



*“Our conclusion is that the opening, petal-shaped glasshouse is a beautiful structure; one of elegance that echoes Victorian glasshouses and references the large C19th glasshouse that previously existed next to the mansion. The design’s high-quality abstract form, like the William Pye sculpture, enables it to be inserted into this sensitive setting in the “folly” tradition. It is cleverly designed to provide light, largescale ventilation and sun in the summer, whilst offering protection when required with minimal energy required to do so.”*

– Adam Hastie,  
On Behalf of the National Trust



# THE WOOLBEDING CHARITY

Heatherwick studio



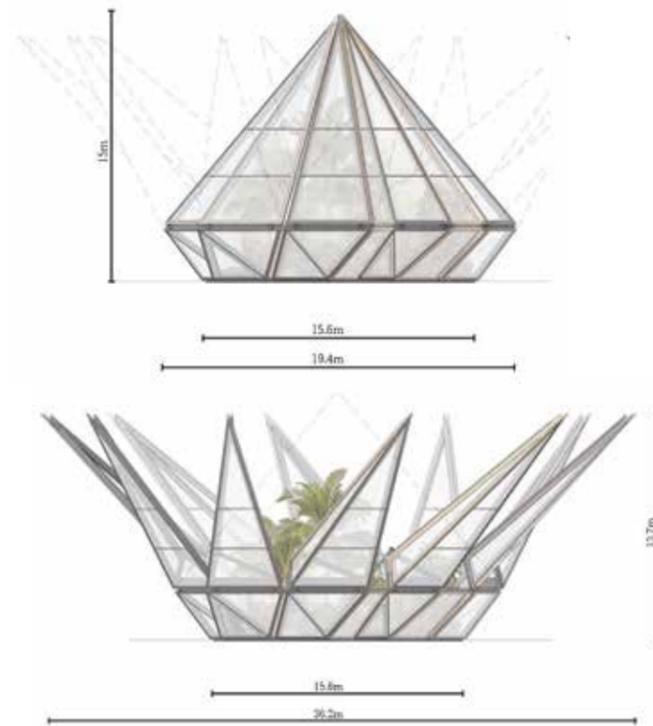
Proposed south Elevation

APPLICATION REFERENCE: SDNP/18/05744/FUL | COMMITTEE DATE: 14TH MARCH 2019

**The Woolbeding Charity is pleased to present this planning application, for a striking ten-sided, opening glasshouse, set in an individually landscaped setting, showing the flora from along key parts of the historic Silk Road trade route.**

The Charity is encouraged that Officers are recommending approval of its proposals to construct a bespoke glasshouse in the Woolbeding Gardens. The proposals represent a fitting legacy for the late Simon Sainsbury, a former resident of the Woolbeding Estate, and will greatly augment the already beautiful setting of the Woolbeding Gardens.

This briefing note provides a further narrative to the site and its context, as well as the suitability of what we hope is an exemplary proposal.



*“The design is thought-provoking”* – Local resident

*“The whole concept of the ‘silk road’ plants will be of interest as well as the particular plants in the glass house itself”* – Local resident

## THE DESIGN APPROACH

The Woolbeding Charity has worked very closely with the South Downs National Park Authority and key local stakeholders, resulting in proposals that your Officers say are...

*“...considered to be of an acceptable design and siting that would enhance the landscape character of the National Park in accordance with policies.”*

The glasshouse was designed by the esteemed designers at Heatherwick Studio, and presents a ten-sided design which opens to resemble the form of a flower opening in bloom. The associated gardens will represent the flora of the ancient Silk Route, with native plants from the most significant regions along the Route being arranged in the approach to the glasshouse, as well as within the glasshouse itself.

**The glasshouse is designed to be striking and architecturally impressive, while also being commensurate and in-keeping with the natural beauty of the estate.**

## HISTORY AND FUTURE LEGACY

Respecting a long tradition of glasshouses at Woolbeding throughout history, the proposal would also celebrate the years Simon Sainsbury enjoyed residing at Woolbeding, restoring its house and gardens with Stewart Grimshaw, who is Chairman of The Woolbeding Charity and the current tenant of Woolbeding House. Your Officers say;

*“It is therefore considered that, subject to the considerations below, the proposal is acceptable in principle as it would both introduce public art and enhance a well-established visitor attraction in accordance with policies”*

## CONSULTATION

The Woolbeding Charity employed a specialist communications consultancy to direct a thorough programme of consultation, ensuring that the local community was properly informed and had ample opportunity to register comments, both positive and negative.

As part of this consultation, a public exhibition was held, to which approximately four hundred stakeholders and local residents were invited. Over fifty people were in attendance at this exhibition, including a large group from the National Trust, Parish Councillors, representatives from All Hallows Church, and members of the Midhurst Society.

All the comments received prior to the publication of the Statement of Community Involvement on the 27<sup>th</sup> July were very welcoming of this proposal coming forward.

Following this positive feedback, a number of amendments have been made to make the proposals as fitting as possible, both in terms of the enduring legacy and their place within the local community. These changes principally include finessing the position of the glasshouse within the pasture and redesigning the external gardens that depict the Silk Road.

Below: Photo from public consultation



*“A brilliant idea and concept which will enhance the gardens and will certainly attract visitors”*

– Local resident



Your Officers say *“...subject to a condition to secure the details of the soft landscaping and the recommendations of the Species Rich Management Plan, it is considered that the proposed soft landscaping scheme would enhance the landscape character of the site.”*

## ACOUSTIC CONSIDERATIONS

In comments on the planning file, and in an email to the proposal team, feedback has been provided regarding the pumps and generators in the plantroom, particularly with regard to its proximity to All Hallows Church and its churchyard.

Whilst there will be some audible noise from the hydraulic pump when the glasshouse is opening and closing, there will be strict noise emission limits imposed as a condition of any planning permission given. Therefore, any noise emissions will be closely controlled.

**We do not anticipate that the noise of the proposed plantroom and its contents will have any detrimental impact on the setting of the church or the experience of those visiting. Overall, we are looking to ensure that the tranquil nature of the national park is wholly maintained.**

A representative of the Church has commented:

*“The PCC were satisfied with these assurances and no objections were raised. We are happy for the development to proceed”.*

– Noel Simpson, Churchwarden

### KEY – SILK ROUTE PLANTING

- |                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Istanbul/ Mediterranean Bursa | 11. Chinese Outdoor Subtropical |
| 2. Blacksea Coast/Pontic Alps    | 12. Subtropical Glasshouse      |
| 3. Anatolian Plateau             | A. Naturalistic Path            |
| 4. Persian Woodland              | B. Mowed Path                   |
| 5. Zagros Mountains              | C. Wild Hedgerow                |
| 6. Kopet Dag                     | D. Transitional Planting        |
| 7. Himalayan Sub-Alpine          | E. Flower Rich Grassland        |
| 8. Tarim Basin Deciduous Forest  | F. Mulberry Tree                |
| 9. Tian Shan Montane Steppe      | G. Persian Ironwood             |
| 10. Tibetan Meadows              | H. Cedar Tree                   |

### SUMMARY

The Woolbeding Charity is proud of the scheme now presented, which has been developed through careful listening; from the design process to the wider consultation, and input from the Planning Officers and the surrounding community. We are grateful for the strongly positive reception, and believe that the proposals are both sensitive to the natural setting, and a pleasing addition to the National Park that will complete a significant garden at Woolbeding.

The Woolbeding Charity hopes you will agree with the recommendation of your Officers and approve this application.