



# KING'S HOUSE SCHOOL

RICHMOND

London Borough of Richmond  
Planning Department

28th April 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

## **STATEMENT OF NEED**

Please accept this letter as a Statement of Need in support of the School's current planning application for the proposed development at the existing King's House School Senior Department at 66-68 Kings Road, Richmond, TW10 6ES.

The proposed development comprises the demolition of several school buildings, construction of a new music, arts and teaching block, some internal refurbishment work and landscape works. The application is a revision of 20/0165/FUL which was refused permission at Committee in June 2020.

### **Background**

King's House School was opened in 1946. The School first occupied the Holy Trinity Vicarage and Parish Hall in Kings Road. In 1955, extra space was found when the Junior School was established at 61 Kings Road. By 1965, the School had almost doubled in size, which led to the purchase of 66 Kings Road. Today, the Senior Department occupies 66-68 Kings Road.

King's House is a lively, busy and happy school, which gives each pupil a high-quality, broad academic and extra-curricular education, regardless of race, religion or culture. The School provides an environment in which the welfare of the pupils is paramount and where they feel secure and able to flourish. The principles of equality, tolerance and acceptance in all areas of life are promoted and the diversity of the pupil body celebrated.

### **Need for proposed development**

#### **Accessibility and Equality**

The proposed demolition of several poor quality school buildings, construction of a state-of-the-art music, arts and teaching block, some internal refurbishment work and landscape works are the next steps in the long-term evolution of the school as a successful education provider and community asset in Richmond. This is necessary because the piecemeal approach to the School's extensions in the past has resulted in significant operational and logistical difficulties. Most notably, the buildings are difficult to navigate, and it is easy to become disorientated. Accessibility is a challenge, as there are numerous level changes between the different buildings and across the sloping site in general.

The new proposal rationalises and improves the accommodation, so that the Senior Department is more accessible and inclusive for a wider range of users. It addresses the current difficulties posed to staff and pupils with a protected characteristic, for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010. While disabled staff, pupils, community users and other visitors would be the principal beneficiaries, others with a protected characteristic would also benefit.



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We have also had specific regard to the duty under section 149 of the Equality Act, which is now part of the under-pinning of “inclusive design” within the planning system. Given the age of the buildings occupied by the School and the fact that many of them were not originally built for educational use, the only way the School is able to meet these requirements is to replace old buildings and improve existing buildings in the way proposed.

## Modernisation and Enhancement

It is also the case that many of the School's facilities are outdated, for example, a number of the classrooms are too small for modern-day teaching requirements. The new facilities will provide far better quality learning and teaching environments for pupils and staff and for those community groups who benefit from being able to use the School.

The School is fortunate to have areas of open space around the buildings, given its location in central Richmond. The School cherishes these spaces, but recognises they could be improved for the benefit of all those who use them. The proposals will greatly enhance the landscape around the buildings, providing additional native wildflower, shrub and tree planting, as well as flexible play space and outdoor learning environments.

Allied to this, the proposals will result in a net gain of 20 trees on site. Native planting, green roofs and walls and faunal boxes will also provide a Biodiversity Net Gain. The retained and additional tree planting will contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

## Efficiency and Sustainability

Several existing buildings at the School do not meet modern-day requirements with respect to energy use and sustainability. The new buildings will be constructed to rigorous sustainability criteria and standards, resulting in highly efficient and sustainable buildings on site and contributing to reducing carbon use.

The new buildings will also bring heritage benefits, through the removal of unsightly buildings that have been added in a piecemeal way since the main Victorian buildings were constructed. In particular, the modern garage to the side of number 66 compromises the legibility of this building's façade and its removal will be beneficial to this Building of Townscape Merit and the Conservation Area.

I hope this letter adequately sets out the pressing needs for this development and highlights the multiple benefits to the school, locality and community.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Turner  
Headmaster

Chris Laverty  
Chair of Governors