

LONDON OFFICE

Mr Hamish Evans
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 1SS

Direct Dial: 0207 973 3627

Our ref: P01597199; L01597200

12th January 2026

Dear Mr Evans

**Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2015
& T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**SUNTE HOUSE, BIRCHEN LANE, HAYWARDS HEATH, WEST SUSSEX RH16
1RZ**

Application Nos DM/25/1705; DM/25/1706

Thank you for your letters of 23rd December 2025 regarding amendments to the above applications for listed building consent and planning permission. On the basis of the information provided, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the applications.

Introduction

Historic England provided written advice on the original scheme on 11th September 2025. The proposal involved internal and external alterations to the main house, enclosure of the north-east courtyard, new extensions to the north of the listed building, addition of a pool house within the existing enclosed kitchen garden and alterations to access and parking arrangements.

In that letter, we considered the proposals to represent an improvement on the earlier pre-application scheme and were broadly content with the internal alterations to the main house. However, we concluded that the following elements would still result in harm to the significance of the listed building and therefore recommended revisions to meet the requirements of paragraph 208 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF):

- The proposed substantial and unsympathetic single-storey pool house abutting the existing northern wall of the kitchen garden, which would adversely affect the character of the enclosed garden and its contribution to understanding the historical functioning of the site and the relationship between the buildings and the surrounding land.



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- The proposed large glazed element connecting the house and the reinstated dairy, which would introduce an unsympathetic component in close proximity to the listed building and disrupt the coherence of the reinstated form.
- The new access and parking area, which would introduce formal and unsympathetic features within the historic landscaped setting of the house, currently characterised by an informal and attractive appearance.

In addition, the scheme proposed replacement of all windows with double-glazed units. We therefore recommended completing the submitted window schedule with information on the age and significance of each unit, in order to inform a sympathetic approach to thermal upgrading.

In our previous letter we set out the significance of Sunte House and the relevant policy context. We do not repeat this information, but our earlier advice should be read in conjunction with the comments below on the recently submitted amendments.

Historic England Updated Position

In response to our comments, the footprint of the pool house has been reduced in length and the structure redesigned as a lightweight element, with services relocated within a curved extension of the existing garden wall. The revised conservatory-style design has improved both the visual and conceptual relationship between the new element and the garden setting. The new service enclosure reduces visual impact and also acts as a subtle reference to a lost 19th-century feature.

With regard to the link between the dairy building and the northern elevation of the house, the large extent of glazing to both the elevation and the roof has not been reduced. As a result, the adverse impact arising from the introduction of an unsympathetic element in close proximity to the listed building - affecting the coherence of the reinstated dairy - has not been addressed.

In relation to the proposed re-alignment of the western pathway and the provision of additional parking, it has not been confirmed whether these elements fall within permitted development rights. If they do, they should be withdrawn from the current applications and instead be considered under an application for a Lawful Development Certificate. The applicability of our previous comments is therefore subject to clarification on this point.

The current submission includes an addendum to the Heritage Statement (dated 19 December 2025), providing further clarification on the age and significance of the existing windows in the main house. The document identifies the ground-floor windows as late 20th-century replacements and those at first floor level and within the dormers as probable 19th-century units that have undergone refurbishments or partial replacement, likely as part of the wider late 20th century alterations. The basement retains an original opening and casement window on the southern section

of the east elevation; however, the timber frame is in poor condition and shows evidence of decay.

As set out in our previous letter, this updated information should inform a strategy to determine which windows should be retained, repaired, or replaced and how they could be upgraded to improve thermal performance. For further information on this topic, please refer to the following Historic England's published guidance:

Historic England Advice Note 18 (HEAN18): Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency (July 2024), available at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adapting-historic-buildings-energy-carbon-efficiency-advice-note-18/heag321-adapting-historic-buildings-energy-carbon-efficiency/>

Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading (February 2017, second ed.), under review, available at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/traditional-windows-care-repair-upgrading/heag039-traditional-windows-revfeb17/>

Recommendation

Historic England has no objection to the applications on heritage grounds, subject to the issues identified in our advice being addressed in order to avoid or further reduce harm to the significance of the listed building and to meet the requirements of paragraph 208 of the NPPF.

In determining these applications, you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 16(2) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the applications. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or if you require further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

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