



## HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

<b>TO:</b>	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Leonardslee Gardens, Brighton Road, Lower Beeding
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	Extension to the visitor entrance building to house a new ticket sales area and café; Infilling roof to the former generator block courtyard, re-roofing of the Alpine House and internal/ external reconfigurations and link extension; Single storey winter garden conservatory to the Stable Block; Terrace extension to the east and internal/ external reconfigurations; Change of use from redundant staff offices and staff accommodation within the stable block to guest accommodation including extension to Honey Cottage; Change of use to the partial first floor of the Red House to staff accommodation; Small WC extension, reinstated chimney stack, and roof alterations to the Engine House; Lightweight wedding pavilion to the lawn, south of Leonardslee House; Landscaping changes including to the forecourt of Leonardslee House.
<b>REFERENCE:</b>	DC/25/1146
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	<del>Advice / No Objection / Objection / More Information / Modification / Refusal</del>
<b>SUMMARY OF COMMENTS &amp; RECOMMENDATION:</b>	
See below	
<b>MAIN COMMENTS:</b>	
<p>Leonardslee House is a grade 2 listed building constructed in an Italianate style in 1853, which replaced an existing building on the site. Its garden is intrinsically linked with the house and is designated at grade 1, and therefore of exceptional interest. Its significance is set out by Historic England, and therefore will not be repeated here but has been fully considered within this response.</p> <p>The house and its garden are open to the public, with a restaurant and shop, and the house occupied as a boutique hotel. The application has been submitted as a comprehensive development strategy to provide further visitor facilities, including accommodation and wedding amenities. The application sets out a masterplan for the site, which is supported by a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment.</p>	

It is recognised that from a heritage perspective there is a need for the gardens and house to raise the necessary income to enable the special qualities of the garden to be maintained and enhanced. It is also understood that there is a need to ensure that the future of both assets can be sustained to a high standard ensuring public enjoyment of the estate.

Prior to the submission of the current application pre application advice was given, to seek to ensure that the significance of the gardens and house are conserved, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

#### Application

The application seeks to extend the existing entrance point, formally a glasshouse. The building is accessed from the car park, and is a simple, functional structure which reflects its glasshouse roots. Due to the current usage of the site, and the prevalence of car parking this part of the estate which formally had a parkland appearance providing a sense of arrival to the main house, has been diluted. The managed garden qualities emerge more strongly as you leave the garden shop. I would therefore raise no objection to the extension of the garden shop in the way proposed. The building appears as a simple structure, which at present acts as an introduction to the estate. The structure has no innate architectural value in itself and has a neutral appearance which does not compete with the formal gardens and house beyond. It would be suggested that this neutrality in this instance works to the benefit of the extension, not drawing the eye and enabling it to meld into its surroundings.

The Generator Hall and Alpine House have a functional appearance which reflects their use. The new window openings in the external wall to the Generator Hall have been reconsidered during the pre app process. Although the preference would be for the wall to remain solid, the introduction of a limited number of openings, in the position proposed would not be so harmful as to warrant an objection. It is also noted that the design of the windows would reflect the industrial aesthetic of the wider structure, and the roof would reflect the previous enclosure of the structure. The Alpine House reflects the horticultural use of the site and the retention of this use albeit in conjunction with wider circulation space, would be supported. The introduction of solid panels would enable the space to be used more practically whilst retaining its character.

In terms of the Courtyard Café it would be suggested that the proposed light touch, glazed structure to the internal courtyard would still enable the features of the stable block and its courtyard to be appreciated. Its finalised design enables visitors to experience the differences between the buildings and the yard space retaining an understanding of being "outside" whilst being shielded from the weather. This would ensure that the historic and architectural interest of this part of the estate is preserved. The cobbles are to be retained with their patterning of wear as they are a traditional feature of the yard area and reinforce its character. Their presence becomes even more salient as the area is enclosed. The provision of the terrace would enable greater appreciation of the gardens, and despite the loss of some historic fabric through the changes of windows to doors it would be suggested that this impact would be balanced against the overall benefits of the proposal. The detailing of the terrace would be important to ensure it retains a simple appearance that does not compete visually with the existing materials or obscure its appreciation as a working estate building. It would also be important that any lighting or noise is contained so as to allow the tranquillity of the gardens to be retained.

It is important that the context for the proposed development should be set within the overall proposals for the estate as a whole and opportunities taken (as identified in the Conservation Management Plan) to reinforce and share the conjoined history of the estate ensuring that the house, gardens and other buildings are not considered in isolation. It is noted that the changes to the landscaping to the front of the house and its wider environs seek to reinforce the relationship of the house to its gardens and service buildings, including the implicit relationship between the polite qualities of the house and the support network of its curtilage structures.

The Wedding Pavilion would be sited to the side of the main house and would not be an unexpected addition to a building of this quality, providing interest and covered outdoor space for visitors. It would be suggested therefore that the structure would not result in harm to the setting of the listed building or detract from an understanding of the gardens.

The Engine House is in a sensitive location within the gardens and any extension should reflect the simple, functional form of the existing building. The proposed extension in this respect retains the industrial lines of the existing building and the use of timber boarding and shingles would enable the extension to naturally weather. The reintroduction of the chimney is supported and considered a benefit of the proposal creating a visual beacon within the garden valley.

#### Conclusion

In summary therefore although some elements would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the gardens and house at the lower end of the scale, it would be suggested that the proposal would enable the gardens and house to be maintained into the future, ensuring public access. The NPPF is clear that where a proposal would 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. In this respect it would be suggested that the balance of public benefits would outweigh the less than substantial harm identified and no objection would be raised.

#### **ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:**

##### **LB07 Submission of Details**

**Pre-Commencement Condition:** No relevant works shall commence until the following details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works must not be executed other than in complete accordance with these approved details:

a) Drawings to a scale not smaller than 1:5 fully describing:

i) new/and/or/replacement windows, external doors, rooflights.

These drawings must show:

- materials
- decorative/protective finish
- cross section of frame, transom, mullions, glazing bars, etc
- formation of openings including reveals, heads, sills, arches, lintels, dormer construction, etc
- method of opening
- method of glazing

ii) Roof details including sections through:

- roof ridge
- hips
- valleys
- eaves
- verges
- verges and bargeboards
- flat roof perimeters
- parapets

iii) Balustrades and railings

b) Specification of masonry, brickwork, stonework including material, colour, texture, face bond, components of the mortar, and jointing/pointing profile.

c) Samples or specifications of external materials and surface finishes.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure that the significance of the designated heritage asset, and the character, appearance and integrity of the building, is not prejudiced, thereby preserving the special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and to comply with Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

<b>NAME:</b>	Nicola Mason
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Strategic Planning
<b>DATE:</b>	10.12.2025