

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/1323	Case Officer:	Emily Wade
Application Type:	Listed Building Consent		
Proposal:	Proposed interpretation installations and fixings and associated works within the ground floor of Wakehurst Place.		
Site:	Wakehurst Place, Selsfield Road, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6TN, ,		
Validation Date	4 Jun 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	27 Jun 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	28 Jul 2025
Target Date:	30 Jul 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Emily Wade

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	Date:	29 Jul 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/1323

**Wakehurst Place, Selsfield Road, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6TN,
Proposed interpretation installations and fixings and associated works within the ground floor of
Wakehurst Place.**

Board Of Trustees Of The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Historic England: No comment- we suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No response to date.

INTRODUCTION

The current proposal relates to the ground floor interior of the Grade I listed mansion house at Wakehurst Place and is for the installation of interpretation installations and fixings and associated works.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Wakehurst Place is a Grade I listed mansion dating from 1590, altered and restored during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The associated 18th century stable block, which is Grade II listed, is located a short distance to the north-east. The buildings are set in extensive gardens, parkland and woods, which are a II* registered park and garden, now looked after by Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The current proposal is for the installation of interpretative displays with fixings, and associated works, within part of the ground floor of the mansion house. The works are largely confined to a 19th century extension to the house, and include construction of a false section of wall at the western end of the chapel to better balance the appearance of this part of the room and to allow for a larger surface for projections, fixing of a projector to a roof truss within the billiard room, installation of new spotlights, a fuse board and control panel within the same room, drilling of a hole for a power supply through the wall between the hall and the chapel, and replacement of unsympathetic modern ironmongery with a more appropriate alternative.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND LIST OF POLICIES

Planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Using this as the starting point the development plan for this part of Mid Sussex consists of the District Plan, Site Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan.

National policy (which is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance) does not form part of the development plan, but is an important material consideration.

Mid Sussex District Plan

The District Plan was adopted at Full Council on 28th March 2018.

Relevant policies:

DP34 Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets.

Site Allocations DPD

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

There are no relevant policies.

Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan

Policy ARD 9: Heritage Assets

Other Material Considerations

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Consultation Draft

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to some of the policies in the draft District Plan and as such, only minimal weight can be given to the Plan and this planning application has been assessed against the policies of the adopted District Plan.

Relevant policies:

DPB2 Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Council has adopted a 'Mid Sussex Design Guide' SPD that aims to help deliver high quality development across the district that responds appropriately to its context and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design Guide was adopted by Council on 4th November 2020 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning applications. The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023)

Paragraphs 210-215 of the NPPF are relevant and state that:

'210. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- o the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

- o the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- o the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

211. In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.

212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
- and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
- c) and conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

Section 16 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

'In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

ASSESSMENT

District Plan Policy DP34 will be relevant and states, in part, that:

'Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:...

- *Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric...'*

The current proposal, which relates to the proposal to re-open some of the ground floor rooms of the mansion to the public with new interpretative installations relating to the work of Royal Botanic Gardens Kew at Wakehurst, and to the history of the site, has been carefully designed to minimise physical impact on the fabric of the building.

Within the Chapel, which is a late 19th century addition to the house, the west wall currently has an off-centred projection which is the back of the fireplace and chimney to the adjacent entrance hall. The current proposal introduces a section of false wall adjacent to this which will balance the appearance of the wall as a whole, and allow a larger surface for a projection. The work has been carefully designed to avoid adverse impact on the historic fabric, and will be fully reversible. This aspect of the proposal is not considered contentious.

The works within the hallway and billiard room are minor in nature, and with the exception of the loss of a small amount of fabric from drilling through the wall between the hall and chapel to allow for a power route, will not adversely affect the historic fabric of the building. This aspect of the proposal is also considered acceptable.

The proposal is therefore considered to preserve the special interest of the listed building, meeting the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

It is recommended that listed building consent is granted.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Emily Wade