

AtkinsRéalis



**Victoria House,
Southern Support and
Police Training
Headquarters –
Internal
Refurbishment Works**

OPCC
November 2025

HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



Notice

This document has been prepared exclusively for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and forms part of the Listed Building Consent application for proposed internal refurbishment works to Victoria House, located within the Southern Support and Police Training Headquarters at Netley, Hampshire.

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This document has 21 pages including the cover.

Document history

Document Title: Victoria House – Heritage, Design & Access Statement
Document Reference: OPCC 004 HDAS

Revision	Purpose description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
1.0	Final Version	SM	CP	SL	GJ	13/11/2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this Statement

This Design Strategy & Heritage Statement has been prepared to provide an overview and analysis of the potential heritage impact of the internal alterations, fire safety works and general refurbishment of the Grade II Listed Victoria House, located within the Southern Support and Police Training Headquarters at Netley, Hampshire

The statement addresses:

- The heritage significance of Victoria House.
- The impact of the proposed works on that significance.
- The justification for the proposals, demonstrating how they respect and preserve the building's historic character while meeting operational requirements.



Northeast elevation of Victoria House

2. Building Details

2.1 Designation

Grade II

2.2 Building Address

Victoria House,
Hamble & Netley,
Southampton,
Hampshire,
SO31 4NA

2.3 Building Location

Victoria House is located within the Royal Victoria Country Park, situated on the former Royal Victoria Military Hospital site in Netley, near Southampton, Hampshire

2.4 Current Use & Layout

The building, as part of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's training headquarters, comprises a central glazed atrium introduced in 1985, housing a restaurant with an adjacent lecture theatre. Around the perimeter are offices and classrooms, with the main kitchen located at the front left-hand side and a bar/social space positioned centrally at the rear.

The first floor is accessed via a central common stair leading to a balcony/walkway above the restaurant, providing access to offices along the front elevation and a mix of offices and classrooms elsewhere. Centrally above the ground-floor lecture theatre is an office touchdown working area.

Two protected staircases on the left and right elevations provide escape routes, supplemented by two spiral staircases introduced in the 1980s near the front of the building.

Floor finishes include hardwood floating flooring in the restaurant, with offices, classrooms, and circulation spaces finished in modern carpet or vinyl.



3. Building History and Development

3.1 Building History

Victoria House was constructed in 1866 as part of the Royal Victoria Military Hospital complex at Netley. Built by the Royal Engineers, it originally served as a psychiatric hospital, complementing the wider medical facilities of the site. The Royal Victoria Military Hospital itself played a pivotal role during both World War I and World War II, treating approximately 50,000 casualties in the First World War and around 68,000 during the Second World War, making it one of the most significant military hospitals of its era.

Following the hospital's closure, Hampshire County Council purchased the grounds and associated land in 1979, leading to the creation of Royal Victoria Country Park in 1980. This transformation preserved the historic site for public use while maintaining its heritage value.

In the 1980s, Victoria House was converted into part of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's training headquarters, a role it continues to serve today.

3.2 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.

3.3 Recent 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 & L/18/82982

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

L/15/77756

In 2016 Listed Building Consent was given for the refurbishment of main reception area.

L/15/76926

Valid date: 21/07/2015

Listed building consent: Erection of an external wall mounted memorial & provision of adjacent access footpath with 4no. associated post lanterns

L/05/55414

Valid date: 01/11/2005

Listed Building Consent: Replacement of existing windows & French windows with new casement windows

L/17924/054/00

Valid date: 02/11/2001

Listed Building Consent: Construction of disabled access ramp, replacement lanterns and entrance door and provision of 4 disabled parking spaces



4. Statement of Significance

4.1 Architectural Significance

Victoria House is an example of mid-19th-century Italianate architecture, adapted for institutional use.

Key features include:

- Red brick laid in Flemish bond with buff-coloured brick detailing, topped with a slate roof.
- A symmetrical front elevation with projecting bays capped by pediments featuring modillion cornices, rusticated quoins, pilasters, and decorative window architraves.
- Round-headed windows with counterbalanced sashes and smaller panes; ground-floor French casements.
- An E-shaped plan with flanking ward wings, ablution blocks designed as three-bay square pavilions, and a double-height dining hall at the rear.
- Italianate Characteristics: Symmetry, pediments, modillioned cornices, and quoining which are all hallmarks of the Italianate style popular in Victorian institutional architecture.

4.2 Heritage Significance

The building's association with the Royal Victoria Military Hospital - a site of national significance in military medical history - represents an important link to Britain's military and medical heritage. This connection underscores its role within a wider network of facilities that supported the care and recovery of service personnel during major conflicts. However, this historic relationship is not reflected in its current use.

Later adaptations, including extensive interior remodelling and the addition of glazed extensions to rear courtyards during its conversion for police training in the 1980s, have significantly altered its character and bear no direct link to its original military function.

These alterations have obscured much of the original architectural character and disrupted the integrity of its historic fabric. As a result, the building no longer provides a clear or authentic representation of its period, and its contribution to the heritage value of the area is considered limited. The cumulative impact of these changes means that its role within the historic context is now largely secondary.

4.3 Communal Value

Its continued adaptive reuse demonstrates sustainable heritage management while maintaining historical integrity.



5. The Works

5.1 Works Summary

The following is an overview of internal proposals; these works have been specified in a way that minimises the loss of original building fabric as much as possible:

- Replacement fire alarm to protect the building
- Replacement lighting, to ensure a compliant emergency lighting system, to reduce energy use by moving from fluorescent to LED lighting and to move away from redundant lighting technology for which replacement parts are no longer available.
- Replacement suspended ceilings, as the current ceilings largely be removed to allow for the fire alarm and lighting to be changed (see photos in appendix A for typical examples).
- Replacement floor coverings, replacement of carpets with new carpet tiles, replacement of worn and stained vinyl floor coverings.
- Refurbishment of the ground floor lecture theatre to include new auditoria seating.
- Refurbishment of the ground floor Duke Room, to create a modern social space.
- Improvements to fire protection, installing fire breaks in voids (if found missing), repair or replacement of damaged 1980s timber fire doors.
- Enlargement of first floor fire exits onto protected stairs, installing larger fire doors to give clear opening of 1050mm to aid escape.
- The WCs are to be refurbished to include removal of the 1980's masonry privacy screens to allow for an improved layout and larger cubicles for user comfort. The existing drainage routes are to be reused where possible to avoid undue disturbance of the building fabric.

5.2 Impact of Works

The proposed works will not result in changes to the historic fabric of the building, as the works will focus on the internal finishes and doors (and electrical services) that were replaced in the 1980s or later during its conversion to the current use.

Where defects to the existing fire barriers are identified during the works (once they have been exposed following removal of the suspended ceilings to allow for an assessment) they will be repaired as necessary on a like for like basis.

Where fire barriers are absent, new barriers will be installed to achieve the required fire resistance rating in accordance with the fire strategy. Particular attention shall be given to service penetrations through walls forming protected areas. These measures are essential to safeguard both the occupants and the building itself, ensuring compliance with modern safety standards and once the works are complete, they will again be concealed following installation of new ceilings etc.

The alterations to the WCs will see the masonry privacy screens removed (and replaced with plasterboard partitions) but these are a modern addition and carry no heritage significance.



The replacement of the existing floor finishes, ceilings and fire doors focuses on modern finishes which carry no heritage significance.

Given that the interventions are mostly limited to non-original elements and do not affect significant historic features, the overall impact on the building's historic fabric is assessed as **Very Low**.

5.3 Accessibility Improvements

Although the proposed works primarily involve a general refurbishment of the building, opportunities to improve the accessibility of the building have been incorporated where feasible.

The lighting will be upgraded to achieve improved lux levels throughout, enhancing visibility and user comfort. Where the fire alarm system is replaced, it will comply with modern standards and include visual indicators such as flashing beacons to assist users who are hard of hearing.

Alterations to the WCs will introduce ambulant disabled cubicles where these were previously absent, improving inclusivity.

New finishes will be specified in accordance with Light Reflectance Value (LRV) requirements set out in Approved Document M, including contrasting colours for doors, architraves, and stair nosings to aid visual differentiation. While door widening is not generally proposed, certain doors on escape routes will be increased in width to meet fire safety requirements.

No external works are planned, and access arrangements to the building will remain unaffected by the works.

6. Conclusion

The proposed internal refurbishment and fire safety works have been developed with careful consideration for the heritage significance of Victoria House. The design approach ensures that all interventions respect and preserve the building's historic character while delivering essential improvements to safety, functionality, and accessibility.

Heritage Sensitivity

- Works are confined to modern elements introduced during the 1980s conversion, including suspended ceilings, floor coverings, and non-original partitions (e.g., WC areas).
- No historic fabric or architectural features of value will be disturbed.
- Where minor alterations are necessary - such as the installation of fire barriers within ceiling voids - these interventions are fully reversible, maintaining the ability to restore the building to its original condition in the future.

Fire Safety and Compliance

- Enhanced fire safety measures include assessment and repair of existing fire barriers, installation of new barriers where absent, and appropriate fire-stopping at service penetrations.
- All works will comply with Approved Document B, relevant British Standards (e.g., BS 9999), and best practice guidance for heritage buildings.

Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

- Introduction of LED lighting improves energy performance and reduces operational costs.
- The design aligns with principles of sustainable heritage management, ensuring long-term viability without compromising historic character.

Accessibility Enhancements

- Upgraded lighting to achieve improved lux levels for visual comfort.
- Installation of visual fire alarm indicators to assist users who are hard of hearing.
- Provision of ambulant disabled WC cubicles.
- Finishes specified in accordance with Approved Document M to provide appropriate visual contrast and support inclusive use.



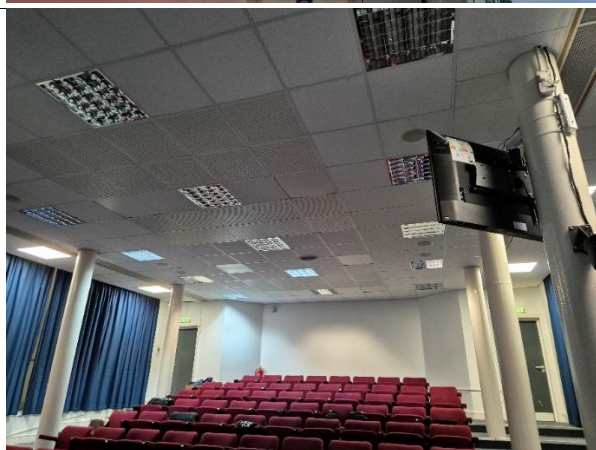
APPENDICES

7. Appendix A – Photographs



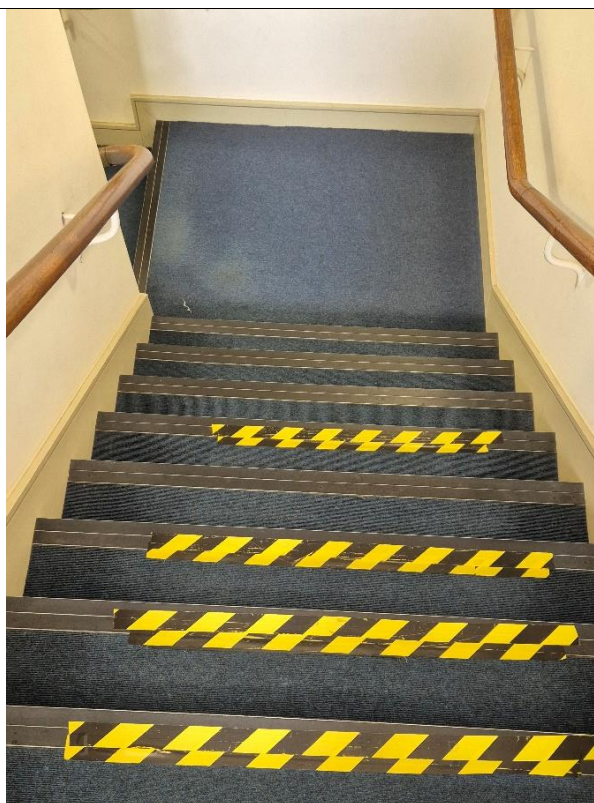


Example of current "hidden grid" suspended ceiling, found to both ground and first floor areas. To be replaced as part of refurbishment with new 600mm exposed grid suspended ceiling.



Lecture Theatre to ground floor. Replacement ceiling, lighting, carpets and auditoria seating.

Removal of curtains and application of frosted film to internal glazing



Protected escape staircase. Carpet with aluminium stair nosing to be replaced with new carpet tiles / metal stair nosing in colour to comply with colour contrast.



Example door with "port hole" vision panel that will be replaced – see door schedule and drawings



Example fire door with Georgian Wire glass (joints loose and door rating compromised) – to be replaced with new FD30S door with vertical vision panel – see door schedule and drawings



Double fire door, poorly fitting with significant damage, to be replaced with new FD30S double door – see door schedule and drawings



Another typical double fire door, poorly fitting with significant damage, to be replaced with new FD30S double door – see door schedule and drawings



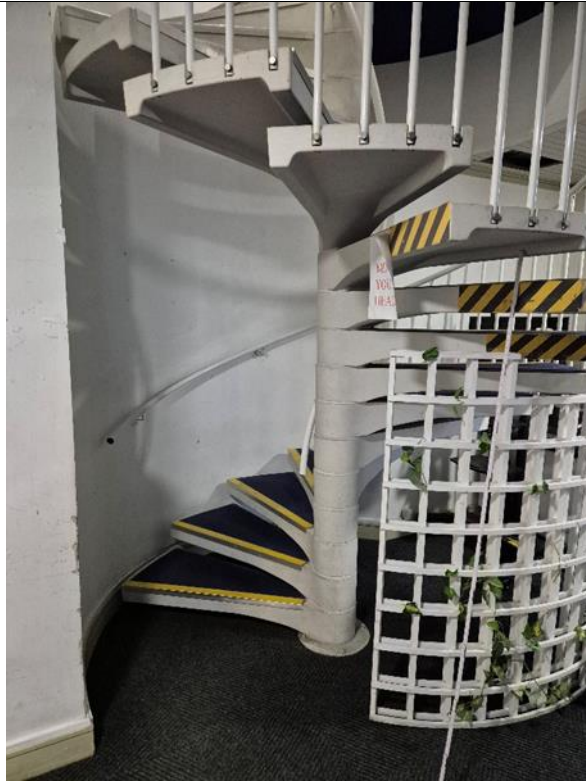
Longmoor Room, timber media wall to be removed. For details refer to the drawings



Restaurant lighting. Globe lights to columns and central ceiling hung chandeliers.



Standard office / meeting room fluorescent tube lighting to be replaced with LED. 600 x 600 tiles to be replaced for new as per the drawings



Spiral staircase. Carpet with aluminium stair nosing to be replaced with new carpet tiles / metal stair nosing in colour to comply with colour contrast.

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