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14th September 2017

Planning Department
Swindon Borough Council
Via e-mail : sbcd@swindon.gov.uk

S/16/1832 – Land at Brook Cottage, Hay Lane, Grange Park, Swindon Erection of 4no. dwellings and associated works

Whilst members of Lydiard Millicent Parish Council are mindful that this application is outside their parish boundary, several concerns have been raised by residents within this parish and as elected representatives they have a duty to consider those concerns and if appropriate make representations on behalf of electors'. At a meeting held on Thursday, 7th September 2017 I was instructed by Lydiard Millicent Parish Council to send the following comments in regard to the above planning application.

1. The proposed development will adversely affect the historic environment and landscape of Lydiard Park. Lydiard Park is a heritage asset, and included in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. It contains a number of listed buildings. As such the proposal is contrary to section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and paragraphs 109 and 129 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which aim to preserve and enhance heritage assets.
2. The proposal is to build four executive homes, which is completely at odds with the historic setting of the park, and the Council finds it difficult to reconcile the need for them here, when there are many more suitable locations both within Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Unitary Planning Authority control.

Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026 recognises the importance of Lydiard Park as a green space (paragraphs 4.323 and 4.324); reflecting its importance as an area of recreation, natural beauty and heritage, to the people of Swindon and the surrounding villages. Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026 policy EN10 states that Swindon Borough's Historic environment should be sustained and enhanced and stresses the need for any development proposals that affect such an area to be justified, to conserve and enhance those assets and their setting. The current proposals are contrary to this policy.

3. The proposals are contrary to policy EN5 of Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026, which aims to preserve the intrinsic character of the landscape. This includes preservation of the setting of historical assets. The proposals would also adversely affect the green space which separates Swindon from its rural hinterland. Lydiard Park allows the residents of Swindon, and its surrounds, to access open space which has a genuine and distinctive rural identity. Paragraph 4.352 of the Plan refers to the need to sustain "the separate identity of settlements and the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the urban fringe." Allowing building, particularly of the type envisaged, to encroach upon this area, will destroy its unique rural aspect, which should be preserved for the residents of Swindon, the surrounding villages, and future generations.
4. The proposals adversely affect the biodiversity of the area and are contrary to policy EN4 of the Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026.
5. Whilst the proposed development is not in the parish of Lydiard Millicent, the Council believe that the unique setting of Lydiard Park should be preserved for the benefit of the residents of Swindon and our residents, many of whom enjoy the amenities it offers and who wish to see its historic setting preserved. Building there will also erode the rural nature of the park, and negatively impact on its country feel.

It is more than just a recreational green space – it is a place where people can go and feel they have escaped from their urban surrounds, to enjoy and experience - for a short time - the historical significance and beauty of this location. That experience will be reduced, and ultimately lost, if this development is allowed.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Bourne

DEBORAH BOURNE
Parish Clerk
Lydiard Millicent Parish Council

