

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/24/2780	Case Officer:	Katherine Williams
Application Type:	Listed Building Consent		
Proposal:	Replacement of the existing oil tank fired boilers with a new Air and Water Source Heat Pump system and associated works (Amended description 09/12/2024).		
Site:	Wakehurst Place, Selsfield Road, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6TN, ,		
Validation Date	22 Nov 2024	Overall Expiry Date:	10 Jan 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	15 Jan 2025
Target Date:	17 Jan 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Katherine Williams

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	15 Jan 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/24/2780

**Wakehurst Place, Selsfield Road, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6TN,
Replacement of the existing oil tank fired boilers with a new Air and Water Source Heat Pump
system and associated works (Amended description 09/12/2024).**

C/o Agent

LETTERS OF REPRESENTATION

None received

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

MSDC Conservation Officer - no objection

Historic England - defer the Council's Conservation Officer

Historic Environment Consultant - no recommendations to make concerning this application.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No objection

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks listed building consent for the replacement of the existing oil tank fired boilers with a new Air and Water Source Heat Pump system and associated works.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

AP/039/88 - New stair between 1st and 2nd floor with removal of present fire screen on 1st floor landing and construction of new fire screens in 1st floor corridor. Granted

AR/021/89 - Removal of bathroom, cupboard and related partitions from parts of second floor attic area. Granted

04/01769/LBC - Change of use of storage room and 2 no. education rooms to kitchen facility involving two new openings in one wall and new floor, wall and ceiling finishes. Change of use of 3 no. storerooms to an education room involving the part demolition of 3 no. walls. Granted

DM/19/5123 - Rebuild Memorial Garden Wall. Granted

DM/19/5126 - Rebuild Memorial Garden Wall. Granted

DM/20/0041 - Rationalise, upgrade and relocate the main electrical services from within the basement plant room W-1001-B1-005 to the first floor unused HR Room, involving some removal and later re-instatement of sections of timber wall panelling to access existing risers enroute to the new location.

Granted

DM/22/0197 - Proposed re-roofing of the existing Sussex/Wealden sandstone and Horsham stone slate roof of Wakehurst Place. The proposed works also include external fabric repairs, repairs to rainwater goods, masonry repairs, glazing repairs, temporary works, structural repairs, fire compartmentalisation, fire alarm installation, and co-ordinated maintenance access. Granted

DM/22/0198 - Proposed re-roofing of the existing Sussex/Wealden sandstone and Horsham stone slate roof of Wakehurst Place. The proposed works also include external fabric repairs, repairs to rainwater goods, masonry repairs, glazing repairs, temporary works, structural repairs, fire compartmentalisation, fire alarm installation, and co-ordinated maintenance access. Granted

DM/22/0917 - Erection of two temporary portacabin structures within the existing staff car park to provide educational and welfare facilities in connection with Wakehurst. Under Consideration

DM/24/2822 - Replacement of the existing oil tank fired boilers with a new Air and Water Source Heat Pump system and associated. Under Consideration

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application building consists of a Grade I listed building which is run by the National Trust. The building is a large E-shaped three storey sandstone ashlar house dating from 1590 with 19th century

additions. The building has a number of roof forms and valleys which contribute to the character of the building. The building is roofed in with cement bedded Horsham stone slate with cement fillets which is estimated to date back to the 1970s and is in need of repair with some of the beds lost resulting in slipped and broken slates. To the north of the building is the original stable building for the property which is Grade II* listed and has been subsequently converted to form a restaurant. Beyond this building are the associated buildings, structures and infrastructure used in association with the use and management of the property. Further to the north is the Millennium Seed Bank. These buildings are accessed by a private access road which extends to the western side of Selsfield Road.

Wakehurst Place is also located within the Grade II* Registered Park and Gardens of Wakehurst, the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the countryside.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal includes the removal of the existing 3 No. oil tanks and sections of the surrounding walls to the northwestern side of the Stable Restaurant. This would be replaced by 3 No. Air Source Heat Pumps and 2 No. thermal stores. The ASHPs would be positioned within an attenuator which would have a height of some 3 metres. The thermal store would include an increase in the roof by some 0.4 metres with a mono pitched roof. The boilers within the existing boiler room would also be replaced by 2 No. Water Source Heat Pumps.

The existing northern wall would be replaced by timber fencing.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND LIST OF POLICIES

DISTRICT PLAN (adopted March 2018)

Relevant policies:

DP34 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

Site Allocations DPD

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

There are no policies deemed relevant to this application.

Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan (made March 2015)

Relevant policies:

ARD 9 - Heritage Assets

ARD 20 - Wakehurst Place and Millennium Seed Bank

Other Planning Legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Other Material Considerations

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 - 2039 - Submission Draft (Regulation 19)

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to the majority of

Policies in the draft District Plan and as such, only minimal weight can be given to the Plan and this planning application has been assessed against the policies of the adopted District Plan.

Relevant policies:

DPB2 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Council has adopted a 'Mid Sussex Design Guide' SPD that aims to help deliver high quality development across the district that responds appropriately to its context and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design Guide was adopted by Council on 4th November 2020 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning applications. The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

ASSESSMENT

The LPA is under a duty by virtue of s.16(2) of the Listed Building and Conservation Area (LBCA) Act 1990 (Decision on application): *'In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'*

The NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Policy DP34 of the District Plan is relevant and states:

'Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- *A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal;*
- *Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use;*
- *Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- *Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;*
- *Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*
- *Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric.'*

Policy ARD9 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan echoes the ethos of this policy. Policy AR20 specifically relates to Wakehurst Place and states:

'The Neighbourhood Plan will support development proposals which will enable Wakehurst Place and the Millennium Seed Bank to expand to meet new and changing needs as both a tourist destination and centre of research of international importance, provided that the design is sympathetic to the heritage assets and the important landscape setting.'

Paras 205, 212-215 of the NPPF state:

'205. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

Principle DG11 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states: 'Heritage assets and historic landscapes should be celebrated, enhanced and preserved where appropriate, for the enjoyment of existing and future residents. Where appropriate and providing it does not cause harm to the heritage assets or their setting, they should be carefully integrated into development proposals as they help to reinforce a sense of place and local identity.'

Elsewhere new development should generally reflect the scale of adjacent areas and the settlement context within which it is located to deliver a coherent and consistent urban fabric.

There may be potential to introduce a new character / development form and massing (refer to chapter 5):

- On larger urban extensions; this will typically be within the middle of the site and associated with a new neighbourhood centre, spine road or the main open space.
- In town centre locations defined as coarse grain areas and nearby sites identified on the brownfield sites register.'

Historic England has been consulted on the application and state that they do not wish to provide comments on the application.

The Council's Conservation Officer has provided the following comments on the application:

'Wakehurst Place contains a grouping of heritage assets- a Grade I listed 16th century mansion, and associated Grade II listed 18th century former stables building with associated ancillary buildings set within a II* registered park and garden. The wider site, which is now owned by the National Trust and managed by Kew Gardens, is open to the public, and the former stables building has been converted to provide facilities including a visitor restaurant.*

The current proposal relates to a service area to the rear (north west) of the stables, which houses the electrical plant room, oil fired boilers and oil tanks, and is for the replacement of the boilers and tanks with an air and water source heat pump system, as part of the estate's decarbonisation programme.

As existing, the structures in the area are largely modern and unattractive- the proposed works will replace the existing oil tanks with air source heat pumps and attenuation, which will be somewhat higher than the existing structures, but will be partly concealed by a louvred timber frame to one side, and by an existing stone wall to another- to the remaining two sides the area is enclosed by existing buildings. Associated works include alterations to the stone wall to remove a modern blockwork extension to it, and to the existing adjacent thermal store comprising re-roofing, re-rendering and a new door. Water source heat pumps will be installed in the existing boiler room.

Given the existing nature of the site, and its position to the rear of the stables building, the proposed works are not considered contentious in principle. Although the ASHP enclosure will be somewhat taller and more visually prominent than the existing oil tanks, it will be partially screened, and otherwise at least tidier in appearance than the existing tanks and associated plant. The other associated works to the thermal store and boiler room are relatively minor and affect historic fabric only in the attachment of the new thermal store roof to the stables' wall. On this basis the proposal is not considered to harm the special interests of the affected heritage assets.

I am also mindful of the requirements of paragraph 167 of the NPPF that: 'Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights).'

The proposal is therefore considered to preserve the special interest of the Stables, the registered park and garden, and the setting of the mansion house. This meets the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP36, and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.'

The proposal would be seen within the context of the existing northern 'back of house' area of Wakehurst. As noted above by the Conservation Officer, the ASHP enclosure would be taller and more visually prominent than the existing oil tanks. However, given the scale of the proposal and its restricted views from the wider area, along with the creation of a renewable energy source, it is considered that the proposal would not have a harmful impact upon the special interest of the listed building, and the proposal would conserve the character of the listed building and its setting.

CONCLUSION

The special interest of the building will therefore be preserved by the works. As a result, the proposal complies with policy DP34 of the District Plan, policies ARD9 and ARD20 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan as well as the requirements of both the NPPF and the Listed Building and Conservation Area (LBCA) Act 1990.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Katherine Williams