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Research - Conserve - Campaign

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Dear Mr Burman,

Ref : 19/04598/OUT - Outline permission for up to 9 dwellings together with parking and amenity space (All matters reserved); Land South of Hook Street, Lydiard Tregoze. Wilts

The Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to proposed development affecting a site included by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks & Gardens, appreciates that you have allowed us a short extension to comment on the above application, as we were not consulted by your officers and only heard of this through the Friends of Lydiard Park. We have liaised with our colleagues in the Wiltshire Gardens Trust and would be grateful if you could take our comments into consideration when deciding this application.

Lydiard Park (Grade II), Lydiard House (Grade I) and St Mary's Church (Grade I) are irreplaceable heritage assets of national importance. In order to protect these in 2004 Nicholas Pearson Associates drew up a defined Essential Setting boundary around the registered Country Park, which goes beyond the Historic England registered park boundary (RPG). The Restoration Plan, which was adopted by Swindon Borough Council states : *'The proposed minimum essential setting of the registered landscape is plotted on figure 20 (see attached) but this makes assumptions about a rural context for the park. The definition of the setting is justified solely in terms of visual character and the designed historic views at ground level, and does not encompass areas where high level intrusive development could impact on the park. The extent of the setting should be extended if it is proposed to alter the urban area boundary.'* In terms of the current application, the essential setting is the 'minimum essential setting' **It is clear from this that all future development should not be allowed within the Essential Setting of Lydiard Park.** The Planning Inspectorate acknowledged this in 2012 when the development of Hook Street was only permitted when it had been moved out of the defined critical setting. Nicholas Pearson Associates even used the view of the old folly site on Windmill Hill as the cover of their Restoration Plan, and it is this exact view from the RPG which is now proposed for development. If approved, this development would open up all of Park Farm land south of

Hook Street, which is owned by the developer, for housing. This is the crux of the GT/WGT's objection.

The GT/WGT disagree with the statement in the Landscape and Visual Technical Note by edp : (2.7) *'In terms of high-level constraint, the site does not lie within any landscape designation at a national or local level, nor is it within any designated heritage ... feature. In this regard the site is broadly unconstrained at a high level.'* This totally ignores the Essential Setting acknowledged by the Planning Inspectorate mentioned above. This document however, does acknowledge that (3.31) *'The sensitivities of users of this Park (Lydiard) is high.'* Plan 2 Environmental Designation (p.26) shows the RPG clearly to be a visual receptor.

The *Planning Statement 3.2 'seeks to establish the principle of development at this site'* and acknowledges that the topography is flat, so the view to Windmill Hill is clearly compromised by the development. In Para 4.5 they state that the site *'abuts residential development at Swindon ... which is a town very able to support additional housing sustainably. It is worth considering that a residential development of this type would go some way to address persistent under delivery of housing at this area.'* This would appear to contradict figures given in the *Wiltshire Housing Site Allocation Plan, submission draft July 2018*. This document (4.32) states that the aggregated housing trajectory *'supply exceeds the 5 year requirement'* and that Royal Wotton Bassett indicative requirement is currently 8% above what is needed and that (4.47) the *'rates of development at Royal Wotton Bassett anticipated levels of growth have been exceeded over the 1st half of the Plan Period'* (ie 2006-26).

The GT/WGT strongly **OBJECT** to this application.

Yours sincerely,

Margie Hoffnung
Conservation Officer

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