



LONDON OFFICE

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

Direct Dial: 0207 973 3627

Our ref: P01597193; L01597203

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/25/1708; DM/25/1709

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 the residential conversion of a group of curtilage-listed farmyard buildings, including the barn, located to the north of Sunte House.

In that letter, we acknowledged that several of our pre-application recommendations had been incorporated into the scheme. However, we considered that some elements would still result in harm to the significance of the listed building and therefore recommend the following revisions to meet the requirements of paragraph 208 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF):

- Reducing the extent of glazing on courtyard-facing elevations of the farmyard buildings in order to preserve their rural and utilitarian character;
- Locating rooflights only on the outer slopes of the farm buildings to retain their vernacular appearance;



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- Relocating the proposed array of solar panels from the inner roof slope of the stables to a less conspicuous roof slope or to a ground-mounted location;
- Replacing the proposed slate roof tiles on the stables with clay tiles to maintain visual consistency with the immediate context; and
- Reducing the extent of glazing in the barn's southern extension to lessen visual dominance and retain the agricultural and utilitarian character of this rural building type.

In our previous letter we set out the significance of these farm buildings 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

We welcome the inclusion of some of our recommendations in the revised proposals. In particular, the rooflights previously proposed on the inward-facing elevations of the courtyard buildings have been removed. In addition, the proposed array of solar panels on the inner roof slope of the stables has been omitted. Notwithstanding these improvements, the re-cladding of the stables' roof with slate tiles – rather than the recommended clay tiles to maintain visual consistency - has been retained.

We note a discrepancy in the proposed design of the southern elevational of the stables, as illustrated on the revised drawing (ref: 335-FA-DR-00-202 rev. P02) and on p.6 of the Addendum to the Design and Access Statement (December 2025). The former reflects the earlier submission, while the latter indicates a reduction in the vertical extent of glazed areas. This discrepancy should be clarified.

With regard to the barn extension, the redesign as a lean-to structure has reduced the adverse impact of the earlier proposal by retaining the roof form of the host building, decreasing the scale of the new element and reinforcing its visual subservience. However, the large extent of glazing creates an out-of-keeping, domestic appearance to this important former farm building, while the use of a zinc-clad roof, intended to distinguish the contemporary intervention, does not sympathetically relate to it.

We draw your attention to Historic England's guidance *Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings – Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Re-use*, available at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adapting-traditional-farm-buildings/heag158-adapting-traditional-farm-buildings/>.

Paragraph 3.11 of the guidance states:



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“Overtly domestic extensions such as porches and conservatories are alien in character and can rarely work successfully within the context of historic farm buildings. However, a carefully designed extension or new structure might be considered alongside a farm building if this will safeguard the significance of the main structure. [...]

Whether contemporary in design or based on an existing structure, extensions and new buildings should be subordinate in scale and relate to the massing and character of the existing farmstead group.”

We therefore recommend significantly reducing the amount of glazing in the proposed extension to better reflect the building typology, materiality and traditional character of the barn.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the applications on heritage grounds. While the proposals for the main farmyard buildings (stables, cowshed, and byre) and the cottage can be considered broadly acceptable, the conversion scheme for the barn should be amended reduce the amount of glazing in the proposed extension, in accordance with our advice, 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 or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments and further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or if you require further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

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