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East Hampshire District Council
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By email only: Narinder.lakhan@easthants.gov.uk
August 24th 2026

Dear Narinder Lakhan,

APP/26/00574

Application for approval of all Reserved Matters (siting, scale, external appearance, and landscaping) relating to Phase 9 (North West Corner and Visitor Centre) of the Havant Thicket Reservoir development pursuant to Condition 2 of the S73 consent planning reference APP/24/00312 dated 6th December 2024.
Havant Thicket, adjacent to Sir George Staunton Country Park,
Middle Park Way, Havant

Thank you for consulting the Gardens Trust in its role as Statutory Consultee on the above application which may have a material impact on the significance of Leigh Park (Staunton Country Park), a Grade II* registered park and garden (RPG) included by Historic England on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The inclusion of the site on this statutory register requires great weight to be given to its conservation. We have liaised with our colleagues in the Hampshire Gardens Trust and their local knowledge informs this joint response.

The listing describes the RPG as "A Regency landscaped garden, laid out in the 1820s and 1830s on the site of late C18 pleasure grounds and a walled garden, with a series of specialist gardens and follies by Sir George Staunton to accommodate his Chinese and botanical interests. The gardens are surrounded by a park of C18 origin, which was developed by Sir George in the early C19, and also incorporates late C19 alterations."

Whilst we have no comments with regard to this specific application, we have previously responded to other aspects on this ongoing matter on July 16th and again on the 18th August and, prior to that, in the previous application for reserved matters (APP/25/00988), the Gardens Trust responded (Darcie Kerr 13th November 2025) with regard to the following matters;-

"The Gardens Trust first commented on the original application APP/20/00990 in December 2020 in which we expressed our concern regarding the destruction of part of the Grade II* RPG and the truncation of the avenue. At the time we said that we appreciated 'that there is very little option for alternative suitable locations for the reservoir. We very much regret the

loss of ancient woodland but have to accept that the public benefit outweighs the substantial damage to the RPG, and the new reservoir, if permitted, will stop water extraction from important chalk streams. We would suggest that suitable discreet interpretation be sited on the viewing area to enable visitors to understand the lost landscape.’ Our 2nd response on 25th October 2022, noted that ‘in the planning conditions contained within the revised documentation there is no mention we could see of either the historic landscape or our suggestions of discreet interpretation. We would like to reiterate our earlier request that the damage to ancient woodland is minimized as far as possible, and that discreet signage is erected to enable visitors to appreciate what remains.’ Within our third response on 16th September 2024, we reiterated this position. We would like to again emphasise that we strongly recommend that the loss of the landscape is communicated appropriately within the reconfigured reservoir surroundings.”

The Gardens Trust has reviewed the documents associated with this latest application for approval of all reserved matters and we note that there is minimal reference to the historic landscape and no reference to the recommended signage.

We cannot find any response to our recommendations. If, indeed, our comments have been responded to, we would be grateful to be directed to them. However, in the meantime, we wish to reiterate yet again our earlier request that the damage to ancient woodland is minimized as far as possible, and that discreet signage is erected to enable visitors to appreciate what remains.

If you have any further queries, please contact us at this email address, and we would be grateful to be advised of the outcome of the application in due course

Yours sincerely

Joanne Mirzoeff BA (Hons) MSc
Consultant Conservation Officer