



Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Date: 17 October 2025
Our ref: 10244

For the attention of: Stefan Galyas

Application ref: DM/25/2231
Location: Stonehurst Selsfield Road Ardingly Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 6TN
Proposal/Description: Reinstatement of observatory tower, proposed construction of orangery and associated works, including removal of hanging tiles

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

Review of Submitted Information

This review is based on a desktop study without a site visit of the above-referenced application and its submitted documents. This consultation responses focuses on specifically the landscape impact of the development proposals. The application submission includes a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Ref: 2551-TFC-00-ZZ-RE-L-8001.

The LVIA has been prepared using and referring the Landscape Institutes 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment'. This guidance sets out the industry standard best practice approach to producing LVIAs. The LVIA methodology is appropriate.

The LVIA refers to the relevant policy and guidance for development in the High Weald National Landscape, referencing the relevant management objectives and guidance. The LVIA also includes reference to the 'High Weald Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development', and links the proposed material finishes to this document. The location of the site and its proximity to Wakehurst Place have been assessed. Reference the Registered Park and Garden landscape designation have also been included within the LVIA.

The LVIA references the 'Dark Sky' objective of the High Weald National Landscape, AONB Management Plan. Para 5.2.8. of the LVIA states "*Combining the national value and the medium susceptibility results in a high/medium sensitivity. Specific impacts of the proposal would require a lighting assessment.*" (See summary.)

Figure 9 of the LVIA includes the Zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) to the application site. The proposals will be visible from the sites immediate surroundings and following the broad line of the B2028 from Ardingly in the south to Selsfield Common in the north. Figure 9 is a 'bare earth' assessment. Figure 10 shows a ZTV based on LIDAR data, which includes buildings and vegetation. Using this assessment, views to the site are still largely locally based, with longer views to the site mainly from the east and south. These visual receptors have been used to determine the viewpoints to inform the LVIA assessment.

Following a desk-based review, the location and assessment of the viewpoint receptors within the LVIA are generally deemed appropriate. For such a unique development proposal, linked to historical references and historic design cues, the balance of 'beneficial impact' within such as sensitive landscape setting should be carefully considered. The LVIA has demonstrated this.

We would however advise that historic environment advice is sort considering the sensitive heritage nature of the site and proposals.

In summary, the LVIA has been produced following the Landscape Institute guidance and provides a robust assessment of the site, the relevant policies and guidance, as well as how these have influenced the proposals.

Regarding the impact on the National Landscape, further consideration and reference to the need of a lighting assessment in line with the 'Dark Sky' objective of the High Weald National Landscape, AONB Management Plan, should be considered. This assessment could not only assess the impact of the proposals but may also provide some opportunities to mitigate any current lighting issues within the wider site area.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council.

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.