

## DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands

App Ref: PL/26/0344 Full planning permission

Address: The Abbey School, 17 Kendrick Road, Reading, RG1 5DZ

Proposal: External alterations to Richards Hall, including over cladding, new windows, drainage, paving, new ramp, and replacement balustrades.

Applicant: Mr Mark Lucas

Received date: 13/03/2026

Extended Target Decision date: 23/06/2026

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

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### 1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises The Abbey School, located on the eastern side of Kendrick Road. The school comprises an original Victorian building core along Kendrick Road, with large modern extensions to the front and rear. The Abbey School is a private Girls' school for 3-18 year olds. The site is split between the Junior School on Christchurch Road and the Senior School site on Kendrick Road.

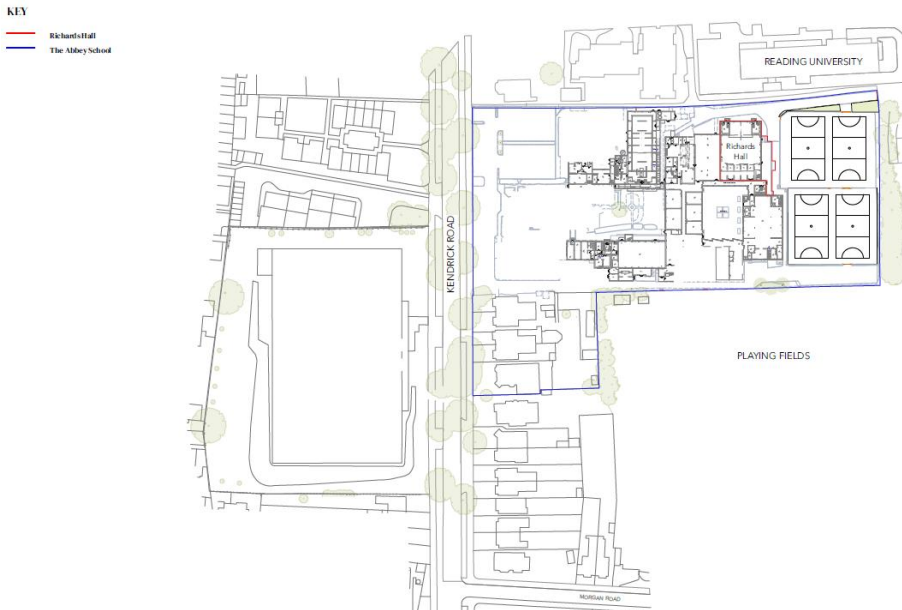
Richards Hall is located to the rear of the main school building, in front of the sports courts. It is located on the boundary in proximity to the Museum of English Rural Life, Reading University London Road Campus, student accommodation and surrounding residential housing.

The site is located within the Kendrick Road Conservation Area and an Air Quality Management Area.

Google earth image – Richards Hall illustrated by the blue dot



## Site location plan



## 2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal comprises works to improve facilities at the school to revise the design and construction of Richards Hall which is used for examinations, school activities and functions. No changes are proposed to the existing use of Richards Hall. The building footprint will remain the same. As outlined in the Kew Planning covering letter, works include:

- A reduction in the amount of glazing on its external elevations to reduce internal overheating and the impacts of climate change and a change to the design of the external elevations
- Trespa Meteon Over cladding
- Replacement aluminium coated windows and doors, infilling windows with matching brickwork
- Curtain walling
- Construction of a new ramp, replacement balustrades and resurfacing

### Documents/Plans submitted

~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1151 P01 Existing site location plan~~

~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-7000 P01 - Existing External Plan~~

~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1300 P05 – Existing and proposed Elevations~~

~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1152 P01 Proposed Site Location Plan~~

~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1500 P01 Proposed Ramp Section~~

~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-7001 P02 Proposed External Plan~~

~~CIL~~

As received 13 March 2026

~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-7001 P03 - Proposed External Plan~~

As received 17 April 2026

~~250468-900-260522 Richard's Hall Drawing & Document Issue Sheet~~

~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-2000 P02 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan~~

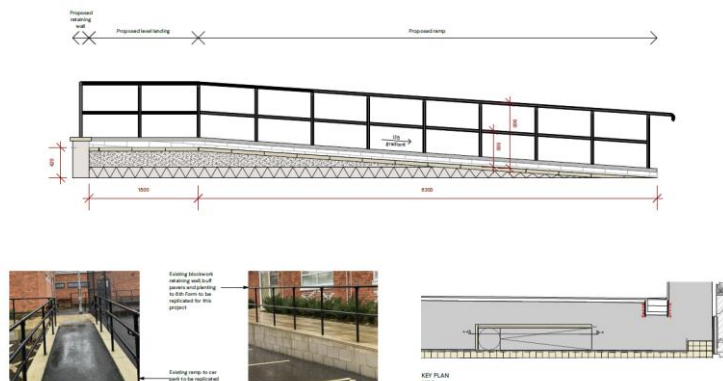
250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1202 P03 - Demolition and Alterations External Plan  
~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1152 P03 - Proposed Site Location Plan~~  
 As received 22 May 2026

250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1154 P01 - Proposed Block Plan  
 250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1500 P02 - Proposed Ramp Section  
~~250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1153 P01 - Existing Block Plan~~  
 250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1152 P02 - Proposed Site Location Plan  
 As received 8 June 2026

250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1151 P02 – Existing site location plan  
 As received 9 June 2026

250468-TAS-KK-XX-XX-D-A-1153 P02 -Existing Block Plan  
 As received 11 June 2026

### Existing and proposed elevations



### 3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

88/0044 Erection of two timber sheds for store/garage and workshop. Permitted  
 99/1181 Erection of a single storey extension to provide cloakroom for kitchen staff. Permitted  
 99/1869 Extension of existing laboratory block; new roof and external windows to existing laboratories plus new staff room. New area of parking to replace spaces lost to the laboratory extension. Permitted  
 01/0414 Alteration to existing building to create new dormer and 6sqm extension to provide new tuck shop. Permitted  
 06/01507/CON Removal of wing at the front of the school and the timber classroom. Permitted  
 06/01508/FUL Partial demolition of existing front section of the school. Permitted  
 12/01629/FUL Development of an all weather playing field with floodlights and fencing. Permitted  
 07/00318/FUL 6 floodlights to illuminate existing 6 tennis courts. Permitted  
 13/00288/FUL Erection of 30m length of 3m high weld mesh security fence and 1.5m high bund. Permitted  
 200061/FUL Erection of a new dining hall with green roof over the existing courtyard, rooftop extension to the 6th Form block to provide a new common room, extension to the south-east to provide additional classroom space and a new study area for the 6th Form block, reconfiguration of hard landscaped area to remove 1 of 4 netball courts, move existing flood lighting, relocate existing 6th form parking and enhance the frontage of the 6th form building. Permitted 10 July 2020

#### 4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Conservation Officer – No objections as it is considered that little harm would be generated by the proposed development.
- Transport Development Control – There are no transport objections to the proposed external alterations.
- Access Officer Consultations – No objections, subject to an amendment to the proposed gradient of the entrance slope to be 1:15.
- Conservation Area Advisory Committee Consultations – No objections have been received at the time of writing this report.

A Site notice was displayed for the required period on 7 April 2026 and an advert was placed in a local newspaper on 2 April 2026. No letters of representation have been received.

##### Communications with the agent

Revised plans were required to show an amended gradient, that would provide greater accessibility, and the site location around Richards Hall.

##### Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

#### 5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024 and a submission version submitted in May 2025. A pre-submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of May 2025.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remain very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the advice given below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’. Policy CC7 reiterates that all development must be of high quality design, to maintain and enhance physical character and context.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

**National Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024 (as amended)  
National Planning Practice Guidance

**Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)**

CC1 (Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development)  
CC2 (Sustainable design and Construction)  
CC3 (Adaption to Climate change)  
CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)  
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)  
EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)  
EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas)  
EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context)  
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)  
TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)  
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)  
OU1 (New and Existing Community Facilities)

**SPD**

Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

**Other relevant documentation:**

Kendrick Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2005)  
Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic England, 2016)  
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)  
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015b) Principles of Conservation (Historic England, 2008)  
Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015)

**6. APPRAISAL**

The main issues to be considered are:

- Principle of Development
- Appearance, Design and Impact on Conservation Area
- Amenity for Nearby Occupiers

• Principle of Development

The Abbey School is a private school. Policy OU1 seeks to promote 'new, extended or improved community facilities, particularly where this will involve co-location of facilities on a single site'. Whilst acknowledging the private school status, the school offers a range of community benefits to local sports, activities, education, prayer and music groups. The gradient of the slope has been revised to allow greater accessibility into the building. Consideration has been given to providing enhanced accessibility into the building. No changes are proposed to the footprint or use of the building. The changes to the design of the external elevations will not be seen within the public realm.

It is considered that the proposal to improve the Richards Hall facilities would comply with the principles of Policy OU1 and CC7.

- Appearance, Design and Impact on Conservation Area

Although the application site/subject building is within the settings of Buildings of Townscape Merit at the University of Reading and whilst the building is close to the historic part of Abbey School and the Grade II listed Front Block of St Andrew's Hall and Stable Lodge to the north, the revised external elevation will not be visible within the public realm.

The RBC Conservation officer commented that the subject building is modern, with the eastern façade constituting large glazing with horizontal design emphasis and that regarding its appearance, this elevation makes no contribution to the significance of the conservation area, though it could be argued that it has a positive or consistent visual relationship with the university buildings, given their educational function. The RBC Conservation officer queried the use of dark coloured cladding that would look more industrial and that some elements of the original building would be lost however assessed that as the building is well set back from the public realm/path (Acacia Road), the alterations to the eastern elevation of the building would not be perceived dramatically, with screening and fencing.

On balance, the changes to the external elevations of a more modern addition are in keeping with other buildings within the school grounds and given the location and nature of the small-scale development within the school grounds, there is considered to be little impact on the Kendrick Road Conservation Area or the setting of historic buildings in the vicinity of the development.

It is considered that the proposal to improve the Richards Hall facilities would comply with the principles of Policies EN1, EN3 and CC7.

- Amenity for Nearby Occupiers

Due to the small scale changes proposed, the proposal is not considered to cause a significant impact to the living environment of existing residential properties or wider users of the area. The proposal is, therefore, considered to comply with policies CC8 and EN17, subject to conditions restricting the hours of use for external lighting and in the event that plant is installed in the future, that a noise assessment is submitted in accordance with BS4142:2014 methodology to safeguard neighbouring amenity.

Other issues

Trees are located in the vicinity and a lighting hours of use condition is recommended to protect local wildlife to comply with policy EN12.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The proposal for external alterations to Richards Hall, including over cladding, new windows, drainage, paving, new ramp, and replacement balustrades will provide better provision for users of Richards Hall and is considered to comply with policies CC7, CC8, EN1, EN3 and EN17 subject to conditions.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

Grant

Recommended Conditions:

1. Time limit
2. Plans
3. Materials
4. Lighting
5. Plant



Informatives:

1. Terms
2. Building Regs
3. Construction
4. Positive & proactive