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Mrs D Horton-Baker
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Dear Mrs Horton-Baker

Reigate Priory School – Existing Site pre-application discussions 2020

We have been reviewing the correspondence in connection with the Reigate Priory pre-application submissions made by Strutt & Parker on behalf of the Department for Education ('DfE') dated 17th July 2020. We note that a pre-application meeting took place on the 9th October 2020. The following documents have been provided by the DfE:

- Pre-covering letter dated 17th July 2020
- Pre-Application Heritage Statement
- Pre-Application meeting notes of 9th October 2020

A number of salient points from the pre-application notes namely:

1. Harm (from the several options submitted with the pre-application submission in 2020) would occur to the heritage asset based on the scale, mass, and height of the proposals as the Option 1 scheme was not subservient to the Grade 1 Listed Building.
2. The proposal would result in inappropriate development, with 'Very Special Circumstances' being required, and an Alternative Site Assessment submitted (due to the Green Belt nature of the site) to prove other sites with a less significant impact could not be found.
3. A three storey option would not be supported in the context of the Heritage Asset as a subservient building would be required.
4. A replacement of the 1950's scheme would need to be suitable in all respects namely relationship, scale, mass and heights.
5. A less than three storey building would not provide sufficient accommodation in the context of the 1950's footprint. Both internal and external minimum areas are required to meet current educational standards. To deliver a compliant new school the building must be a minimum of three floors.
6. The existing Grade 1 Listed Building cannot be remodelled to provide fit for purpose, modern facilities for pupils.

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7. The Local Plan confirms the following designations apply in respect of the existing Reigate Priory site:

- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Park
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Site of High Archaeological Potential
- Reigate Town Centre Conservation Area
- Green Belt
- Partially within Flood Zones 2 and 3

When discussing this with the 'DfE' the stance is clear that, as the initial high level viability studies resulted in an unfavourable pre-app response (as per meeting minutes), no further feasibility work was completed in favour of the pursuit of an on-site option based on the requirements in terms of floor area, vision for a new school facility in line with the current and future requirements.

The DfE issued a supportive letter during the current planning application period in connection with the relocation to Woodhatch per the current planning application before committee.

We would be grateful if this update was made available to Members given the information supplied may not have included the full background above.

Yours sincerely



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