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HERITAGE STATEMENT, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

In Support of a Full Planning Application and Listed Building Consent

Blatchford House

52 Kings Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5PR

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement and Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a Full Planning Application and a concurrent application for Listed Building Consent at Blatchford House, 52 Kings Road, Horsham.

The applications seek planning permission for the change of use of the property from supported living accommodation to a single private dwellinghouse together with associated external works, including the construction of a detached double garage, alterations to the existing vehicular access, repairs to the front boundary wall and associated landscaping works. Listed Building Consent is sought for internal and external alterations to the Grade II listed building required to facilitate its refurbishment and long-term residential occupation.

Blatchford House is a substantial detached Victorian residence dating from the mid to late nineteenth century. Whilst the building has remained in residential use throughout its history, it has most recently operated as supported living accommodation following planning permission granted by Horsham District Council in 1994 (Ref. HU/177/94). During this period a number of alterations have been undertaken to accommodate its operational requirements, including the subdivision of internal spaces, installation of modern services and replacement of traditional timber windows with uPVC units.

The proposals seek to remove a number of these later interventions and reinstate a more coherent domestic arrangement whilst retaining those elements that contribute to the building's architectural and historic significance. The scheme has been informed by the principle of minimum intervention, retaining historic fabric wherever practicable and limiting alterations to those necessary to secure the building's continued viable use as a private dwelling.

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The proposed development comprises:

- Change of use from supported living accommodation to a single private dwelling.
- Internal alterations and reconfiguration to create a practical family home.
- Creation of four-bedroom suites with dressing rooms and ensembles at first floor level.
- Retention of the second floor in its existing configuration.
- Replacement of modern uPVC windows with traditionally detailed painted timber sliding sash windows.
- Removal of redundant services associated with the previous supported living use.
- Construction of a detached double garage on an existing concrete base.
- Replacement of the existing damaged patio.
- Removal of the redundant former greenhouse base.
- Repair and enhancement of the front boundary wall, including new railings between the piers.
- Widening of the existing vehicular entrance.
- General external repairs and redecoration.

This statement assesses the significance of the listed building and considers the impact of the proposed works. It concludes that the proposals preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building whilst securing its continued long-term occupation in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

2. Site Description

Blatchford House occupies a generous plot on the south-eastern side of Kings Road, approximately 1.5km north-east of Horsham town centre.

The property comprises a substantial detached Victorian residence with later additions to the rear, including a two-storey extension and conservatory. The house is set within mature residential grounds with a large area of hardstanding to the front and side providing vehicle parking. The rear and side gardens are predominantly laid to lawn with mature trees and established planting.

The principal elevation retains its Victorian proportions and architectural composition, with later alterations largely confined to the rear of the building and the internal layout. As a result, the building continues to make a positive contribution to the character of Kings Road and the wider streetscape.

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Within the grounds are a number of modern features associated with the building's more recent use, including extensive areas of hardstanding, damaged paving, redundant service installations and the remains of a former greenhouse. An existing concrete slab remains from a previous outbuilding and is proposed to be reused as the base for the new detached garage, thereby limiting additional disturbance within the site.

Overall, the site retains the characteristics of a substantial Victorian dwelling, although a number of modern interventions currently detract from both the building and its setting.

3. Heritage Significance

Architectural Interest

Blatchford House is included on the National Heritage List for England as a Grade II listed building in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest.

The building is a substantial detached Victorian residence dating from the mid to late nineteenth century. Its significance derives principally from its scale, proportions, traditional brick construction, roof form and balanced principal elevations, all of which continue to express its original domestic character.

Whilst alterations have taken place during the building's history, including later rear extensions and the replacement of traditional windows, the principal form and architectural composition remain readily apparent.

Internally, although a number of partitions and alterations have been introduced to facilitate the supported living use, much of the original plan form remains legible and continues to contribute to the building's significance.

Historic Interest

Blatchford House reflects the expansion of Horsham during the Victorian period and forms part of the town's late nineteenth-century residential development.

Constructed as a substantial family residence, the building has remained in residential use throughout its history. Its more recent occupation as supported living accommodation represents a later phase in that evolution and has resulted in a number of modern interventions that have altered, but not fundamentally diminished, its historic character.

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Setting

The building occupies a generous plot which allows it to be appreciated as a detached Victorian residence within mature landscaped grounds.

Whilst the established gardens contribute positively to its setting, a number of modern features, including extensive hardstanding, damaged paving, redundant service equipment and the remains of a former greenhouse, detract from the quality of the site. The proposed external works provide an opportunity to remove these features and reinforce the domestic character of the property.

Overall Significance

The principal significance of Blatchford House lies in its external architectural character, surviving historic plan form and continued residential use.

The majority of the proposed works relate to modern alterations of limited heritage value rather than original Victorian fabric. Consequently, the scheme provides an opportunity to remove later interventions that detract from the character of the listed building whilst preserving those elements that contribute most to its significance.

4. The Proposed Development

The proposed scheme has been developed to facilitate the return of Blatchford House to a single private dwelling whilst preserving those elements that contribute to its special architectural and historic interest.

The approach has been to retain the principal historic structure and plan form of the building, removing later alterations where these detract from its significance and introducing only those changes necessary to provide accommodation suited to modern family living. The proposals have sought to minimise intervention in historic fabric wherever practicable.

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Change of Use

The property is currently in use as supported living accommodation. The application proposes its return to a single private dwellinghouse.

This reinstates the building's original purpose and provides a sustainable long-term use that will support its ongoing maintenance and conservation. The proposed change of use requires relatively little alteration to the external appearance of the building and is supported by a programme of refurbishment and repair.

Heritage Impact

The proposed change of use represents a positive heritage outcome by securing the continued residential occupation of the listed building whilst requiring only limited physical intervention.

Lower Ground Floor

The lower ground floor will remain largely unchanged.

Existing accommodation will continue to provide ancillary family accommodation including a cinema room, games room, wine cellar/bar, utility room and associated storage areas.

Works at this level are limited to refurbishment, replacement finishes where necessary and the upgrading of building services. No alterations are proposed that would materially affect the significance of the listed building.

Heritage Impact

The proposed works are limited in scope and will have a neutral impact upon the significance of the heritage asset.

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Ground Floor

The ground floor currently reflects the operational requirements of the building's former supported living use, with a number of later partitions interrupting the proportions of the principal rooms.

The proposals remove these unnecessary interventions to create a layout that is more consistent with the building's original domestic character whilst responding to modern living requirements.

The accommodation will comprise:

- Entrance Hall
- Formal Sitting Room
- Study
- Snug / Television Room
- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Pantry
- Cloakroom
- Ancillary circulation spaces

The kitchen remains within the existing service area, thereby limiting intervention into the principal historic rooms. Elsewhere, the proposals largely utilise existing openings and circulation routes, reducing the extent of alterations required.

Heritage Impact

The removal of modern partitions improves the legibility of the historic plan whilst allowing the principal rooms to be appreciated more fully. The proposed alterations are limited and retain the building's overall plan form and architectural character.

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First Floor

The first floor will be reconfigured to provide four-bedroom suites.

Each bedroom will incorporate:

- Dressing room.
- Ensuite bathroom.

The revised arrangement provides accommodation that meets contemporary residential requirements whilst respecting the existing structural form of the building.

Wherever practicable, existing walls have been retained, with new partitions introduced only where necessary to create functional accommodation. Existing circulation routes also remain substantially unchanged.

The proposals remove a number of later subdivisions associated with the supported living use, resulting in a clearer and more coherent domestic arrangement.

Heritage Impact

The proposed alterations improve the legibility of the historic layout through the removal of later interventions whilst retaining the principal structural elements of the building. The works involve only limited intervention into historic fabric.

Second Floor

No alterations are proposed to the second floor.

The existing accommodation, structure and layout will remain unchanged.

The retention of this floor demonstrates the restrained nature of the overall scheme and preserves existing historic fabric in its entirety.

Heritage Impact

No heritage impact arises from the proposed works at second floor level.

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Windows

The existing uPVC sash style windows are modern replacements and do not contribute positively to the significance of the listed building.

The proposals seek their replacement with traditionally detailed painted timber sliding sash windows designed to reflect the proportions, glazing pattern and detailing appropriate to the age and character of the building.

The replacement windows will reinstate materials more appropriate to the historic building and improve the appearance of the principal elevations.

Heritage Impact

The replacement of inappropriate modern windows with traditionally detailed timber sash windows represents a clear enhancement to the architectural character of the listed building and better reflects its historic appearance.

Removal of Redundant Services

The building contains numerous modern services associated with its former supported living use.

These include surface-mounted wiring, alarm systems, communication equipment, redundant plumbing and associated fixtures that have accumulated over time.

Their removal forms part of the wider refurbishment works and will reduce visual clutter throughout the building.

Heritage Impact

The removal of redundant modern services will improve the appreciation of the historic interior without resulting in the loss of significant historic fabric.

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External Works

The proposed external works are modest in scale and principally comprise repair, maintenance and enhancement.

These include:

- Replacement of the damaged concrete and brick patio with a new paved terrace.
- Removal of the redundant remains of the former greenhouse.
- General repair and maintenance of the external fabric.
- External redecoration using appropriate materials and finishes.

The works are intended to improve both the appearance and functionality of the property whilst respecting its historic character.

Heritage Impact

The proposed works amount largely to repair and maintenance and will enhance the setting of the listed building through the removal of modern features that detract from its appearance.

Boundary Wall and Access

The existing front boundary wall will be repaired where necessary using matching brickwork and materials to maintain a consistent appearance.

The piers will be increased in height and new metal railings installed between them to provide a more defined boundary treatment.

The existing vehicular entrance will be widened to improve access whilst retaining the overall character of the frontage.

Heritage Impact

The proposed repairs and alterations will reinforce the character of the site's frontage whilst improving functionality. The works are modest in scale and are considered to preserve the significance of the listed building and its setting.

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Detached Garage

Planning permission is sought for the construction of a detached double garage positioned on an existing concrete slab within the grounds.

The reuse of this previously developed area avoids unnecessary encroachment into the garden and limits ground disturbance.

The garage has been deliberately positioned away from the principal elevation and designed as a clearly subordinate ancillary building. Its scale, form and materials have been selected to complement the listed building without competing with it visually.

Heritage Impact

The proposed garage occupies an area previously developed within the site and has been designed as a subservient ancillary structure. Owing to its scale, location and appearance, it will preserve the setting of the listed building whilst providing an appropriate ancillary facility.

5. Design and Access Statement

Design Principles

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Design Principles

The proposals have been informed by an understanding of the building's architectural and historic significance and seek to retain those elements that contribute positively to its character.

The overall approach has been one of restraint, limiting intervention to those works necessary to facilitate the building's continued occupation as a private dwelling. Where alterations are proposed, they seek either to remove later interventions that detract from the listed building or to introduce carefully considered new work using materials and detailing appropriate to its age and character.

Throughout the scheme, existing historic fabric has been retained wherever practicable, with new work designed to remain subordinate to the original building.

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Layout

The proposed internal layout is more closely aligned with the building's original domestic function than the existing arrangement.

Many of the internal alterations relate to the removal of later subdivisions introduced during the building's use as supported living accommodation. These changes allow the principal rooms to be appreciated more fully whilst retaining the established circulation pattern and principal structural elements.

The first floor provides four well-proportioned bedroom suites, responding to contemporary living requirements without fundamentally altering the character or legibility of the building.

Scale

No significant increase in the scale of the principal building is proposed.

The detached garage has been designed as a modest ancillary structure that remains clearly subordinate to the listed building. Its position within the site ensures that the principal house continues to dominate both visually and architecturally.

Appearance and Materials

The proposals retain the established appearance of the listed building.

New work has been designed using materials appropriate to the building's age and character, including:

- Painted timber sliding sash windows.
- Matching brickwork for repairs.
- Traditional painted metal railings.
- Sympathetic paving materials.

These interventions seek to reinforce the architectural character of the building through the replacement of inappropriate modern materials with more traditional alternatives.

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Landscaping

The proposals provide an opportunity to improve the setting of the listed building through the removal of redundant structures, repair of the front boundary wall and replacement of poor-quality hard landscaping.

The mature gardens remain substantially unchanged and continue to provide an appropriate setting for the building.

Access

Pedestrian access will remain unchanged.

Vehicular access will be improved through the widening of the existing entrance, allowing safer vehicle movements whilst retaining the established character of the frontage.

Internally, the return of the building to a single dwelling will significantly reduce activity associated with its former supported living use whilst providing accommodation appropriate to its original purpose.

6. Heritage Impact Assessment

Assessment of the Proposals

The proposals have been developed following an assessment of the significance of the Grade II listed building and seek to retain those elements that contribute most to its architectural and historic interest.

The majority of the works relate either to the removal of relatively modern alterations associated with the building's supported living use or to repair and maintenance of the existing fabric. The principal form, scale, roof structure and architectural composition of the listed building are retained throughout.

Overall, the proposals represent a measured approach that seeks to preserve the significance of the designated heritage asset whilst ensuring its continued long-term occupation.

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Change of Use

The proposed return of the property to a single dwellinghouse reinstates the building's original residential function.

Continued occupation as a private dwelling provides a sustainable long-term use that will support ongoing maintenance and investment in the building's historic fabric.

The change of use itself requires only limited physical alteration to the building and therefore has little impact upon its significance.

Internal Alterations

The internal alterations have been designed to minimise intervention into historic fabric.

Many of the proposed works involve the removal of relatively recent partitions and fittings associated with the building's supported living use. Their removal improves the legibility of the original plan whilst allowing the principal rooms to function once again as domestic spaces.

Where new partitions are required, they have been introduced only where necessary and with regard to the existing structural arrangement.

The second floor remains unaltered, demonstrating the restrained nature of the overall scheme.

Taken together, the internal alterations are considered to preserve the significance of the listed building whilst improving its functionality.

Replacement Windows

The existing uPVC windows are modern insertions that detract from the architectural character of the listed building.

Their replacement with painted timber sliding sash windows will reinstate materials, detailing and proportions more appropriate to the building's historic appearance.

The proposed replacement therefore represents an enhancement to the significance of the listed building.

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Removal of Redundant Services

Numerous modern services associated with the building's former supported living use have accumulated over time.

Their removal will reduce visual clutter throughout the building and reveal more clearly the architectural character of the historic interior.

These works involve no loss of significant historic fabric and are considered to result in a positive heritage outcome.

External Works

The external works comprise repair, maintenance and modest enhancement.

Replacement of damaged paving, removal of the former greenhouse base and general repairs to the external fabric will improve both the appearance and setting of the listed building.

These works are considered to represent routine conservation measures that preserve the significance of the heritage asset.

Boundary Wall and Access

Repairs to the front boundary wall will be undertaken using matching brickwork and appropriate materials.

The widening of the existing vehicular access has been designed to improve functionality whilst retaining the established character of the frontage.

The introduction of railings between the piers will provide a more coherent boundary treatment appropriate to the character of the property.

Overall, these works preserve the setting of the listed building whilst improving its presentation.

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Detached Garage

The proposed detached garage occupies an existing concrete slab within the grounds, thereby avoiding unnecessary development elsewhere within the site.

Its scale, form and location ensure that it remains clearly ancillary to the listed building.

The garage has been designed to complement the existing property without competing with its architectural significance and is therefore considered to preserve the character and setting of the listed building.

Overall Heritage Impact

The proposals retain the principal elements that contribute to the significance of Blatchford House, including its form, scale, architectural character and historic plan.

The majority of the works involve either the removal of later interventions or the repair and reinstatement of traditional materials.

The replacement of inappropriate uPVC windows, removal of redundant modern services, reinstatement of a more coherent internal layout and enhancement of the building's setting together provide clear heritage benefits.

When considered as a whole, the proposals preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building and secure its continued conservation through an appropriate and sustainable residential use.

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7. Planning Policy

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities, when determining applications for Listed Building Consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting and those features that contribute to its special architectural or historic interest.

Similarly, when determining planning applications affecting listed buildings, the Act requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving both the building and its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. It requires proposals affecting designated heritage assets to be supported by an understanding of their significance and for any impact to be properly assessed.

The proposals have been developed with these statutory duties and national policies in mind. They retain the principal architectural and historic characteristics of Blatchford House, remove a number of later interventions that detract from its significance and introduce only those alterations necessary to secure the building's continued viable use.

Taken as a whole, the proposals are considered to preserve the significance of the Grade II listed building and are consistent with the objectives of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework and the relevant policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

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8. Conclusion

Blatchford House is a Grade II listed Victorian residence whose significance derives principally from its architectural quality, historic character and continued residential use.

Over time the building has been adapted to accommodate supported living accommodation, resulting in a number of alterations that have affected the legibility of its original domestic arrangement and introduced features that make only a limited contribution to its significance.

The proposals seek to address these changes through a programme of sensitive repair, refurbishment and carefully considered alteration. Modern interventions of limited heritage value are removed where appropriate, whilst the principal historic structure, plan form and architectural character of the building are retained.

Particular benefits of the scheme include:

- The return of the property to its original function as a single private dwelling.
- The replacement of inappropriate uPVC windows with traditionally detailed painted timber sash windows.
- The removal of redundant services associated with the building's former supported living use.
- The reinstatement of a more coherent internal arrangement through the removal of later subdivisions.
- Repair and enhancement of the front boundary wall.
- Improvements to the setting through the removal of redundant structures and replacement of poor-quality hard landscaping.
- Construction of a detached garage on an existing developed area within the site.

Whilst the proposals introduce a number of alterations, these have been carefully designed to respect the significance of the listed building and are limited to those necessary to secure its continued long-term occupation.

Overall, the proposals preserve the special architectural and historic interest of Blatchford House and represent a positive and sustainable approach to its future conservation. The development is therefore considered to accord with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework and the relevant policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that planning permission and Listed Building Consent be granted.