the school. Currently, the floor level within the vestibule sits approximately 125mm below that of the cloisters, creating a step and impeding inclusive access.

The building was listed as Grade II on 26 June 1980, and remains in use for its original educational purpose.

3. Proposed Development

The proposal includes the following conservation-led interventions:

- Carefully removing and salvaging original red quarry tiles for reuse.
- Forming a new internal slope (max 1:20 gradient) within the vestibule to align floor levels.
- Constructing a platform to match the cloister level.
- Adjusting the northern doorway threshold: raising the external stone threshold by 60mm and reducing the internal timber threshold to suit.
- Regrading external macadam and adjusting the drainage channels to match new levels.

All tile reinstatement will follow traditional methods, using lime mortar beds and narrow joints pointed with lime putty or sand-cement mix. Where tiles or stone thresholds are beyond repair, they will be replaced like for like.

4. Planning Policy Context

The proposed works comply with the following policy framework:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023)

- **Paragraphs 199–202:** Emphasise the importance of conserving designated heritage assets.
- **Paragraph 130(f):** Supports developments that are inclusive and accessible.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031

- **DP26 – Character and Design:** Respects the character and setting of the local area.
 - **DP35 – Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets:** Supports sensitive alteration and reuse of heritage buildings.
 - **DP41 – Accessibility and Infrastructure:** Encourages accessible and inclusive development.
-

5. Heritage Impact and Justification

The vestibule and connecting thresholds are key circulation areas and part of the formal approach between the quadrangles.

Symbolic & Cultural Role

In the context of historic educational values, the use of honest, robust materials like quarry tile supported the ethos of order, discipline, and permanence. In Gothic Revival schools, quarry tiles were selected to match the robust and honest materials palette. Their use symbolised permanence, moral integrity, and good order — key values in historic educational architecture.

The proposed alterations are modest, reversible, and compatible with the historic building fabric. Original materials will be preserved and reused where possible. The proposed interventions are necessary to meet modern standards of accessibility and provide level access between key public and ceremonial spaces.

6. Conclusion

The proposal represents a thoughtful and conservation-led intervention to improve accessibility within a Grade II listed school building. The works respond to a clear functional need while preserving the special interest of the building.

The applicant respectfully seeks Listed Building Consent from Mid Sussex District Council to carry out the proposed improvements.

Prepared by:

Daniel Barker BS (Hons), MCIAT, MCIQB, C.Build E MCABE
Building Solutions Consultants Limited