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SDNPA – via e-mail

FAO Philippa Smyth

26th September, 2025

Planning Application SDNP_25_03500_LIS_Stanmer Village Church Ramped access and internal alterations

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.

SGT supports the principle of converting the church building for community use. We also support the use of a metal ramp since this avoids the need for supporting walls, allows the original paving beneath to be retained and does not require drainage at the toe of the ramp.

However, there are a number of points regarding the proposed ramp and railings that require clarification before the application is fit for approval. Our concerns arise because the drawings provided are unclear and in particular fail to reflect the fact that there are two mature yew trees by the path to the entrance, as illustrated below:



Our detailed points are as follows:

1. The railings would need to be designed and finished to be in keeping with the existing railings and the illustration does not reflect this.
2. It is not clear why there would need to be gaps and steps on either side of the ramp, depending on the detailed design this may look odd.
3. The metal grid would need to be in keeping with other metal work and painted / coated in black and obviously non slip.
4. The trees and their root protection areas need to be indicated on the drawings. A tree retention and protection report should be submitted to detail how the trees and the root area would be protected during construction, this should be produced by a qualified arborist.
5. We recommend that the applicant is required to provide full design and tree protection proposals prior to a decision and that these are not put in as a condition.
6. The tree protection measures need to confirm that the trench for a waste connection would not be within the root protection area of the trees.

We wonder if a curved ramp is worth considering, which would allow for a longer and shallower slope, more space at the church end and perhaps obviate the need for openings part way along which look rather clumsy - and avoid the yews?

Yours faithfully

Jim Stockwell

On behalf of the Sussex Gardens Trust.

CC: The Gardens Trust