

Cerys Jones

From: Glynis Shaw <glynis@castell-photography.co.uk>
Sent: 20 November 2020 18:38
To: Cerys Jones
Cc: John Edmondson; Joanna Davidson; Sarah Green; Elaine Davey; Lawrence Isted; Anna Irwin; Margie Hoffnung; Alison Allighan
Subject: reserved matters App ref P/2020/0673



Dear Cerys

Thank you for consulting with WHGT concerning reserved matters App ref P/2020/0673

Welsh Historic Gardens Trust Comment:

Wynnstay is a very rare example of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown's work in Wales. It is highly regrettable that this fact and its protective heritage designation has not saved the site from development creep. The landscaping of this development should not only enhance these houses but acknowledge the fact that this is a very rare development allowed on a well documented Capability Brown heritage site. This scheme would not be allowed almost anywhere else in Britain - and the landscaping should therefore be exceptional.

The first phase of the housing development of up to 319 houses is for 131 houses. The landscaping of phase 1 should set the tone with high quality landscaping referencing the fact it is controversially situated on part of the Grade I Wynnstay Hall parkland. The planning, landscaping and planting should make some effort to recognise the 'sense of place' on this special site. Instead the landscaping seems over suburban with a minimal park

around the ornamental pond with a very small children's play area for the eventual 300+ houses.

It is good news that a few oak trees by the pond will be spared and that there will be some repair to the haha. The pond, haha and oak trees will be the only surviving monuments on this development site of what was once part of one of the most magnificent parkland landscapes in Wales, laid out by 'Capability Brown, who is internationally recognised as the most important landscape designer of his day, and one of the greatest figures in the history of Landscape Design.

The surviving features; the ornamental pool and the haha built between 1777 and 1782 should be more prominent in the scheme so that they can be better appreciated.

The public spaces in this scheme should reflect something of the lost idealised landscape and perhaps replace some of the eighteenth century trees lost to weather, poor management or over maturity. Park trees are different from suburban housing-estate trees as they are planted with longevity and statuesque qualities in mind. The scheme could provide an element of succession planting for future generations. It would be good to see a Brownian tree planting in the scheme including a cedar of Lebanon or beech - a quintessential Brown tree, with oak, evergreen oak (*Quercus ilex*), and linden (*Tilia x Europaea*) along with other plants often used by Brown.

Some properties in this development might benefit from a larger public space and smaller private space - this layout assumes everyone has the same garden interest. The ornamental borders in front of some of the houses are suburban in style. Brown typically had grassland up to the house - and perhaps a meadow style landscaping would be more appropriate.

The dotting of trees around the gardens does not allow for individual choice nor provide any special landscape feature. A few gardens have no trees - and all the trees seem to be boundary planting. It might be better to consider small clumps of trees across a group of properties. The boundary treatment and planting perhaps could be more sensitive to the eighteenth century parkland landscape.

The varied hedge, fence, railings idea may not look coherent - in some places it might look as if the money has run out or that it was designed by different people at different times and emphasises the fragmentation of the site rather than providing a sense of unity.

Planning for suburbia today should surely include cycle paths and footpaths for health and well-being and provide an alternative to cars.

It is important that modern landscaping on this site is of the highest quality and unique in design. Wynnstay is a national case study of a significant lost landscape and its subsequent treatment will be studied by many.

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