

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 07 January 2026 17:02:22 UTC+00:00
To: "Katherine Williams" <Katherine.Williams@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Wakehurst Place, Selsfield Rd, Ardingly DM/25/2341

Hi Katherine

Comments on the above planning application.

The application site is an open field to the west of Selsfield Road, just to the north of the northern entrance to Wakehurst Place. The proposal is for the construction of a weather station mast 11m in height with associated equipment and surrounding post and rail fence.

Wakehurst Place has at its heart a Grade I listed 16th century mansion house and associated II* listed 18th century stable block. These buildings are set in extensive formal gardens with parkland beyond- this is a II* registered park and garden. Although I would consider the listed buildings to be too distant from the site, with the intervening topography, planting and other buildings, to be affected by the proposal, the boundary of the registered park and garden is a relatively short distance to the south, although separated from the site by the visitor car park. In addition, a public right of way (PROW) runs along the northern access road just to the south of the site, passing close to the boundary of the registered garden, so that the site has the potential to affect the character of the approach to the designated heritage asset along this route.

I would also consider that the estate cottages located just to the south east of the site at 1 and 2 Yew Tree Cottages, which on some historical maps are identified as the north lodge to the estate, would be regarded as non- designated heritage assets (NDHAs). This cottage pair, which are prominent in views from Selsfield Road and the adjacent PROW, date from the late 19th or early 20th century, and are attractive and characterful, retaining a number of period features. They also have group value with the other historical buildings forming part of the Wakehurst estate.

A further registered park and garden is present to the opposite eastern side of Selsfield Road at Stonehurst- this is an extensive Grade II listed garden and pleasure grounds dating from the early 20th century. Intervisibility between the site and Stonehurst gardens is likely to be limited by screening to both sides of Selsfield Road and by the falling topography west to east, however there may be glimpsed views of the site from Selsfield Road which form part of vistas also including Stonehurst; in addition the above mentioned PROW, plus another which runs north-south through the application field to converge with the Wakehurst access road, emerge onto Selsfield Road opposite Stonehurst. To the extent to which the registered garden is appreciable from Selsfield Road, the site therefore affects the character of this approach to it.

Stonehurst house, which is located directly adjacent to Selsfield Road, is a substantial and attractive late 19th century house, retaining many period features, which the Council regards as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). This designation would include the associated lodge buildings, boundary walls etc.

The proposed weather station mast is a tall structure set in an open field which will undoubtedly be clearly visible in views from the adjacent PROWs and northern entrance track. It is also likely to be visible in glimpsed views from Selsfield Road, and in views from the south looking across the visitor's car park. However, given the slim profile and lightweight construction of the mast, it is unlikely to be particularly prominent in these views.

In respect of the Wakehurst registered park and garden, given the distance between the site and the boundary of the asset, the impact on views from within the gardens and on the character of the approach to them along the adjacent PROW is likely in my opinion to be minor and acceptable. Furthermore, it could be argued that the nature of the development is complementary to the research aspect of the gardens at Kew, which is also reflected in more significant structures such as the Millenium Seedbank. The impact on the NDHAs at Yew Tree Cottages will be more marked, but still limited, and insufficient in my opinion to equate to harm, particularly given the nature of the assets as part of the Wakehurst estate.

The impact on views from the Stonehurst RPG and the associated NDHAs, and on views/vistas including these assets from Selsfield Road, is also in my opinion likely to be limited and acceptable.

In summary the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the settings of the adjacent designated and non-designated heritage assets, meeting the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP36 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Thanks,

Emily

Please note that this advice is given at Officer level only and is without prejudice to the formal decision of the District Council.

Submit your planning application online.
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

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