



47 Denmans Lane
Lindfield
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 2JN

Via e-mail to: Hastings BC

FAO: Case Officer: E Meppem

7th December, 2017

Re Application Number: HS/OA/17/00558

Alexandra Park: Outline application for 6 detached dwellings

Dear Sirs,

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment on this application, which has a material impact on the significance of Alexandra Park historic designed landscape which is Registered by Historic England at Grade II*. The inclusion of this site on the national register is a material consideration.

The Gardens Trust (GT), which is the statutory consultee on matters concerning registered parks and gardens, is now working closely with County Garden Trusts such as Sussex Gardens Trust (SGT) to comment on planning applications and fulfil this statutory role. For further information, we refer you to the GT publication *The Planning System in England and the Protection of Historic Parks and Gardens* (2016), which is available online at [GT Planning Guide](#).

Summary

We write to object to this outline application since the development is likely to cause harm or substantial harm to the significance of Alexandra Park, a Grade II* Registered Park.

Background

Where a planning application affects a heritage asset such as a registered park or garden, the local planning authority should require the applicant to describe the significance of the park or garden and the potential impact of the proposals on its significance (NPPF, para 128 – see below).

128. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Unfortunately, in this case, none of the documents submitted with the application describe the significance or the impact of the proposals. Without such supporting documents it is difficult to properly assess the impact of the proposals. However, representatives of the Trust know the park very well and the reasoning for objecting to the application is set out below.

Reasoning

The application site is located on a steeply rising ridge directly above the western most limb of the Grade II* Registered Alexandra Park.

The enjoyment and appreciation of this wooded part of the park depends upon the preservation of its sense of isolation / seclusion, without any suburban intrusion. The steeply sloping 'private' land immediately adjacent the reservoir serves as a vital landscape buffer zone between the park and the built-up area and in views across the park. It contributes positively to the green enclosed setting of the park. The importance of this woodland has been acknowledged by the making of a TPO; the designation report explains that the TPO has been made 'to reinforce the screening this land provides between the park and the built-up area'.

Without adequate additional tree screen planting to preserve this landscape buffer and in the absence of any 'visual landscape assessment' the Trust objects to this development on the basis that the application is inadequate and that the development will cause visual harm to the grade II* registered Alexandra Park.

The application appears to show no understanding of the significance of the registered park, nor includes any assessment of the impact upon the setting of Alexandra Park. It is therefore judged to fail to comply with policy HN1 of the Local Plan's Development Management Plan.

Yours faithfully

Jim Stockwell.

On behalf of the Sussex Garden Trust.

CC: The Gardens Trust