



Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement In Support of Listed Building Consent Application

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the installation of a pedestrian path located to the southern boundary of the existing car park at Hurstpierpoint College, between the car park and the adjacent hockey sports pitch commonly referred to as the South Astro.

The purpose of this statement is to set out the planning merits of the proposal, demonstrate its compliance with national and local planning policy, and outline the key considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

2. Site Context

Hurstpierpoint College is an independent co-educational day and boarding school located in a countryside setting approximately 1.8km north of Hurstpierpoint village and 4.7km southwest of Burgess Hill. The site is situated at College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex BN6 9JS.

The main academic buildings at the College are Grade II listed and were originally constructed in 1853 in Gothic style using knapped flint and limestone, with clay tiled roofs. These buildings are arranged around inner and outer quadrangles.

The application site lies at the southern boundary of the campus, specifically to the south of the existing car park and immediately north of the southern astro turf pitch (South Astro). The site terrain includes a steep grass bank of approximately 2.3 metres in height between the car park and the astro pitch. The wider campus includes a mix of educational and boarding buildings, surrounded by playing fields and mature tree boundaries.

To the south of the site lies agricultural land, while to the east and west are additional school facilities and boarding houses. The astro pitch sits approximately 2.3 metres below the level of the main listed building and approximately 16m from the most southern gables of the outer southern quadrangle, with a steep embankment in between.

3. The Proposed Development

The application seeks full planning permission for the installation of a new 1.5m wide, 50m long pedestrian pathway constructed from permeable macadam, finished in red to denote a safe pedestrian route in line with campus standards. The path is located along the southern boundary of the existing car park, at the top of a steep grass embankment, providing safer access from the southernmost parking spaces towards designated pedestrian crossings and onward to school facilities.

Key features of the proposal include:

- A 1.5m wide, 50m long permeable macadam pedestrian path
- A hardstanding to facilitate level viewing for hockey games
- A simple metal safety railing (1.1m high) with a handrail and mid-rail, finished in black, acting as a fall barrier along the top of the grass bank
- Concrete edging and a grass-hunched transition along the south edge of the path to integrate with existing landscaping
- The path will align with the top of the existing kerb of the southern car park, offering level and safe access

The proposed platform sits slightly above the existing ground, factoring in the level taken from the top of the existing kerb and the steep gradient of the sloping bank. Excavated material from the construction will be reused on site to gently regrade the adjacent land, helping to reduce the visual impact when viewed from the pitch level below.

The proposed railings are designed to be functional and sympathetic to their historic setting. They consist of a black metal handrail with a mid-rail, finished in a simple, visually light style that reflects the Gothic Revival character of the nearby listed school buildings.

This improvement supports the school's commitment to enhanced accessibility, pedestrian safety, and safe spectator facilities for the sports pitch.

4. Planning Policy Context

The proposed development has been prepared in accordance with the following planning policy documents:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – The proposal accords with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, supporting growth and efficient use of land, while respecting the local character and context.
- **Mid Sussex District Plan** – The proposal complies with relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan, including:
 - **DP21: Transport** – Promotes sustainable access and highway safety.

- **DP26: Character and Design** – Ensures high-quality and contextually appropriate development.
- **DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets** – Protects the setting of designated heritage assets.
- **Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (HSCNP)** – Relevant policies include:
 - **HurstC1: Countryside Character** – Seeks to protect and enhance the rural landscape.
 - **HurstC5: Hurstpierpoint College** – Supports appropriate development that enhances the educational use of the site while conserving its architectural significance.

5. Design and Access Considerations

The development has been designed to integrate sensitively with its surroundings. The width and alignment of the path provide a clear and legible route for pedestrians and are finished in red to maintain consistency with other designated pedestrian routes across the campus.

The use of permeable macadam supports sustainable drainage, and the modest safety railing is visually unobtrusive while fulfilling its purpose as a fall barrier. The materials, levels and landscaping work together to ensure the intervention is both functional and respectful of the site's character.

The raised platform and safety railing are designed to blend appropriately into their setting. The railing, in particular, reflects the character of the site through its traditional black metal design, which complements the architectural features of the nearby Gothic Revival school buildings. Earthworks will be handled on site to soften transitions in ground level and maintain the overall landscape quality.

The proposed development will have no adverse impact on residential amenity, local character, highways, or heritage assets, and will enhance the accessibility, safety, and operational efficiency of the site.

6. Design and Access Statement

Use: The development provides improved pedestrian access and safe viewing facilities in support of the College's sports facilities. It aligns with the College's wider goals of safety, accessibility, and enhancement of existing amenities.

Amount: The proposal consists of a 1.5m wide, 50m long permeable macadam footpath with a raised platform and a 1.1m high railing.

Layout: The path runs east–west along the southern edge of the car park, positioned above a grassed embankment which drops down to the southern astro pitch. It connects to existing pedestrian routes and a traffic-calmed crossing area.

Scale: The scale is modest and proportionate to its setting, designed to avoid visual intrusion and respect the character of the existing landscape and built environment.

Landscaping: The proposals include minor earthworks to regrade excavated material into adjacent grass banks, which helps integrate the development with its surroundings and minimise its visual impact.

Appearance: The path will be surfaced in red permeable macadam, a consistent treatment used elsewhere on campus to signify safe pedestrian zones. The metal handrail is black and of simple design, chosen to echo the Gothic character of the surrounding listed buildings.

Access: The proposal improves accessibility and safety by providing a level and well-defined pedestrian route adjacent to the car park, reducing reliance on vehicular areas and improving circulation around the sports pitch and wider site.

7. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a high-quality improvement that aligns with national and local planning policy objectives. It will deliver safer pedestrian access and viewing facilities for the adjacent sports pitch, with no harm to the rural character, heritage setting, or residential amenity.

On this basis, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.