

Planning Department
Teignbridge District Council
Forde House
Brunel Road
Newton Abbot
TQ12 4XX

Your ref 16/02062/FUL
Our ref E16/1309

20 December 2016

Dear Sirs

Erection of dwelling, land adjoining Oxton Mere Barn, Kenton

Thank you for consulting The Gardens trust on the additional information provided for above application, which affects Oxton House, an historic designed landscape of national importance, which is included by Historic England on the *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest* at Grade II.

We have studied the Heritage Statement in detail and consider that that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development will not adversely affect the historic significance of Oxton House. Suggesting that the building will occupy a site that has experienced a higher degree of change that many parts of the Registered park and garden is not sufficient justification (para 5.19).

Historic England, in their letter of 13 December 2016 point out that Oxton House is on the *Heritage at Risk* Register. The reason for this includes the neglect of the pleasure grounds, the parkland being ploughed, the considerable loss of parkland planting, the fragmented multiple ownership and the consequent issues for the management of the historic landscape. The proposed development would result in further subdivision of the estate to its detriment.

The applicant has not offered any 'conservation gain' in mitigation of the proposal. In their letter, Historic England also raise the question of whether *there is an opportunity to provide some positive gain to the parkland, either*

through the reinstatement of features or further planting that could provide the site with some benefits to the At Risk designated asset.'

Oxton House has a consciously designed setting, intended to reflect the status of its owner by creating a deliberate aesthetic effect. The original late C18 design remains basically intact and relatively unspoilt.

The proposal is to convert the existing agricultural building into a dwelling. The Heritage Statement para 5.11 refers to the possibility of '*opening up carefully selected views of the building.*' We consider that this would be completely unacceptable as views of a conspicuous modern building from within the historic designed landscape would be seriously detrimental to its character and appearance.

We made detailed comments on the application in our letter of 31 October 2016 and ask that you refer also to this letter as part of your consideration of the application.

We consider that the proposed development would cause considerable harm to the significance of the heritage asset of Oxton House and therefore should not be permitted. We recommend that your authority should refuse consent for this proposal as it clearly conflicts with national planning policy with regard to the conservation of the historic environment, and with your local plan policies.

Yours faithfully
John Clark
Conservation Officer