47 Denmans Lane
Lindfield
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 2JN

Mid Sussex District Council
Submitted by e-mail to: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
FAO Stuart Malcolm

29th July, 2022

Dear Sirs,

DM/22/1774 WAKEHURST PLACE, HAVELOCK FARM. DEMOLITION OF EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS, NEW GLASSHOUSES ETC

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to proposed development affecting a site listed by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks and Gardens as per the above application. The Sussex Gardens Trust (SGT) is a member organisation of the GT and works in partnership with it in respect of the protection and conservation of registered sites, and is authorised by the GT to respond on GT's behalf in respect of such consultations.

The site has been well known to SGT for many decades and experienced representatives of SGT have carefully reviewed the documentation submitted with the application and visited the site earlier this week.

The Trust welcomes the vision for the project, ie for Wakehurst "*to become a national centre of excellence in conservation science and practice, seed research and landscape ecology*".

The documentation is comprehensive and includes an assessment of significance and the impact of the proposals on that significance. The Trust agrees the impact on the Grade II* Registered Park will be neutral, particularly because of the decision to retain some of the farm buildings, some of which provide a pleasing backdrop from areas of the Registered Park – for instance the view looking north from within the old walled garden. When viewed from within the Registered Park, the new structures will generally be well screened, although new evergreen planting in some areas would help screen the new buildings as well as some less attractive parts of the retained buildings – e.g. to the rear of the public toilets.

Facilitating the Hortus Conclusus

At page 27 of the Design and Access Statement there is a section describing the longer-term benefit for restoring the walled garden to its original purpose once the current proposals are completed. Depending on how and when such restoration is undertaken, such a development could provide a very great public benefit. Sussex Gardens Trust considers this potential benefit has not been fully drawn out in the application and if this were better described, it would further strengthen an already strong case for approval.

Conclusion

Sussex Gardens Trust supports the application.

Kind regards

Jim Stockwell
Trustee
On behalf of
Sussex Gardens Trust