

**DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

**Proposal for a new garden artist studio at:**

*The Holt  
Selsfield Road  
Ardingly  
West Sussex  
RH17 6TN*

April 2025

**Mr Philip & Mrs Meriel Stinson**

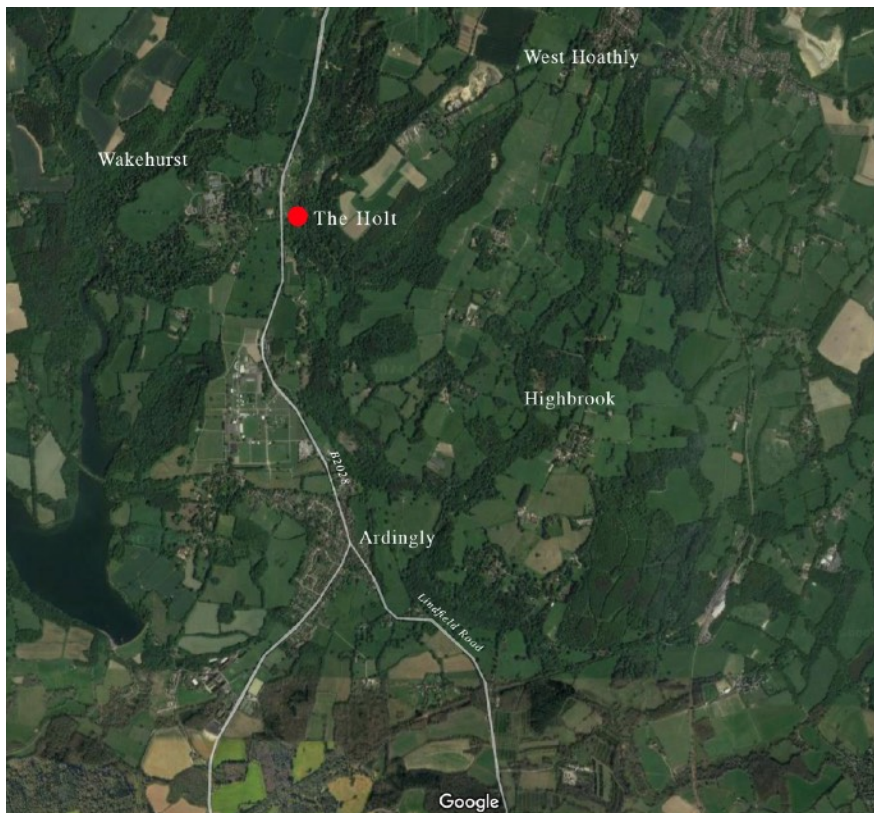
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## 1. BACKGROUND

The Holt is located in a rural setting on Selsfield Road between Ardingly and Selsfield Common. Wakehurst place is situated immediately to the west. To the north lies South Lodge and Stonehurst. Chiddinglye wood is located to the north east.

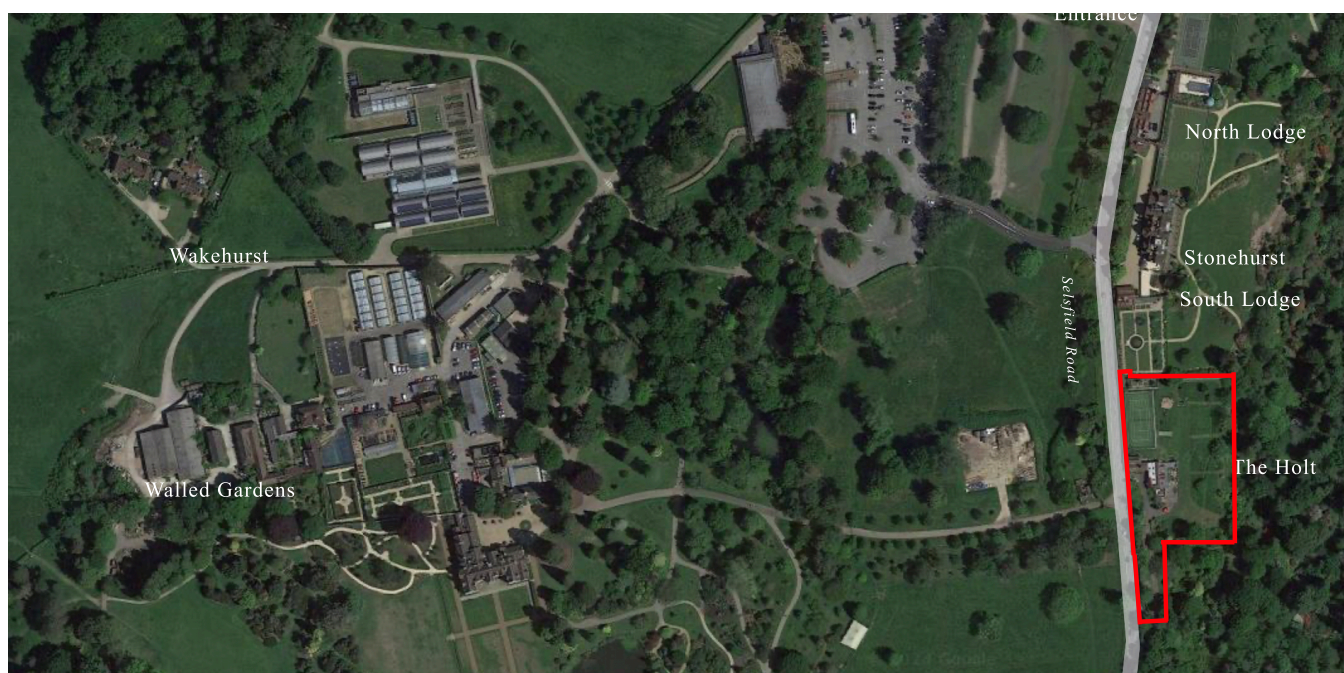
The grounds associated to Stonehurst Estate have been separated in the early 2000s into three separate and privately owned estates referred to as Stonehurst, the Holt and Many Waters. The Holt has been in private residential use since 2002. The proposal site is, where Stonehurst Nursery originally operated from. It consisted of three buildings, the potting shed and two greenhouses. The potting shed is used as an ancillary building to the Holt. It houses the 3 phase power supply for the main house. Although the existing greenhouses no longer exist, building outlines of the greenhouses are still distinguishable today. There are still some existing brick walls remaining, which formerly held the greenhouse roof structures up.



Googlemaps satellite view - March 2025

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Googlemaps satellite view - March 2025

## 2. EXISTING SITE CONTEXT

### Flood Risk Summary

#### *Surface Water*

|                                                  |          |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Yearly chance of flooding:                       | Very low |
| Yearly chance of flooding between 2040 and 2060: | Very low |

#### *Rivers and the Sea*

|                                                  |          |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Yearly chance of flooding:                       | Very low |
| Yearly chance of flooding between 2036 and 2069: | Very low |

#### *Groundwater*

Flooding from groundwater is unlikely in this area

Reservoirs:

Flooding from reservoirs is unlikely in this area

### Tree Preservation Order (TPO)

There are no TPO's associated with this site.

### Conservation Area

The proposal site lies outside of the conservation area.

### Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The site lies within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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## Listing

The site lies within a listed parkland, Stonehurst Park & Garden.

|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| Listing:           | Grade 2    |
| List Entry:        | 100326     |
| Date First Listed: | 01.08.1988 |

## 3. PLANNING HISTORY

**09/00261/FUL** - Minor Amendment to approved development 08/00302/FUL  
*Approved*

**08/00302/FUL** - Minor alteration to approved scheme AR/07/00891/FUL  
*Approved*

**07/00891/FUL** - Alteration and extension within existing building lines  
*Approved*

**05/00275/FUL** - Replacement of existing dilapidated wooden fence with wooden close board fence  
*Approved*

## **4. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 182 & 183)**

The scale and extent of development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty should be limited.

### **Midsussex District Plan (2014-2031)**

#### **DP12 Protection and Enhancement of Countryside**

The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.

The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.

#### **DP16 High Weald Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;

- the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;
- the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;
- character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and
- the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the AONB that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.

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Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular should not adversely affect the views into and out of the AONB by virtue of its location or design.

## **DP26 Character and Design**

All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:

- is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;
- contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;
- creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;
- protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;
- protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;
- does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);
- creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;

## **DP36 Historic Parks & Gardens**

The character, appearance and setting of a registered park, or park or garden of special local historic interest will be protected. This will be achieved by ensuring that any development within or adjacent to a registered park, or park or garden of local historic interest will only be permitted where it protects and enhances its special features, setting and views into and out of the park or garden.

## 5. PROPOSAL

### Amount, Gross Internal Area

GIA: 15.5 sqm

Proposed footprint: 29.5 sqm

### Scale and appearance



We were commissioned by the client to develop a design for a new garden artist studio utilising the picturesque views over the east facing woodlands and valley. From the beginning we were looking into a design approach, which pays reference to the sites former use as a camellia nursery, whilst also telling a new story. The proposal has been placed within the outline of the former greenhouses. The remaining brick walls of the former greenhouses are utilised within the landscape design. The modern design clearly distinguishes between the old and new, whilst harmoniously integrating references from the past. The design is a contemporary adaptation of a traditional greenhouse with a similar modular language and form. Whilst earlier iterations showed a greenhouse roofing system, we deviated away from this idea to ensure the buildings thermal performance can operate as sustainably as possible to avoid unnecessary overheating in the summer months. We are proposing a north facing roof light, which not only provides optimal light conditions for painting, but can also be used for cross ventilation. We are proposing for automatic blinds to be installed to avoid night time light pollution. The building is a timber frame structure with timber windows, doors and a zinc roof. An intricate timber fin screen would be installed in front of the south facing windows in order to further assist in the

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temperature control of the building in the summer months. We are proposing a flat mounted pv panel system integrated between the standing seams of the zinc roof. There are several products on the market such as Flextron solar panels or Rheinzink solar system.

The scale of the modestly sized garden studio has been carefully considered to be sympathetic to its surrounding context. The proposed ridge height is 4.2m, which is the same as the existing potting shed. As the proposed street elevation on drawing 2411-01-30 will show, the proposed garden studio is discreetly tucked away and would barely be seen from Selsfield Road. The neighbouring house South Lodge, which falls within the curtilage of Stonehurst, is approximately 45m away from the proposal site. We believe the proposed scheme would barely be noticeable from this distance. The garden studio is designed to be a non-habitable space.

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Timber fins screen reference



Modular greenhouse design reference

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Flextron almost invisible flat mounted solar panels



Grey brick plinths

## Layout

The proposed garden artist studio is a single, open plan multifunctional space used for painting and crafts. It has a vaulted ceiling.

## Landscaping

In our view the landscaping around the proposal site feels currently underutilised. It is partly used for productive gardening to grow seasonal vegetables, however we believe there is a need to create a landscape, which improves the biodiversity and facilitates the emergence of new habitats.

The landscape design proposal is looking to re-use the east and west facing brick walls of the former greenhouse to form two raised flowerbeds with herbaceous borders. Furthermore, we are proposing planting along the north facing brick boundary wall within the pre-existing raised brick beds. These would be used for productive gardening.

The hard landscaping would be minimal, with terraces formed on either side of the proposed garden studio. These would be outdoor stone tiles.

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We believe successful methods of enhancing the biodiversity of the site would be:

## Enhancements for Nesting Birds

To provide a net positive benefit for nesting birds within the development, we propose to install further bird boxes, e.g. sparrow terraces across the site.

## Insect & Bee Hotel

We are proposing for an insect and bee hotel to be installed, which will attract bees, butterflies and ladybirds and a host of other insects to the garden.

## Plants for pollinators

Seed producing plants need to be pollinated in order to reproduce, maintain genetic diversity, and develop fruits and seeds. Nearly all food crops rely on pollination by beneficial insects and other animals. Plants and pollinators have evolved to create a symbiotic relationship and pollinators depend on flower nectar and pollen as their food source. Plants are fertilised when pollinators transfer pollen between flowers. Naturally some plants are more attractive to pollinators than others. Simply, because they are either more accessible or else produce more food. Over time pollinators have evolved to seek out plants that are naturally a rich source of nectar and pollen.

Here are a few examples of plants, which have certain traits that entice pollinators due to the colour of the flower, shape or scent.

- Bees prefer purple, blue, orange or yellow flowers with short tubes or no tubes that are easily accessible
- Butterflies favour white, pink, red, yellow or purple flowers with a place to perch while they sip on nectar.

We believe establishing herbaceous borders with perennials such as allium, lavender and salvia are a great way to enhance the natural habitat.

## **Access**

The access remains as existing without any alteration.