



70 Cowcross Street  
London EC1M 6EJ  
Telephone: (+44/0) 207 608 2409  
Email: [enquiries@thegardenstrust.org](mailto:enquiries@thegardenstrust.org)  
[www.thegardenstrust.org](http://www.thegardenstrust.org)

Planning Department  
North Devon Council  
PO Box 379  
Barnstaple  
EX32 2GR  
By email only: [Planning@northdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Planning@northdevon.gov.uk)

June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2026

Dear Ms D Butler,

**Application 81767**  
**Former Northgate Inn North Devon Link Road South Molton Devon EX36 3RG**  
**Additional parking area**

The Gardens Trust (TGT) have been alerted to the above application by the Devon Gardens Trust. The application site is within the historic designed landscape at Castle Hill, a Grade I registered park and garden (RPG) included by Historic England on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and therefore the proposals potentially affect the RPG. The inclusion of the site on this statutory register requires great weight to be given to its conservation.

I have to begin this letter by reminding the LPA that the Gardens Trust is the Statutory Consultee on development affecting all sites included on the Historic England *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*. As stated above, we were alerted to this application on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May by the Devon Gardens Trust (members of TGT and their voluntary planning advisors provide local information to TGT). We would respectfully remind you of the judgment handed down in the case of *SPAB v Broxtowe Borough Council (2023)* which makes it unambiguously clear that any consent granted without the benefit of proper consultation will be invalid.

The listing details the RPG as follows 'An early C18 formal landscape with structures and water features laid out by Earl Clinton around a mansion designed by Lord Burlington, altered to a more natural form and extended in the mid C18 by Matthew, Lord Fortescue. Further C19 developments include early C19 structures and pleasure grounds around the house and extensive late C19 ornamental planting across the estate.'

We also note that there is no reference to the RPG within in the application documents, specifically the Planning Statement and DAS (7<sup>th</sup> May 2026) and

therefore, the information provided by the applicant is insufficient to allow an adequate assessment of the proposal's impact on the significance of the RPG, and does not meet the requirements of paragraph 207 of the NPPF to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected to a level of detail proportionate to their importance.

However, our colleagues in the Devon Gardens Trust do know the site and have been able to make an assessment of the proposals. We note that, in response to the previous application at this site (81256) the Case Officer expressed concerns about the levelling up of the ground works as follows "At present the ground slopes gently from the building towards the roads on various sides, which does at least give it some semblance of fitting into the local topography. I would suggest that this more subtle landscaping approach is continued as it is more appropriate to the sensitive location within the registered parkland."

This new application is also seeking to level the land to create a flat surface for the car parking. Whilst it appears to be an area of land that may already have been previously recontoured to create a bund to hide the site, if the LPA is minded to approve the application, we would strongly recommend that any associated groundworks need to be undertaken in an appropriate way within this undulating landscape.

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