

Southern Support and Police Training Headquarters, Netley
Security Improvements
Design Strategy incorporating the Heritage Statement



E05535 23/09/2024

**Hampshire Constabulary Southern
Support and Training Headquarters
Netley Abbey,
SO31 4TS**

Contents:

1.0 Assessment of Heritage Significance

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Heritage Description
- 1.3 Development History
- 1.4 Existing Site Plan
- 1.5 Photographs
- 1.6 Summary Statement of Significance

2.0 The Proposals

- 2.1 Summary
- 2.2 Statement of Impact

3.0 Justification and Mitigation

1.0 Assessment of Heritage Significance

1.1 Introduction

This document has been prepared by the Historic Buildings Group in Hampshire County Council Property Services to form part of a Planning and Listed Building Consent application for works to improve the physical security of the site, adjacent to the Grade II Listed Victoria House, set within the Grade II Listed Royal Victoria Country Park, Hampshire. The Statement considers the Heritage Significance of the building and Park, and the impact of and justification for the proposals

A brief history of Royal Victoria County Park

The Royal Victoria Country Park was formerly known as the Royal Victoria Military Hospital. It was built in 1863 as the largest military hospital in the UK and retained this status until it was demolished in 1966 following a fire.

The grounds originally comprised of the hospital building and an associated Chapel, 'Officer's Mess' (officer's accommodation), a military psychiatric hospital, informal parkland, a cemetery and a pier.

The Military Hospital's historic significance is rich and wide ranging. Queen Victoria laid the foundation stone in 1856 and visited frequently once operational. In addition, the hospital played a significant role in both World War I and World War II, with 50,000 and 68,000 casualties being treated there respectively.

The grounds of the hospital and associated land were purchased by Hampshire County Council in 1979 and converted into the Country Park in 1980. The 'Officer's Mess' has since been converted into residential apartments and the military psychiatric hospital has been converted into Victoria House, part of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's training headquarters..

Five buildings within the Country Park are designated as Grade II listed buildings, including The Chapel, The Empire Building, The Officer's Mess, The Lodge and Victoria House.

This document has been prepared to accompany a Listed Building Application to undertake works to improve the security of the site in order to safeguard its current use as a centre for Police training and operational activity.

1.2

Heritage Description

The Victoria House building is Grade II listed and is described by Historic England as follows:-

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1072597
Date first listed: 26-Aug-1997
List Entry Name: VICTORIA HOUSE AT VICTORIA HOSPITAL
Statutory Address: VICTORIA HOUSE AT VICTORIA HOSPITAL, NETLEY

SU 40 NE 1009/8/10004 - HOUND NETLEY Victoria House at Victoria Hospital II

Listing NGR: SU4688007086 Army mental asylum, now police training HQ. 1866, by the Royal Engineers; remodelled for the Hampshire Constabulary in the 1980s. Red brick in Flemish bond with buff-coloured brick dressings. Slate roofs. Brick lateral stacks with corbelled tops. STYLE: Italianate. PLAN: E-shaped on plan; the flanking ward wings extending to the rear, the SE containing the infirmary; the dayroom in the central projection and with the stairs and dining hall in the central wing at the back; ablution blocks flank the front range. In the 1980s the interior was remodelled and the rear courtyards were infilled by the Hampshire Constabulary. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys. Symmetrical 3:1:3:6:3:6:3:1:3 bay SW front; centre and end bays project with pediments with modillion cornices, wide rusticated brick quoins, pilasters and window architraves; round-headed windows with impost and cill bands, the first floor with apron panels; counter-balanced sashes with small panes, ground floor French casements; flanking square 3-bay ablution blocks with hipped roofs and modillion eaves. At the rear the wings are more plainly treated and have hipped roofs and sash windows; the central dining hall has gable-ended roof and four large round-headed windows on first floor and single-storey 7-bay range below with central entrance. The courtyards between the rear wings have been infilled with a 1980s glazed structure. INTERIOR: remodelled.

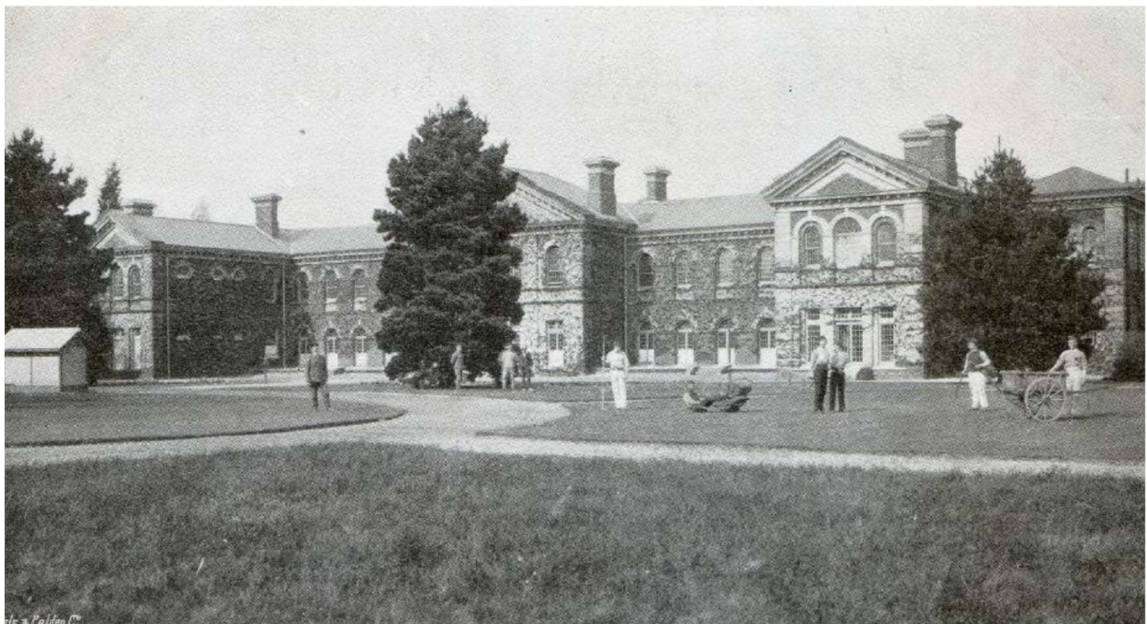


Fig 1: Early 20th C view of the SW elevation of Victoria House.



Fig 2: Current view of NE elevation of Victoria House showing main entrance.

Victoria House is located within the Grade II listed Royal Victoria Country Park. The Historic England description of the park is summarised as follows:

ROYAL VICTORIA COUNTRY PARK (FORMERLY ROYAL VICTORIA MILITARY HOSPITAL)

List Entry Number: 1001584

The grounds of what was, before it was demolished in 1966, the largest military hospital, opened in 1863 overlooking Southampton Water, incorporating a lunatic asylum set in its own grounds. The grounds were probably laid out by the Southampton landscape designer William Bridgwater Page.

The large numbers of invalid soldiers returning from the Crimean War in the mid-1850s caused the War Department to begin in January 1856 to prepare plans for a huge general military hospital. A 109 acre (c 44ha) site forming part of Netley Grange Farm (which had formed part of the lands of the nearby Cistercian Netley Abbey before the Dissolution) was bought in the same year for the purpose from Thomas Chamberlayne. The Royal Victoria Military Hospital was designed by E O Mennie and the foundation stone laid by Queen Victoria on 19 May 1856. The design, with its spinal corridor a quarter of a mile long, was soon heavily criticised for not having taken into account the lessons in construction which had been learned in the Crimea, in particular the new fashion for wards designed in separate pavilion form. Work was too far advanced however for major structural alterations to be carried out (The Builder, September 1856). The Southampton landscape designer, and owner of Old Spa Gardens seed and nursery business, William Bridgwater Page is thought to have laid out the grounds (Fairman 1984; Burroughs 1992), which consisted of formal terraces and lawns leading from the main building down to the waterfront, surrounded by informal parkland. The hospital opened in March 1863 having cost £350,000. An officer's mess was constructed in its own grounds within the site, together with a military lunatic asylum set within walled grounds (c 1870) and a cemetery.

During the First and Second World Wars the grounds to the north of the hospital building were used for temporary hutted hospital accommodation, but these buildings were taken down after each war enabling the land to be returned to parkland/recreation ground use. The additions brought the numbers of patients up to several thousand at a time. In 1966 the main hospital building was demolished, leaving only the central chapel. The site was bought by Hampshire County Council in 1979 and opened as the Royal Victoria Country Park in 1980. The officer's mess was converted to domestic accommodation and the former lunatic asylum has become Victoria House Police Training Centre. The site remains in public use.

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING The site lies at the south-east tip of greater Southampton, south-east of the village of Netley. The c 90ha site occupies ground which rises to the north-east, being bounded by Southampton Water to the south-west, by Netley to the north-west, Hamble village to the south-east, and by agricultural land to the north-east beyond the railway line linking Fareham with Southampton. The setting is partly rural, partly urban, and partly marine. Views extend from the south-west third of the site over Southampton Water towards Fawley Oil Refinery and Hythe, and south-east along the Water towards the Isle of Wight.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main approach to the hospital enters the site c 750m north-west of the chapel, at Netley Cliff, giving access from Netley. A single-storey Italianate-style lodge (1861, listed grade II), built of red and yellow brick, stands to the east of the entrance which is flanked by C19 iron gate piers and gates, overlooking the Water to the south-west. From here the main drive extends south-east, parallel with the water's edge, overlooking to the north-east a playing field edged with mature trees and with glimpses of the former officer's mess extending beyond this. At a point c 450m north-west of the chapel the drive curves north-east, close to the point where formerly stood a stone memorial to those who fell in the Crimea (demolished mid C20), before returning south-east again, to form part of the long straight drive which formerly ran along the south-west, entrance front of the former hospital building overlooking terraced lawns running down to the water-side. The drive arrives at the south-west front of the chapel, which formerly stood at the centre of the main hospital building, overlooking the Water to the south-west.

From the chapel the main drive continues south-east for a further 200m along the course of the former south-west front, turning north-east and then north-west to run along what was the back side of the building and site of the railway and station. Off this drive, which formerly encircled the building, lead several spurs, giving access to the former stable yard, which stood c 350m east of the chapel, the lunatic asylum (now, 2002, a police training centre) standing 450m north-east of the chapel, and beyond this the cemetery, lying c 700m east of the chapel.

Victoria House, the former military lunatic asylum (1866-70, listed grade II), was constructed by the Royal Engineers. It stands 450m north-east of the chapel and is set in its own walled grounds. The one- and two-storey building is Italianate in style and has an approximately E-shaped plan and is built of red and yellow brick. Following its conversion to a training centre there have been substantial extensions. It is approached from the north lodge via a drive which leads south-east across the northern parkland directly to the north-east front.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The pleasure grounds include the formal terraced lawns to the south-west of the chapel and site of the former main building, the grounds of the officer's mess, and the grounds of the former lunatic asylum.

The c 6ha former military asylum grounds lie towards the east corner of the site, surrounded almost entirely by a high brick wall to prevent patients from escaping. It is approached directly from the site of the main hospital via a drive curving north-eastwards which arrives at a gateway flanked by brick piers set in the wall at the west corner of the asylum grounds. The grounds were laid out at the same time as the building was erected, c 1870, and contain many mature trees, particularly to the south-west and south-east. The building stands at the north-east corner of the almost rectangular site, with lawns extending to the west and south-west and a car park to the north-west. To the south-east of the C19 building lies a substantial late C20 extension, and beyond this stands the former asylum Medical Officer's Quarter, Hollyleigh. This house stands in its own wooded garden, approached through the north-east perimeter wall via a drive from the north which is an extension of the main drive to the asylum site from the north lodge. Lawns and an informal path system surround the house, with wooded grounds falling away to the south and east towards West Wood.

PARK The various areas of the pleasure grounds are connected by the park which consists of several discrete open areas and much woodland. An area of playing fields largely enclosed by a line of trees divides the main entrance from the former site of the hospital building. A large open area of parkland lies to the north-east of the site of the former hospital building, the site of the hutted wards during the World Wars. This area merges to the south-east into West Wood, running along the east and south-east boundaries, in which are located Victoria House, the cemetery, and the sites of the former stable yard and isolation hospital (now gone). Further woodland runs along the north-west boundary linking the main entrance and the north entrance.

1.3 Relevant Development History

F/21/90574

In 2021 permission was granted for the installation of a marquee to the southwest of Victoria House within the walled garden.

F/18/82889

In 2018 permission was granted for the provision of a new memorial garden to Victoria House.

1.4 Existing Site Plan & Aerial Photograph



Fig 5: Current Site Plan / Aerial Photograph

See separate drawing: **E05535-HCC-ZZ-DR-B-1002-Heritage Asset Plan as Existing** for detailed site / works outline.

Note that significant areas included within the application site are to contain the measures to provide the required biodiversity net gain.

1.5 Photographs



Fig 6: West of the Gym Building, looking West .



Fig 7: West side of sports field, looking South.



Fig 8: Access road from Hound Road, looking West. New secure gate to be positioned at this point.



Fig 10: Access road from Hound Road. Secure fence to be positioned to right hand side of road in lieu of timber fence.



Fig 11: North West corner of Victoria House garden wall. New secure fence & gates to be installed across road.



Fig 12: Timber gate in wall to be replaced with new hardwood timber gate of similar design (without lower middle section) to improve security. See drawing **E05575-HCC-XX-XX-DR-B-7101**



Fig 13: South East of Hershel building. Fence with new pedestrian gates to abut perpendicular to wall. Gates to allow maintenance access to each side of wall.



Fig 14: North East of Victoria House looking NE. New fence will run through woods R to L and then follow right hand side of the path back to the main entrance road.

1.6 Summary Statement of Significance

For the reasons outlined below, Victoria House and the Park have considerable local significance.

Evidential Value

Victoria House has been heavily extended to the North East, modern extensions have infilled the courtyards between the wings and the interior of the building has been heavily remodelled to suit the various functions the building has supported. However the South West facing elevation exists broadly as constructed and its evidential value is therefore high.

Historical Value

As one of the few surviving elements of the Royal Victoria Military Hospital complex Victoria House is considered to have high historical value. Containing five listed buildings, the park itself is of great historical value as a reminder of the scale and significance of the Royal Victoria Military Hospital.

Aesthetic Value

The South West elevation of Victoria House has retained most of its original key features including the pedimented centre and end projections with modillion cornices, rusticated detailing and round-headed counter-balanced sash windows. This elevation was originally the front of the building, and the other elevations are more plainly treated. As such it has the highest aesthetic value of any area of the building.

Communal Value

Victoria House currently forms part of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's training centre, is also used by the Constabulary for internal social events and as such it has high communal value.

2.0 The Proposals

2.1 Summary

The project aim is to secure the site from unauthorised access by vehicle and on foot by installing a secure fence line around the bulk of the site. The fence will link up with the existing high walls around Victoria House which will form part of the secure perimeter to the South West.

New entrances with automatic secure gates will be installed on the current main access road, adjacent to Vickery Building and to the secondary entrance to the North of the site from Hound Road.

Minor gates, allowing authorised persons access through the secure fence line for maintenance and general access.

The perimeter wall around Victoria House will form the secure boundary for the South West part of the site and sympathetic repairs, removal of climbing vegetation and repointing of open mortar joints using a sand / lime mortar will be undertaken.

The new timber gate, replacing the existing will be fabricated of hardwood with joinery details replicating the existing which is not unattractive but not authentic

The access road from the main highway, Hamble Lane (B3397) into the site will be upgraded to allow two way traffic along its length, rather than single lane with passing places as it is currently to avoid the risk of delays to vehicles entering or exiting the site, including emergency vehicles.

Full details of the proposals can be found on the accompanying drawings.

2.2 Statement of Impact

Impact on Historic Fabric

The fences proposed will be modern mesh panels fixed to steel posts in turn set into concrete. They will meet the perimeter garden wall of Victoria House at the Northernmost corner, where boundary road meets the main access road and to the South of Victoria House, within the dense woodland beyond Holyleigh House.

There is no proposal to directly fix to the wall and so there is no detriment to the fabric. The fence could in the future be removed without any disturbance to the listed fabric and the repairs to the wall will be in matching materials and will extend the life of the structure.

Therefore, the impact of the works on the historic fabric is considered to be **Very Low**.

Impact of Setting of Heritage Asset

Victoria House has been altered, internally and externally since construction as its use has changed. The construction of the Palmerston and Hershel Buildings within the walls of Victoria House have further diluted the setting.

The fence will be a significant distance from the building itself and only in close proximity to the garden wall, separated from the building by a Car Park to the North and the two more recent buildings to the South.

A part of the fence line will sit within the listed parkland although the proposed route takes it along existing fence lines or on the edge of open space and wooded areas, helping to mask its form. The fence colour will be chosen to further blend in the bulk with the surrounding landscape.

Therefore, the impact of the setting of the heritage asset is considered to be **Low**.

Overall Impact on Significance

The proposed works have no impact on the historical significance of Victoria House, in fact the proposal includes for sympathetic repairs to the garden walls using matching materials to extend their life and limit the risk of further decay due to environmental factors.

Overall, therefore, the impact on significance of these proposals is considered to be **Low**.

3.0

Justification and Mitigation:

The proposed works are essential to the safety and security of the site as a Police Training facility and operational site.

The repair works to the walls will strengthen them, reducing the risk of falling masonry which has been identified as a Health and Safety issue and limit future decay, helping to preserve the structures for future generations.

Heritage Benefits

The proposals will improve the structural integrity, and preserve vulnerable elements of the building fabric, ensuring the site can continue to be operated safely and securely, providing a sustainable use.