

RICHARD PARR
ASSOCIATES



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Document
Design & Access Statement

Project
Sunte House The Farmyard & The Barn

Date
June 2025

Design and Access Statement for works at:

Sunte House, Birchen Lane,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex RH16 1RZ

Richard Parr Associates
studio@richardparr.com
+44 (0)1453 860200
richardparr.com
@richardparrassociates

+
COUNTRY
Easter Park
Nympsfield, Stonehouse
Gloucestershire GL10 3UL

TOWN
The People's Hall
Studio 5, 2 Olaf Street
London W11 4BE



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Revision	Issue Date	Purpose of Issue
P01	18.06.25	First Issue - Full Application Submission

1.0 Introduction



Introduction

1.1

Clarifications: Application Extents

The following report relates to the proposed works at;

**Sunte House
Birchen Lane,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex RH16 1RZ**

Two concurrent applications are being submitted for the property with the respective boundary extents reflected on the adjacent site plans. This report outlines the proposals to The Farmyard and The Barn and associative gardens & access (fig 01)

For all information relating to Sunte House and associated outbuildings (fig 02) please refer to the corresponding application material

note: this report makes reference to, and includes information on Sunte House for benefits of clarity and full appreciation of the site and its context.

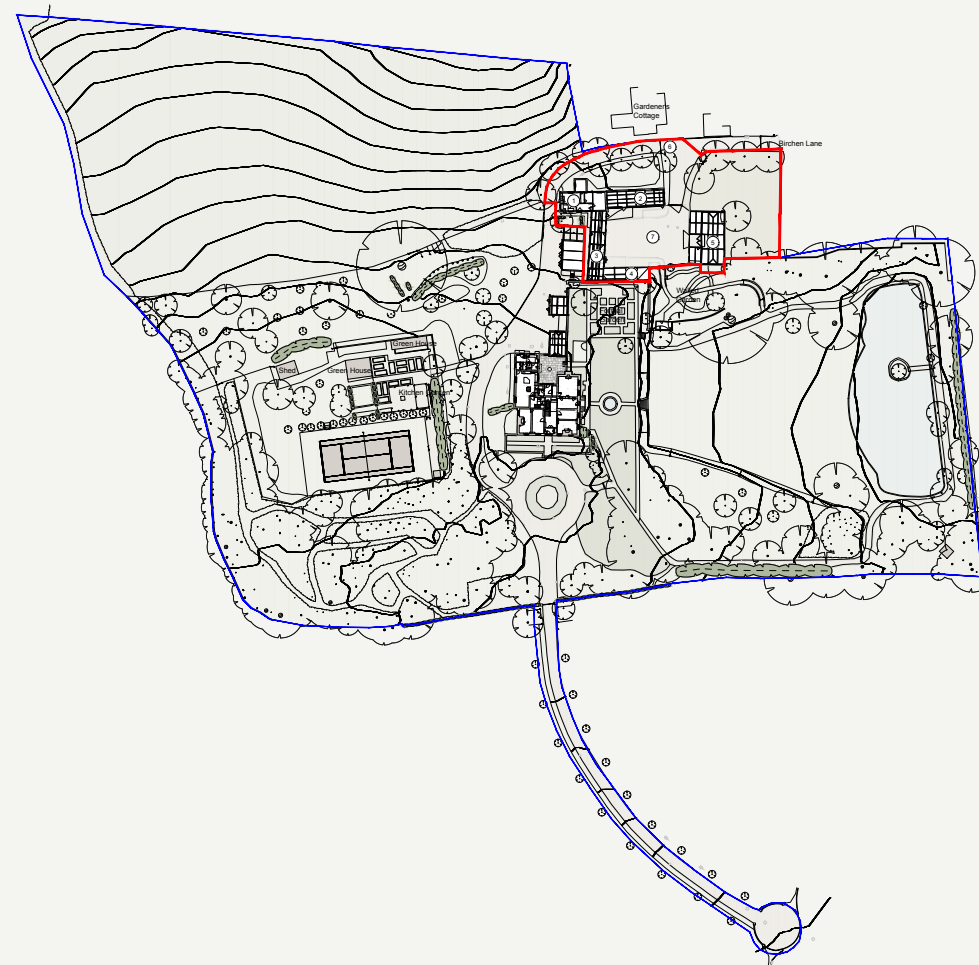


Fig 01. Application Boundary for the proposed works relating to 'The Farmyard' & 'The Barn'

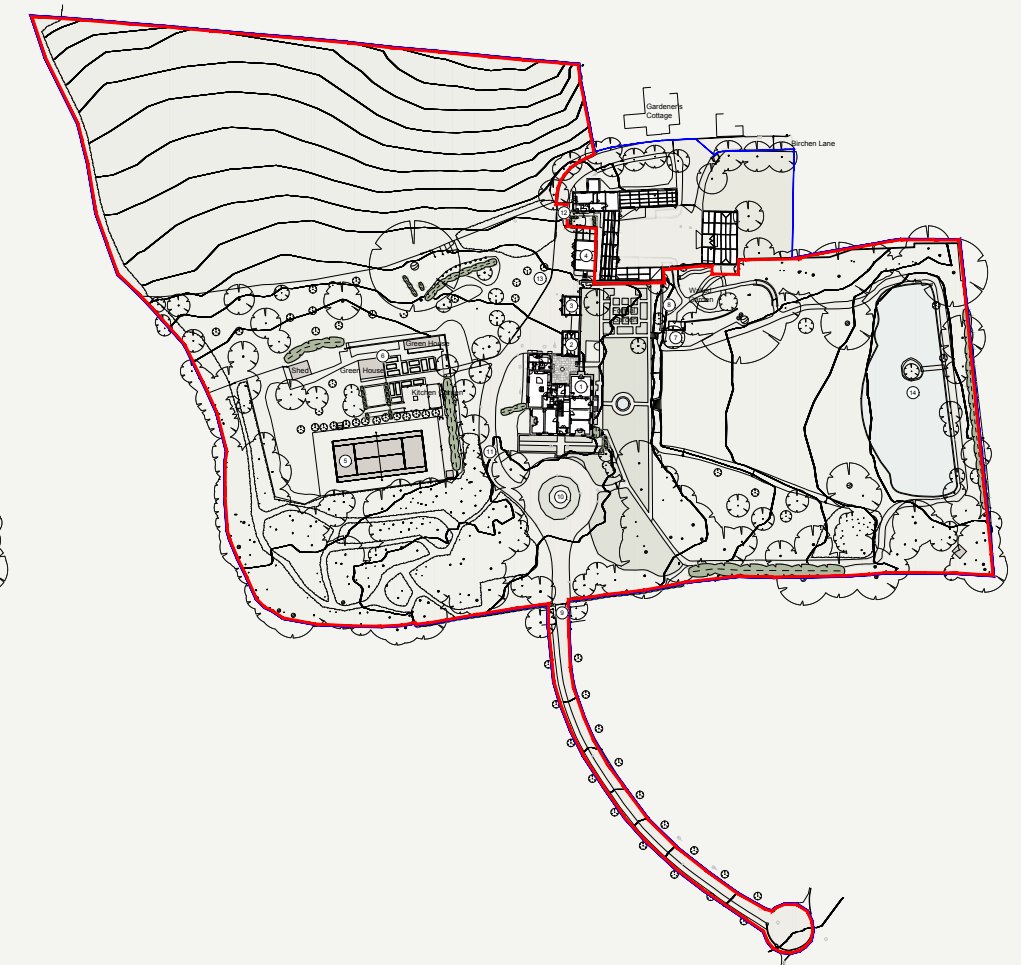


Fig 02. Householder Application Boundary for corresponding submmission and the proposed works relating to Sunte House, outbuildings and associated grounds



Introduction

1.2 Executive Summary & Planning History

This design and access statement has been prepared by Richard Parr Associates on behalf of the owners of Sunte House as part of the information submitted to Mid-Sussex Council in relation to the application. The proposals shall be seeking planning permission and listed building consent (where required).

The proposals set out within this report seek to continue the restoration and conversion of the The Grade II* listed Sunte House and associated buildings. The proposals set out herein are focussed on the collection of curtilage listed buildings forming the Farmyard and The Barn to the North of the house, which are proposed for dwelling conversion and fabric improvements. All of the design proposals seek to retain as much of the existing architectural fabric as feasible and to complement the historic significance of the house and grounds.

This report identifies the planning and design considerations which have informed the proposed development to date, to provide a scheme that meets the aspirations of the Client and the requirements of planning policy both at local and national levels. This includes incorporation of feedback received as part of two pre-application engagement enquiries and two site visits to date from Mid Sussex and Historic England, as summarised below;

- Pre-Application Engagement 01: August 2024
- Site Visit: Mid Sussex with Hamish Evans & Emily Wade October 2024
- Site Visit: Historic England with Alma Howells & Luciana Gallo November 2024
- Pre-Application Engagement 02: March 2025

Notable design development following officers' engagement has included, but not limited to;

- Revised façade design of the farmyard buildings to reduce glazing extents, provide sympathetic fenestration and detailing in line with historic England guidance
- Revised design and use class for the barn, retaining its double height internal arrangement, retaining the principal openings and legibility from the farmyard court and reducing the location / area of extended footprint to be consolidated solely to the south, akin to the extant permission on the building.

The document should be read in conjunction with the supporting information provided by the project team, notably: the Planning Statement prepared by Whaleback (June 2025) and the Heritage Impact Assessment by Robinson Wild Consulting (June 2025). This document is intended to be printed at A3 for the plan scales and scale bars to be accurate.

Summary of key considerations below;

1. The Site, is located on the edge of Haywards Heath with the land ownership totalling 2.87 hectares (or 7.5 acres), of which this application entails 0.2.
2. The house is Grade II* listed with associated curtilage listing to the outbuildings, hereon referred to as The Cow Shed, The Stables, The Cottage & The Byre. (The Farmyard), & The Barn. The walled garden and gardener's tool shed are independently Grade II listed.
3. The wider outbuildings to Sunte House named The Dairy, The Tool Shed and The Garage, are also curtilage listed and submitted within a concurrent application.
4. The collection of buildings forming the farmyard and the barn, have been updated and adapted many times in its history, with substantial amounts of modern, poor quality fabric present across the external and internal fabric. There is also substantial degradation of fabric, notably to the Cow Shed where the roof and envelope is not weathertight, causing accelerated damage to the internal fabric.
- 5: Extant permission resides across this area of the property following the 2006 permission and



Introduction

1.3 Executive Summary & Planning History

2021 Lawful development Certificate issued by Mid-Sussex. Only a small portion of the permitted scheme has been implemented on site, notably to the stables with modern slab and drainage present.

6: The barn, whilst determined to be curtilage listed and have portions of historic fabric internally, has been substantially modified, including its footprint. Large extents of modern structural timber is present internally, alongside exposed modern concrete block to the external envelope that not withstanding the barn's overall character, causes significant detriment to the legibility of historic fabric. The proposals seek to retain the primary reading of the building from the farmyard, whilst sympathetically replacing its modern concrete block fabric with timber weatherboarding (where relevant). Also retrofitting an insulated zone outside of the primary timber structure, to benefit longevity to the building, whilst not compromising the internal exposed character. A small extension to the south is proposed to benefit the relationship with the walled garden whilst extending the hipped roof profile in keeping with the current roof form. This akin to the extant permission proposals.

7: The architectural approach to the proposed glazed extension at the barn seeks to provide a contextual language, independent to the existing to benefit and expose the legibility of historic fabric.

Wider considerations to inform this approach are set out further in the document and in full, within the Heritage Impact Appraisal.

8: To the cow shed, cottage and byre, internal arrangements have been revised to install / re-position partitions whilst working with the visible primary truss lines.

9: All proposed openings to the buildings have been predominantly consolidated where existing openings reside. Care has been taken to place these in keeping with the existing modulation and rhythm of the primary façade compositions, where timber posts, stone and brick plinths, and projecting eaves form key datums to marry with.

10: The existing severely degraded windows around the buildings are proposed for double glazed replacements to increase U-value, air tightness and thermal performance. A select number of skylights are proposed to benefit daylight, however, have been reduced from previous number and arranged to mitigate visual impact to preserve the reading of the buildings.

11: The existing roof finishes vary around the buildings, some of modern finish. These will be replaced (The Stables), repaired and reclaimed (The Cottage, The Byre, The Cow Shed, The Barn) to achieve weather tightness and achieve appropriate finishes in keeping with the local

vernacular. Any legible, primary historic structure will be retained where structurally suitable and exposed to maintain internal character.

12: New insulated slabs are proposed to the cow shed, cottage, byre and barn to remedy damp and air tightness issues and provide more comfortable habitable spaces. This in line with the delivered works within the stables. Floor levels will be suitably coordinated to not compromise the reading of the buildings from the wider landscape.

13: All new buildings will be designed with high quality materials and will be integrated seamlessly into the existing landscape character.

14: Domestic Hot Water and Heating is proposed via Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) installation, with localised units installed to the rear of The Byre. Solar PVs are also proposed to the roof of the Stables to assist in meeting Part-L requirements.



Introduction

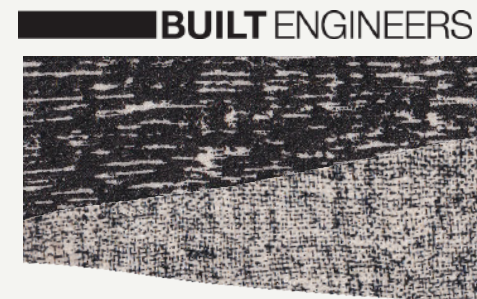
1.4

Applicant & Project Team

The client has assembled a professional team to realise the opportunity of development for Sunte House. Richard Parr Associates has been appointed as Architect for the project with Whaleback as the Planning Consultant.

We have also collaborated with the following team to develop the proposals and supporting material for the application. All parties are seeking to inform a contextual, sympathetic, yet ambitious response that is rooted in an understanding of the estate and its history:

- Planning Consultant, Whaleback
- Heritage Consultant, Robinson Wild Consulting
- Ecologist, Urban Edge
- Arboriculturist, Urban Edge
- Structural Engineer: Built Engineers
- Civils Engineer: Built Engineers
- Mechanical & Electrical Engineer: Mesh Energy
- Flood Risk & Foul Drainage Assessment: UNDA
- Quantity Surveyor: PT Projects



WHALEBACK



**RICHARD PARR
ASSOCIATES**



Introduction

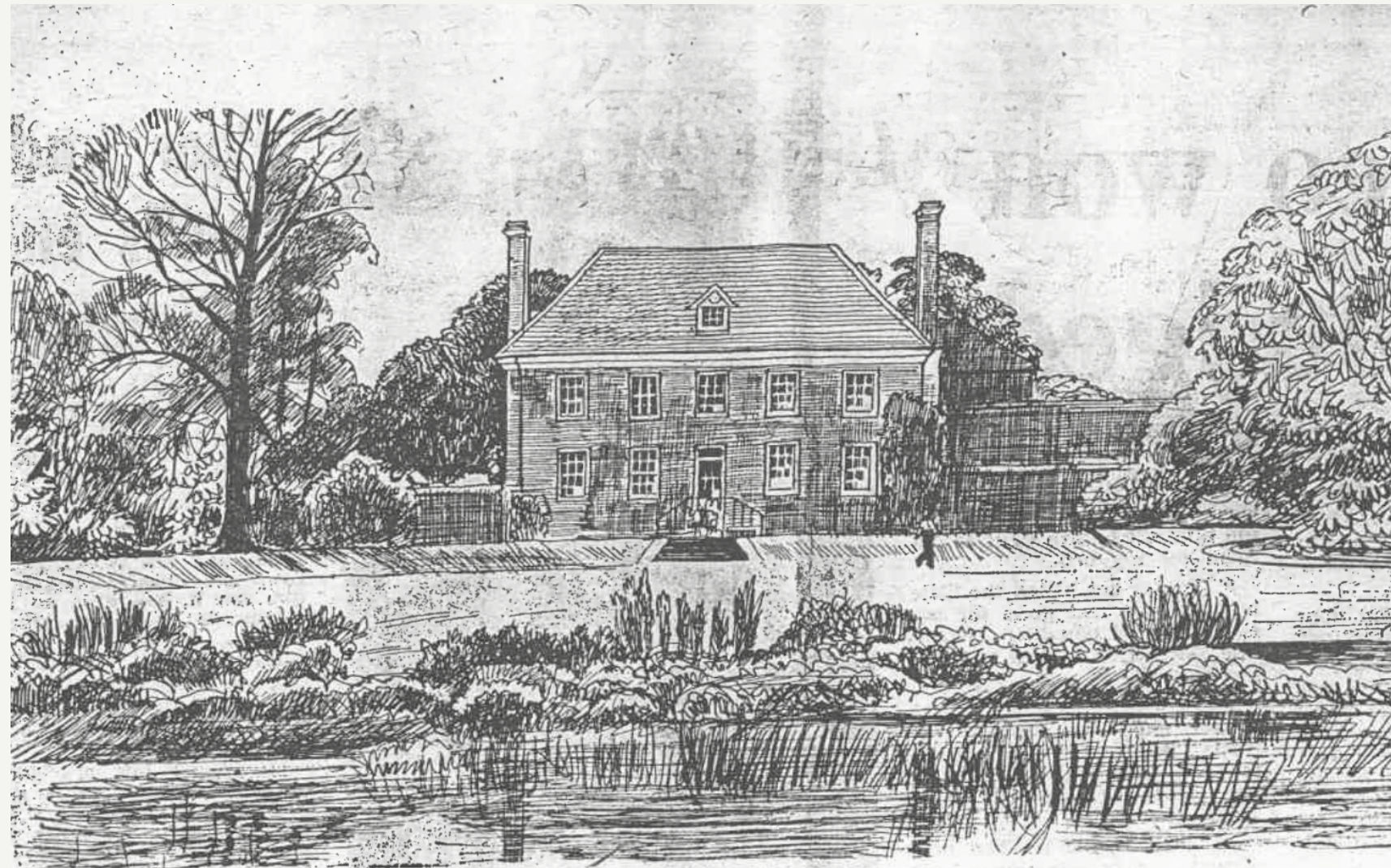
1.5

Brief & Aspirations

This application is part of a collective, long-term vision for Sunte House, to celebrate the building's heritage and its relationship to the surrounding landscape. The ambition is to allow the enjoyment of the whole site through considerate architectural interventions.

To achieve this, the existing, severely degraded building fabric to the farmyard will be refurbished, and with sympathetic additions, create high quality, habitable spaces and preserve these characterful buildings for future use. By understanding the site's character and working closely with heritage experts, we have conceived a contextual proposal arranged for modern living, yet carefully considered in respect of the historic fabric.

Sustainable retrofit measures will bring significant improvements to the fabric performance and help sustain a legacy project for the client and their family to enjoy for generations to come.



2.0 The Site



2.1

The Site

Context

Sunte House is situated on the northern outskirts of Haywards Heath, west of Lindfield, and lies at the southern edge of the High Weald, a landscape characterised by winding ridges and steep river valleys.

Land immediately to the north of the Site is designated as an Archaeological Notification Area defining an area of Iron Age and Roman Industrial Activity.

Designations

- ✗ AONB
- ✓ ANA
- ✗ National Park
- ✗ Conservation Area
- ✗ Ramsar
- ✗ SSSI
- ✗ SPA
- ✗ Greenbelt
- ✗ RSPB Reserve
- ✗ Ancient Woodland
- ✓ Grade II* Listed House
- ✓ Grade II Listed Garden Wall and Building
- 1 Flood Risk Area

- Site Boundary
- Site Structures
- Road
- Water





2.2

The Site

Existing Aerial

1: Farmyard: Located to the North-East of Sunte House, a central yard is enclosed on four sides by agricultural buildings, a gap in the north-east corner providing access from Birchen Lane, with garden gate to the walled garden to the south.

2: Gardens: An 18th century red brick and stone garden wall located to the NE of the house forms a walled garden and with the C18th garden store, is independently Grade II Listed.

3: Sunte House: sits centrally to the site and dates to c.1700, with additions in the 18th and 19th centuries, and is Grade II* Listed.

4 Leisure: The existing tennis court is located to the west of the house. It has an east-west orientation and is in poor condition.

5: Access: The Main Entrance driveway and turning circle is to the south from Gander Green, with secondary access from the North off Birchen Lane.





The Site

2.3

Existing Aerial Sketch

