

Heritage Statement (Planning Application Support)

Kendrick School, Reading, Berkshire

1. Site and Heritage Context

Kendrick School was founded in 1877, and its principal buildings were constructed between circa 1877 and 1927 in red brick in the Victorian institutional style. The school holds clear historic and communal significance as a long-established grammar school in Reading. The main buildings form the primary heritage asset on the site, reflecting both its architectural character and its sustained educational role within the town.

Two buildings on the campus have Grade II listed building status: Sidmouth House and Cedars House. Their designation recognises their special architectural and historic interest under national heritage legislation, affording them statutory protection. These buildings contribute significantly to the character and historic setting of the wider school site.

Over time, the campus has evolved, with additional buildings and facilities introduced throughout the 20th and 21st centuries to support modern educational requirements. These include expanded teaching accommodation as well as sports and swimming facilities. While functional and necessary for the school's continued operation, these later additions are subsidiary in heritage terms to the original Victorian and early 20th-century core.

The small shed positioned along the boundary wall is an ancillary structure, likely dating from the late 19th or early 20th century. It is modest and utilitarian in design and was historically used for storage or maintenance purposes. It does not form part of the principal architectural composition of the school and makes a limited contribution to the significance of the designated heritage assets on site.

2. Significance

- **Main School Buildings:** High local historic and architectural significance.
- **Shed:** Low heritage significance; limited architectural merit and minor contribution to the setting of the school.

The shed's value is primarily evidential as part of the site's functional evolution rather than as a structure of architectural importance.

3. Proposed Works

The application seeks consent for the removal of the existing shed to improve:

- Health & Safety conditions
- Access to the swimming pool
- Emergency service access along the boundary route

The current narrow access arrangement is constrained by the shed's position and does not meet modern operational and safety requirements.

4. Impact Assessment

The removal or alteration of the shed would result in **less than substantial harm**, given its limited heritage value. There would be no impact on the principal Victorian school buildings or their architectural character.

Improved emergency access and enhanced health and safety compliance represent clear public benefits, which outweigh the limited heritage significance of the structure.

5. Conclusion

The proposal preserves the significance of Kendrick School as a heritage asset while addressing necessary safety and access requirements. The works are proportionate, justified, and compliant with national and local planning policy relating to heritage conservation and public benefit.