

Edge Grove School, Aldenham, Hertfordshire

Former stable block: Addendum to the Heritage Statement

Edge Grove School has applied to Hertsmeire District Council for planning permission and listed building consent to extend and make internal alterations to a former stable block at the site. The block stands behind and to the right (north-east) of the grand house which forms the central element of the school complex and is a Grade II listed building (National Heritage List reference number 1130617 (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1103617>). The stable block is not listed in its own right, and is not mentioned in the list description for the house, but it is curtilage listed under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, paragraph (5)(b). Bancroft Heritage Services prepared a Heritage Statement for the project in 2018 (final version dated March 2020). This describes the history and character of the stable block in detail. Hertsmeire District Council's Conservation Officers, however, required further information on various aspects of the building, mainly with regard to the proposed alterations to the interior of the structure (some of which would also be expressed externally). The queries were contained on a pair of floor plans, and were based on the project architect's drawings (Lyons Sleeman Hoare – hereafter LSH). The latter have produced a new version of the plans, with the same queries included but now cross-referenced numerically to the relevant locations on the ground and first floors (LSH drawing 18005-SK-84).

The School has commissioned Keevill Heritage Ltd to provide the required additional information. This is contained in the following table, using the reference numbers on drawing 18005-SK-84. The analysis leading to the answers is based on a review of the existing Heritage Statement (including the historic maps and photographs contained within it), various printed and online sources, and a site visit by the author on 17 September 2020. The entire building was examined inside and out during the latter visit, with numerous photographs being taken of the areas in question and of the fabric generally. This was followed by a meeting with Adam Harris (LSH) and Tim Murphy (Hertsmeire Conservation Officer) to discuss all the points and issues raised by the Council on 20 October 2020. A revised version of 18005-SK-84-(Rev A) was issued to Tim Murphy documenting these discussions following the meeting.

On the whole I agree with the contents and conclusions of the Heritage Statement with respect to the stable block. The identification of the building's function seems sound. It is in an appropriate position for a grand house's stable and coach house block, subservient to it physically (behind and to one side) and in design terms (it has some design flourishes but is more plain than the house, even in the latter's original form). The suggested 18th-century origin therefore seems appropriate given that this is the date of the house's core (it was extended and altered c 1800, in the mid-19th century, and c 1910). The stable has also been added to and altered substantially over the years, especially (but by no means solely) during its school since 1935. It has been extended to the rear several times, with: a small block added to its north-east corner towards the end of the 19th century; a further lean-to on the west side of this built after World War II; and a larger block extending across most of the rear elevation added in the 1980s (this is now used as the school's sports changing room, with smaller offices at the west end).

Inside the building, only the two brick walls flanking the central space (which would have been the coach house/store originally – early/mid 20th-century photographs clearly show it with large double doors in the arched entrance on the south side for coach/cart access) appear to be primary 18th-

century fabric. All other walls, floors and features belong either to the late 19th/early 20th century, or the mid-later 20th-century school use. The late 19th/early 20th century fabric consists of:


- The chimney stack and bread oven within it; evidence for a former room division associated with the stack; a cast iron column (with evidence for another) supporting the contemporary ceiling beams and floor level in the classroom above; and a small area of vertical match boarding on the rear wall. These are in the ground floor of the west bay, which would have been stabling originally.
- The partition match between Classroom SB.1 and the store cupboard to its north comprises horizontal match boarding, probably in situ because it rests on a timber sole plate over a brick footing (probably a single course deep). The boarding is of much larger form than the other remnants (eg in the adjacent office) and probably formed the rear wall of two stable stalls in the ground floor of this bay. The boards are clearly machine-sawn and of at least later 19th-century date, so they must represent a late phase in the building's life as a stable block. The obvious context for this insertion was the addition of the small room on the north-east corner of the building towards the end of the 19th century (it had certainly been built by the time of the Ordnance Survey 1898 map). This retains vertical match boarding to all walls, although areas of this are incomplete (notably on the east wall). The extension and room probably provided a small office (still its use today), and as there was no external access the boarding in what is now the store cupboard would have provided a corridor to it from the coach house/store in the central bay.
- Floor boards to the central bay on the first floor.


On the basis of small areas of opening up carried out following the site meeting with Tim Murphy, it can now be seen that all other partition walls, floors and ceilings are of 20th-century date and belong to the school's use of the building.

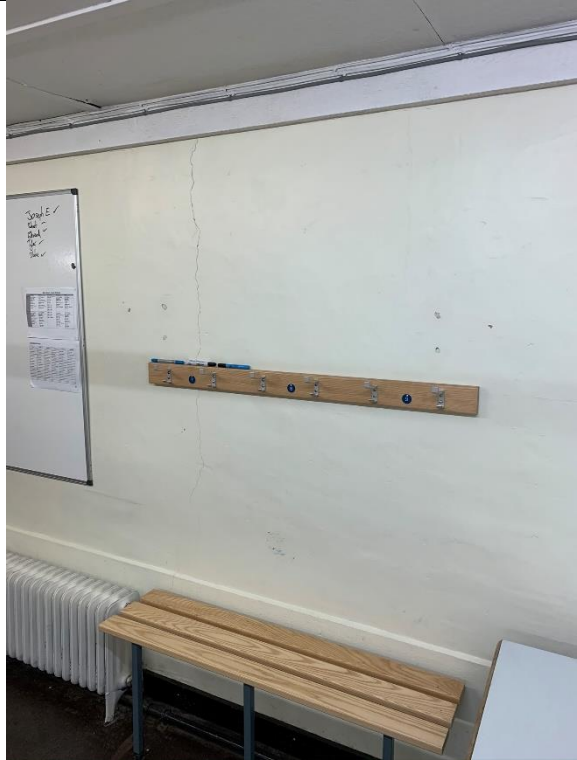
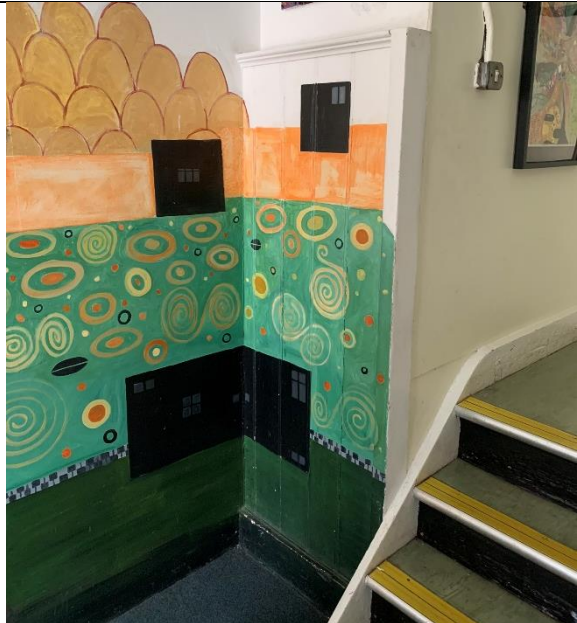
Graham Keevill
Keevill Heritage Ltd
4 November 2020



Additional information: A short section has been added to the end of this report to cover alterations to the design of the proposed extension at the rear (north side) of the stable block. This will replace an existing, smaller modern extension to provide fit-for-purpose school dining accommodation in the most appropriate location for this, at the heart of the campus. Concerns had been raised that the earlier design would be over-dominant with respect to the historic building, and the architects have addressed this issue in the latest design iteration. The impact of the revised design on the heritage asset is therefore addressed. The assessment is based on the design as shown on the revised application drawings.


Graham Keevill
Keevill Heritage Ltd
18 December 2020




Item	Query	Response
Ground floor		
1	Proposed new door opening: <i>What age/value is this fabric? Was there a previous opening here to inform location of new opening?</i>	<p>The seemingly blank walls to the rear of the old stable block are original to it, and thus of 18th-century date. There is clear evidence of a former opening in this location, comprising vertical cracks in the rendered and painted wall face (now within the changing room) running down to floor level. Tap testing confirms that there is an audible change from the solid masonry to the sides with a 'hollowness' in the area between the cracks. The blank masonry is of limited significance/value despite its age (it is to the rear of the building, away from visibility from the house. The evidence for a former opening provides a good context for establishing the new one here, which will aid the utility of the original building as it relates to the proposed extension.</p>
		 <p>View of item/area 1 with clear cracking in the wall surface, extending into the plinth at the bottom on the left-hand side at least.</p>
2	Re-use of existing door: <i>What age/value is this fabric? Why is the new wall not on the alignment of the structure?</i>	<p>As with area 1, the blank wall was original 18th-century fabric. The door is late 20th-century and was cut through when the changing room was built. The house was listed in 1985; it is likely that listed building consent would not have been required when the extension was built and the door was knocked through. The angled wall just inside the door is unusual and, in my</p>


Item	Query	Response
		<p>opinion, modern (ie contemporary with the door). Its alignment makes no sense and it has been cut into the rear wall of the stables. It is of little or no heritage value. The opening up carried out in October 2020 is inconclusive: it did not reveal any phasing to the brickwork, and it is difficult to assess its date – but the crispness of the arisses clearly suggests a modern rather than 18th-century date.</p>
		 <p>Opening up: brickwork of the angled wall in classroom SB5.</p>
3	<p>Proposed new door opening: <i>What age/value is this fabric? Was there a previous opening here to inform location of new opening?</i></p>	<p>The seemingly blank walls to the rear of the old stable block are original to it, and thus of 18th-century date. There is clear evidence of a former opening in this location, comprising vertical cracks in the rendered and painted wall face (now within the changing room) running down to floor level. Tap testing confirms that there is an audible change from the solid masonry to the sides with a ‘hollowness’ in the area between the cracks. The blank masonry is of limited significance/value despite its age (it is to the rear of the building, away from visibility from the house. The evidence for a former opening provides a good context for establishing the new one here, which will aid the utility of the original building as it relates to the proposed extension.</p>



Item	Query	Response
		 <p data-bbox="810 994 1388 1128">View of item/area 3 with clear cracking in the wall surface, extending into the plinth at the bottom and to the floor on the left-hand side at least.</p>
4	Small area of match boarding: <i>How will match-boarding be retained?</i>	<p data-bbox="810 1135 1388 1346">This is a small, isolated area of late 19th or early 20th-century boarding. It may be possible to retain it, but all agreed on site that its heritage value has been so diminished that removal would be acceptable if the plans for this area could not be altered.</p>
		 <p data-bbox="810 1973 1388 2036">Area of vertical match boarding – this is the only fragment in the room.</p>


Item	Query	Response
5	Iron column currently encapsulated in a modern stud partition: <i>How will iron column be retained?</i>	LSH to review how iron column can be retained – it should be feasible to do so.
		 <p data-bbox="815 1104 1386 1272">Late 19th-century cast-iron column now within modern stud partition (arrowed from left). Note evidence for the former position of a matching column on the ceiling beam, arrowed from the top.</p>
6	Re-arranged interior/offices. <i>Appears all walls are to be lined?</i>	This is a matter for LSH.
7	Location of new staircase and lift. <i>What age/value is the ceiling fabric?</i>	The ceiling is modern and of no heritage value. It is suspended off the floor above, which is late 19 th /early 20 th century and also of low heritage value (see item 18).
		 <p data-bbox="815 1933 1386 1986">Modern suspended ceiling in classroom SB5. Note angled wall (item 2) to the right.</p>



Item	Query	Response
8	New door. <i>What age/value is this fabric? Was there a previous opening here to inform location of new opening?</i>	The masonry here appears to be original 18 th -century fabric. It is plain and featureless, of low heritage value because of this. All agreed that a door would be an acceptable intervention given the advantages of access and circulation it provides.
		 <p data-bbox="815 887 1391 943">Blank brick masonry visible in the south-eastern corner of classroom SB5.</p>
9	New kitchen. <i>What interventions are needed to make this a kitchen? Lining of walls? Extractor fans? Bins? Storage?</i>	This is a matter for LSH.
9a	Store cupboard wall. <i>What is the age and significance of boarding? Check ceiling structure above, architect and client to consider retention of boarded partition.</i>	Boarding appears to be late 19 th -early 20 th century, resting on a sole plate set within the interior of the former stable. Probably put in to make a corridor across the back of the stables to the small extension (contemporary) at the north-east corner of the building. The top part of the partition within the cupboard is modern chipboard or similar, continuing above the false ceiling. There is also a modern opening (but blocked with board) at the east end of the wall. Opening up shows that this extends above the false ceiling up to a modern timber with the positions of former fixtures (hooks?) evident, and stencilled numbers between them (67-70 at least). This is at high level, immediately below what appears to be a rendered ceiling. The opening up confirms that the upper ceiling is of tongue-and-groove boards immediately to the west of this, entirely modern. The render must have been applied to this locally because it was within the corridor and rooms in use at the time. All the other partitions in this area are modern as well. The boarding has some value but will be vulnerable if retained here - may be better re-used elsewhere in the

Item	Query	Response
		building, or perhaps wall-mounted for interpretation.
	 <p data-bbox="300 685 788 813">Opening up: view above the false ceiling at the end of the cupboard with blocked opening and numbered timber exposed.</p>	 <p data-bbox="815 741 1366 813">Opening up: modern joist and floor boards on the first floor above the store cupboard.</p>
10	Office matchboarding. <i>How will this [office] structure be encapsulated?</i>	Match boarding within existing to be retained office. LSH to consider door position. Either through and retaining match boarding with a jib door, or through the external wall outside the office immediately to the west.
11	Lean-to addition to late 19 th -century extension. <i>What age/value is this fabric? Heritage statement notes it wasn't inspected.</i>	Historic OS maps show this as a post-World War II addition. Inspection of the interior confirms that the brick walls and timber roof structure are 2 nd half of the 20 th century. To be retained and re-used.
		 <p data-bbox="815 1946 1378 2004">North wall of modern lean-to addition off west side of late 19th-century extension.</p>

Item	Query	Response
12	New door. <i>What age/value is this fabric? Was there a previous opening here to inform location of new opening?</i>	<p>The seemingly blank walls to the rear of the old stable block are original to it, and thus of 18th-century date. There is clear evidence of a former opening in this location internally and externally, comprising vertical cracks in the rendered and painted wall face on the inside and very obvious disruption in the roughcast render outside. As with locations 1 and 3 it is clear that there was an opening in this location historically. The blank masonry is of limited significance/value despite its age (it is to the rear of the building, away from visibility from the house). The evidence for a former opening provides a good context for establishing the new one here, which will aid the utility of the original building as it relates to the proposed extension.</p>
		 <p>Vertical joint in the external roughcast showing where an opening once existed in this wall.</p>
13	Removed door to store cupboard, and door to adjacent classroom. <i>What age/value is this fabric? What's the justification for the loss of fabric and divergence from plan form?</i>	<p>The west end wall of the store is an obviously modern stud partition, with a door of the same age. No heritage value. The wall immediately to the south is original, however, and retains a lintel set high in the masonry. This is of medium heritage value. This fabric to be retained.</p>

Item	Query	Response
		 <p data-bbox="815 797 1375 898">Lintel of existing door (locked shut from the other side) in classroom SB5. The partition and door to the left are modern.</p>
First floor		
14	Alteration to doorway, new steps. <i>What age/value is this fabric? How will this relocated stair impact upon fabric and ground floor?</i>	The foyer/doorway into this classroom are modern and of no heritage value. The steps (not a stair) are confined to the first floor and has no impact on the ground floor below. It may be possible to dispense with the steps if the floor and ceiling heights in the classroom can be raised to provide level access through to the central bay and the new staircase there.
15	New partition. <i>Plans appear to over-board this wall and to subdivide window.</i>	LSH to consider amending partition to avoid window.
16	Cutting back masonry – continuation of chimney stack from ground floor? <i>Plans show significant alteration to this area without detail or justification.</i>	GK advised there is a significant amount of modern surface treatment and some parts of the wall are probably modern, but the stack may survive within this. LSH to consider removal of modern elements whilst retaining bread oven stack.
	Opening up: Removal of part of the modern suspended ceiling in the first-floor west art classroom shows that there is an earlier ceiling above, c 0.5m above the existing (the timber supports for this can be seen at the bottom of the photo). This ceiling is identical to most on the ground floor and dates to the later 20 th century. This suggests that there is room to raise the floor and ceiling in this room to provide level access to the proposed new stairs and	

Item	Query	Response
	lift in the central bay. LSH and School to review.	
17	New steps up to re-used existing door. <i>How will new stair impact upon fabric both upon ground and first floor? Was there a previous opening in this location?</i>	These are steps, not a stair - no impact on ground floor. Steps may not be necessary (see comments immediately above). Door is clearly historic – visible from the central bay.
18	Location of new staircase and lift. <i>What age/value is this floor?</i>	Narrow machine-sawn floorboards, late 19 th or early 20 th century date. Low heritage value. This part of the stable block would have been the coach house, probably open to the roof with at most a corridor at first-floor level to link the two outer bays (though even these might not have been floored).
		 <p data-bbox="815 1496 1391 1559">Narrow, machine-sawn floorboards on the first floor, central bay.</p>
19	Extractor location. <i>What age/value is this fabric? How will extractor impact?</i>	There is no fabric within the classroom in this location at the moment. The roof structure above was inspected during the visit and is of standard truss form, of mid to late 19 th -century machine-sawn timberwork. There is clear photographic evidence for a chimney on the ridge line in this location during the mid-20 th -century at least, with a matching one to the west. The latter appears to be over the stack rising from the existing bread oven on the ground floor (see image below). It is not known when the chimneys above roof level were removed – clearly neither chimney was

Item	Query	Response
		functional by that time. The current design will reinstate the chimneys and thus re-establish the original roof form. This will be an important heritage benefit of the scheme.
		
20	Alterations to doorway. <i>What age/value is this fabric?</i>	Doorway and door – the fabric above and to the right is modern studwork, of no heritage value; to the left it is brick masonry.
		
21	General comment. <i>Need to fully explore fabric – even if covered by fittings such as whiteboard.</i>	An appropriate programme of opening up was agreed during the meeting and has been done subsequently.
22	New Item: <i>Removal of existing chimney stack.</i>	I am doubtful that this is a stack – there is no trace of an equivalent on the ground floor below where the masonry is exposed at upper wall level and there is no scar of a former or removed feature. That said, this thickening of the wall is a clear feature on the first floor and

Item	Query	Response
		its safe removal will need to be addressed as per TM's comments.

Graham Keevill
Keevill Heritage Ltd
4 November 2020

Additional information: Revised design of the extension to the north of the stable block

LSH, the project architects, have altered the design of the proposed extension at the rear (north side) of the stable block. This will replace an existing, smaller modern extension which provides storage for sports equipment, student changing facilities for sports activities, and small office spaces. The existing extension is of no historic/heritage significance, and is inadequate for all the functions it provides. These can be improved and accommodated better in more appropriate locations at the school. The new extension will provide fit-for-purpose school dining accommodation (with catering in the stable block) in the most appropriate location for this, at the heart of the campus. The new facilities (including staff rooms in the stable block) will also provide fully inclusive access for all. The project will thus deliver key aspects of educational and operational needs that the School has identified:

- Re-locating the School dining room to a purpose-built, central location to provide facilities that are secure, convenient and accessible by all members of the school and its community, while also reducing time for pupils coming from the campus perimeter;
- Providing central staff and meeting rooms on the first floor of the stable block; and
- Providing vastly improved disabled access for pupils, staff and visitors - a key component of the School's disability and equality policies. Access will be level and step-free from the exterior and throughout the new/reconfigured facilities, replacing the wholly inadequate access currently on offer in both the changing rooms, offices, art department/classrooms and the dining room at present, something that has never been possible before with such a variation in site levels within and across the various existing buildings and spaces.

Concerns had been raised that the earlier design would be over-dominant with respect to the historic building, and the architects have addressed this issue in the latest design iteration. The impact of the revised design on the heritage asset is therefore addressed here. The assessment is based on the design as shown on the revised application drawings.

The proposed extension is necessarily larger than the existing modern changing rooms, as the extra space is critical to successful delivery of dining space area needed for the number of pupils at the school, and to satisfy accessibility requirements. Nevertheless the new extension has been kept to within the existing length of the stable block, not overlapping it at any point in the east-west axis. Earlier pre-application designs had been larger, extending beyond the west elevation of the stables. The new version, as with the previous one, removed this and keeps within the confines of the north side of the stables. This is important, because the new build will therefore respect the existing structure and be subservient to it in plan form. The footprint cannot be reduced any further without compromising the new facilities (both in size and accessibility) to an unacceptable degree for the School.

The previous design provided a hipped roof with a low pitch along the east-west axis of the building. The ridge was surmounted by a shallow lantern, canted slightly to the north to maximise the inflow of natural light to the interior. Hertsmere District Council and their Conservation Officer objected to the roof and lantern, however, arguing that they were over-dominant on the rear elevation of the stable block. In particular, they highlighted that the first-floor windows and other features at this level would be obscured by the proposed design. This was defined as being harmful to the heritage significance of the curtilage-listed building.

The architects have taken these objections fully into account, and have revised their proposals by removing the hipped/pitched roof and lantern. The new design has a flat roof set at eaves height on the existing proposed footprint. This means that it conforms to the break between ground and first floors evident on the elevations of the stable block, respecting and reflecting its current form. The evidence presented in the first part of this addendum suggests that much of the stable block did not have a first floor internally until the later 19th century, when the current floor layout was established (excluding the modern partitioning for classrooms etc). Even so, the impression of two storeys was clearly provided by the height of the building and by the various openings/niches in its elevations. It is therefore important to reflect and respect this characteristic, and the revised design does so. The roof of the extension deliberately sits below the existing windows on the rear elevation of the stable block so that these are still visible; the two-storey form of the block therefore remains fully legible.

The new extension takes advantage of the local topography in several ways. Firstly it is designed into the ground, terraced in at its lowest point to the rear of the stable block. The extension therefore keeps as low as possible with respect to the stable block and its surroundings. Secondly, the rising ground to the north of the stable block means that the new build will sit down in the landscape and thus the setting of the site. It will be wholly subservient to the historic form of the stable block. It is important to remember that there is already a modern extension here, ugly and inadequate in all respects. The new dining room will be a huge improvement on this. The greatly increased but simple, elegant and restrained form of the glazing to the rear and side elevations will present a much more open perspective, further reducing the perceived scale of the extension.

In conclusion, the revised design responds to the comments and criticisms of the earlier iteration. It represents a significant reduction in the scale, mass and bulk of the extension by providing a flat roof with central lights set within and recessed into the structure. The internal ceiling configuration has been designed ingeniously so that the lights still read as lanterns from within, but the roof is wholly flat form external views. This substantially improves the setting to the rear of the stable block (a curtilage listed building) in comparison to the earlier design iteration *and* the existing, unsatisfactory changing room extension. The high quality but simple design of the new build complements the existing built environment of the site – including the listed house as well as the stable block. The design also allows the stable block to be better appreciated, particularly in views from the north where it will be an impressive but respectful addition to the existing building. The new design will not cause any harmful impacts to the heritage significance of the site or its component elements (especially the stable block). On the contrary, it will conserve and enhance the heritage significance of the Grade II listed house, the curtilage listed stable block, and the site as a whole.

Graham Keevill
Keevill Heritage Ltd
18 December 2020