



Heritage 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 Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a Listed Building Consent application for proposed alterations to a Grade II listed building at Hurstpierpoint College. The works involve minor internal and external interventions to improve accessibility and floor level alignment between the vestibule and adjacent quadrangles. The proposals have been designed sensitively to preserve and enhance the significance of the listed fabric.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted application drawings:

- **AL100** – Site and Block Plans
 - **AL200** – Existing Plan
 - **AL201 to AL204** – Existing Room Elevations
 - **AL300** – Proposed Plan
 - **AL301 to AL304** – Proposed Room Elevations
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2. Site Context and Historical Significance

Hurstpierpoint College is an independent, co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged 13–18. It was founded in 1849 by Canon Nathaniel Woodard and forms part of the Woodard Corporation. The present site was occupied from 1853, with buildings designed originally by R.C. Carpenter and completed by William Slater and R.H. Carpenter. The College was designed in the Gothic Revival style with a layout inspired by the Oxford and Cambridge collegiate model, comprising inner and outer quadrangles.

The original buildings are constructed in knapped flint with limestone dressings, pointed arched windows, and steeply pitched clay tile roofs. The chapel and dining hall define the northern side of the inner quadrangle. The architecture and spatial arrangement reflect the 19th-century ethos of education, religious life, and architectural integrity.

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 original quarry tile flooring and dressed stone thresholds are integral to the historic character and material palette. Quarry tiles within the vestibule and cloisters vary slightly in size and finish, with those in the vestibule typically measuring 6"×6" (152×152mm), and those in the cloisters slightly larger at 9"×9" (229×229mm). The tiles are hard-fired, unglazed ceramic made from natural clay, with a deep red colour derived from iron-rich clay. They have a matte finish with a natural, slightly gritty, slip-resistant texture, suited to robust school use.

The tiles will be carefully lifted, with sound tiles retained for reuse. Where replacements are necessary, they will be matched like for like in size, colour, material and finish. Re-laid quarry tiles will be set on a traditional lime mortar bed with narrow joints. These joints will be filled using lime putty or a sand-cement mix, as historically appropriate. In areas near thresholds, tiles were often laid to subtle gradients to assist drainage and these will be replicated where relevant.

3. Summary of Proposed Works

Rationale for Entrance Level Alterations

Currently, level access is provided from the main car park into the vestibule via the outer quadrangle. However, the vestibule floor sits approximately 125mm lower than the finished floor level of the adjoining cloisters, which serve as the primary circulation route to the inner quadrangle and chapel. This level change creates a barrier to inclusive access, particularly for wheelchair users or those with limited mobility.

To address this, the proposal includes a relatively minor internal alteration to form a gently sloped floor within the vestibule, rising to match the cloister level. The new floor will incorporate a 1:20 gradient (in accordance with Part M and DDA guidance),

beginning 1.3 metres back from the main entrance doors. This ensures that the operation and swing of the inward-opening doors remains unaffected.

The floor will then rise evenly to meet the dominant cloister level, thereby eliminating the step and providing a seamless transition. At the northern door into the inner quadrangle, the existing door threshold will be reduced by approximately 60mm, while the stone threshold will be raised to suit the adjusted levels. Minor associated works will be undertaken to the macadam surface and drainage within the outer quadrangle, including raising levels and regrading the adjacent drainage channel to fall no steeper than 1:20. A new secondary channel will be added to ensure proper surface water management.

The proposed alterations will enable fully level access throughout the ground floor of the main College building and the chapel, significantly improving inclusivity and accessibility across the campus, in line with current accessibility standards.

The application proposes careful repair, reinstatement, and level adjustments to improve internal circulation and accessibility while retaining original materials where possible. Refer to the detailed Schedule of Works (W01–W08).

W01 – Removal and Salvage of Quarry Tiles (Areas A & B)

Careful lifting of existing quarry tiles for reuse. Damaged tiles to be replaced like for like.

W02 – Formation of New Slope in Area A

Introduce a new internal slope (max gradient 1:20) to align floor level with external threshold.

W03 – Formation of New Platform in Area B

Construct a new internal platform to match the finished tile level of the cloister.

W04 – Adjustment or Renewal of Stone Threshold

Raise existing stone threshold by approximately 60mm. Replace like for like if required.

W05 – Door Threshold Reduction

Reduce the height of the existing door threshold between vestibule and quadrangle by approx. 60mm.

W06 – Macadam Surface and Drainage Adjustments

Cut back and raise existing macadam surface. Re-grade to a maximum fall of 1:20 and install a new drainage channel discharging to soakaway.

W07 – Re-laying of Quarry Tiles

Re-lay tiles on lime mortar bed with narrow joints. Point with lime putty or sand-cement mix.

W08 – Skirting and Edge Details

Reinstate or repair skirting and threshold detailing using matching materials.

4. Impact on Heritage Significance

The proposals are minimal, reversible, and based on traditional materials and methods. Original quarry tiles will be retained and reused where possible. New tiles and stone elements will be matched precisely. The intervention ensures better accessibility and continuity between internal and external areas without compromising the historical integrity of the listed building.

Where replacement is unavoidable (e.g. damaged tiles or thresholds), like-for-like materials will be sourced to ensure consistency in appearance and performance. The works will have no adverse impact on the special architectural or historic interest of the building.

5. Conclusion

The proposed works demonstrate a careful and considered approach to enhancing access and circulation in a way that respects the listed building's heritage significance. The interventions are low-impact, sympathetic in design, and use traditional materials and methods throughout.

Listed Building Consent is therefore respectfully sought for these essential and conservation-led improvements.

Prepared by:

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