

Consultee Comments for Planning Application APP/17/00735

Application Summary

Application Number: APP/17/00735

Address: Sir George Staunton Country Park, Middle Park Way, Havant, PO9 5HB

Proposal: Hampshire County Council Consultation for conversion of coach house and stable block to create visitor and volunteer facilities and construction of new visitors car park on former Beacon Nursery site and associated works at Sir George Staunton Country Park (planning application).

Case Officer: Tina Pickup

Consultee Details

Name: Consultee Heritage Team

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On Behalf Of: Conservation Officer

Comments

Principal Conservation Officer Support

I have been fully involved in pre-application discussions relating to these proposals including a detailed site visit. The application submitted reflects previous advice given and as such I wholeheartedly support the plans put forward. The works overall will greatly enhance the heritage assets and it is hoped the Park comes to be better recognised locally for the valuable historic landscape that it is.

I have outlined my comments on each of the proposals below:

New Car Park

The site for the new car park has already been compromised and has lost any historic interest. Siting a car park in this proposed location would therefore have no adverse impact on the registered park. However, it will be important that the car park is adequately screened so that reflection of light off the cars does not intrude into the longer views across the park.

Stables and Coach House

These buildings lend themselves well as visitor facilities. It appears from the plans original fittings and finishes have been retained where possible. The alterations proposals will not harm the historic interest of the buildings. It is my view that the making the buildings more of a destinations for visitors is an enhancement and as such I support the proposals.

The Beacon

This structure is in need of repair. The new handrail and baluster is of a simple and elegant design and is acceptable.

Chinese Bridge

The proposals are to resurface the walkway and the addition of new oak railings and Chinese gateways featuring Chinese inscriptions.

The Chinese bridge was built in 1833 as part of the landscape which Sir George Staunton developed reflecting his close connection with China. The lake and bridge were the centrepiece of Stauntons Pleasure Grounds affording entertainment and amusement.

It is proposed to reinstate the Chinese character of the bridge that has been lost. Whilst detailed archive illustrations of how the bridge used to look are unclear, the proposed design is based on Chinese bridges in other Regency gardens.

The Chinese Fort

This is a modest structure, however, it is understood the fort was built on an artificial island in the lake 1833 as an eye catching folly reminiscent of Stauntons close connections with China.

The fort has been neglected for many years and was concealed by ivy and saplings until very recently. Parts of the walls have collapsed, particularly in the centre and at the ends. The top section, which was originally castellated, is missing.

This structure is in need of repair and I fully support the details put forward in regard of this.

Storey Gardens

It appears walled Storey Gardens will become used by volunteers and students as they return it to growing fruit, vegetables and flowering plants. These will be sold and used in the formal gardens in the farm.

A new pedestrian gateway will be made in the wall and new paths created to improve access. The principle of creating a new pedestrian gate within a damaged section of the wall is considered acceptable as is the design.

The Shell House

The Shell House is a Grade II* listed Building, one of the many follies built by Sir George Staunton in 1828 to enhance his pleasure grounds, with an eye catching stone crown finial which could be seen from the newly created lake, but this is now missing. The interior was designed as a

memorial and decorated with shells. It was later used by Staunton as a museum of curiosities.

The Shell House is a hexagonal structure constructed of brick faced with flint and pebble panels, and has three ogee arched openings protected by modern grilles and a further opening at the rear covered with a steel sheet. The exterior walls are faced with fine knapped flintwork with galleting, but the interior has been largely stripped of its decorative shells, leaving only imprints in the lime plaster finish. The walls are in largely good condition generally, but some of the decorative infill work is missing.

The Shell House is a grotto and it appears from the submission that the secluded appearance that is essential for this building is to be maintained. I agree that the birch trees between the terrace and the grotto should be removed so that the restored roof line of the shell house can once more perform a role as an eye-catcher.

Again I fully support the repairs to the building. In regards of the restoration of the roof the profile appears appropriate and I believe the use of a different material is the right step forward.

Stone Mansion Terrace

The remaining terrace and steps from William Stones mansion has been the subject of previous restoration projects, and the majority of the historic structure is in good condition. However, the repairs as outlined are necessary.

The interpretation of the Mansion (marked out on the ground) is also a good idea which will help visitors to further understand the landscape.