



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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23rd October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

**20/03258/FUL Demolition of Banqueting Suite and outbuildings, erection of a block of 7 apartments (Block A) with associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works (Resubmission of planning permission 19/02022/FUL). Kenwood Hall Hotel, Kenwood Road, Sheffield, S7 1NQ.**

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to the proposed development affecting Kenwood Hall which although not on the Historic England (HE) Register of Parks & Gardens is included in Sheffield City Council's UDP Policy Background Paper No 4 1997 and is a non-designated heritage asset. The Yorkshire Gardens Trust (YGT) is a member organisation of the GT and works in partnership with it in respect of the protection and conservation of historic parks and gardens, and is authorised by the GT to respond on GT's behalf in respect of such consultations.

You will be aware of our letter of 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019 in response to the previous planning application, 19/02022/FUL.

The site of this planning application and the current accompanying one; 20/03276/FUL Demolition of outbuildings, erection of 4 dwellinghouses with associated parking, landscaping and formation of access, is within the Nether Edge Conservation Area and Kenwood Character Area and covered by an 'Area' Tree Preservation Order No 274 2001. We are writing a separate but linked response to application 20/03276/FUL.

Kenwood Hall is Sheffield's largest surviving private example, (as opposed to a public park), of the work of the nationally acclaimed designer Robert Marnock (1800-89). Marnock was commissioned by George Wostenholm, a successful cutlery manufacturer, to design the garden at Kenwood and also the layout of the surrounding residential development carried out by Wostenholm. Wostenholm started buying land in the area of Cherry Tree Hill in 1834, though he did not build Kenwood till 1844, by which stage Marnock was already involved. He produced a concept that provided both an immediate setting for the house and enabled it to be extended, so he did not include physical boundaries, though there were visual ones. The latter were helped by the lie of the land, the house being surrounded by a terrace to south and east. The levels of the main lawn were manipulated to provide for play, created as a sheltered bowl, with planting emphasising the contours and disguising

abrupt changes in level. The kitchen garden was out of view to the west, hidden by vegetation, but with a southern and western aspect. Stables immediately behind the house were accessed with a separate service road, and they were hidden from view from the house by a rockery. This bank in front of the stable block was positioned in a way so that it screens the yard from the entrance of the house, but still enables a view of the roofscape that contributes to the grandeur of the setting of the house. (Unfortunately, the rock bank is to be removed in planning consent already given.)

The main approach to Kenwood was from Cherry Tree Hill Road. There was a walk that connected with and surrounded the lake, where it followed the contours and provided long views to the city and the south, to Meersbrook Park, etc. This was the heart of the development that emerged with Marnock's continuous assistance over the next 30 or so years. This central part was secluded by the manipulated land form, that provided privacy from views nearby, but also enabled long distance views out. The area had not been defined, because it was intended to extend it, and Wostenholm indeed managed to acquire most of the land between Little London and Brincliffe Edge. The Kenwood housing development was an early attempt and experiment in suburban housing.

We would like to make further observations that relate to both the current planning applications:

The Desk-based Assessment from ArcHeritage notes in Appendix 1 Gazeteer of Heritage Assets:

*"The garden has been reduced by housing development around the edges in the 1920's and 1930's and by extensions to the hotel in 1975 and the early 1980's. **However, the core of the garden survives and the views from the terrace are largely intact...**"* We very much support this assessment.

The Planning Statement by DLP Planning Ltd dated May 2019 at 1.2 states that:

*"The site is a parcel of brownfield land containing existing built form and tarmacked car parking ..."*

However, it is evident from Fig1 2.1 that this is only a very partial assessment. **Much of the site remains the historic garden which is not brownfield – it has never been built upon.**

*"3.8 Landscaping is proposed throughout the site which will enhance the quality of the environment and the overall visual appearance of the development from within and outside the site boundary, whilst simultaneously providing a secure environment and no loss of amenity for immediate neighbours. 3.9 The proposed development will be accompanied by a Tree and Landscape Management Plan and a Landscape Strategy which will demonstrate how the proposals will create an attractive built and natural environment throughout the site."*

As we know **Kenwood is a historic garden site from one of the most influential 19<sup>th</sup> Century designers that still remains of significance with much of its planting relatively intact.** The site should be conserved, not disfigured and damaged by seemingly ill- conceived plans.

*"7.6 The proposed homes will respond carefully and confidently to the challenges and inspiration provided by the special and precious setting of the historic buildings and idyllic gardens."*

So, the gardens are recognised as idyllic but we would strongly refute that the proposals respond carefully and confidently to the challenges and inspiration; **they are totally unsympathetic in massing, detailing, and overall design to both Kenwood and the Nether Edge Conservation Area.**

The Tree and Landscape Management Plan Scheme by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd at Plate 1 writes about the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and site called Newton St Loe with clipped shrubs. But we are dealing with a 19<sup>th</sup> Century garden designed by the man who designed Sheffield Botanical Gardens and was its first curator. **Marnock was the leading landscape designer in the Natural Style of the nineteenth century, made even more famous by his student William Robinson.** While

stating 18th century precedence on one side, the selection of plants does not adhere to this, and is primarily a 20th Century nurserymen's range.

The subject of this application, the Banqueting Suite - Proposed Block A – historically was the site of former greenhouses replaced by the Banqueting Hall c1958 and which has been unused for some time.

We note the Heritage Assessment by Franklin Ellis Architects, at 6.0 Impact Assessment writes that for “*Block A the setting of the Stable Block and Kenwood Hall will be affected and with potential impact. Although the new building will have a smaller footprint and set further back from the street*”.

We totally disagree that the detailing of the new building that is proposed to be contemporary and high quality, will have any sympathy whatsoever with the existing stable block and hall. It is seemingly a steel frame system building, that neither adds something of appropriate scale and form, nor beauty. It therefore does not accord with National Planning Policy regarding developments within a Conservation Area which should ‘conserve’ and ‘enhance’ the area nor with Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Note 3 (second edition, 2017) ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets’. We have concerns that this application does not address your authority's statutory duty of section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

We also note in the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy adopted March 2009 Policy CS 74 Design Principles the following:

*“High-quality development will be expected, which would respect, take advantage of and enhance the distinctive features of the city, its districts and neighbourhoods, including:*

- c) the townscape and landscape character of the city's districts, neighbourhoods and quarters, with their associated scale, layout and built form, building styles and materials;*
- d) the distinctive heritage of the city, particularly the buildings and settlement forms associated with:  
iii) Victorian, Edwardian and Garden City suburbs.”*

At 12.14 the Core Strategy writes of “*...heritage and landscape issues that are most important for the city's distinctiveness... this will mean respecting the scale, grain and context of the places in which development is proposed.... The character of the distinctive Victorian suburbs and old village centres is an important factor when weighing the requirement for higher density of development (see policy CS26).*”

In conclusion we strongly object to this planning application which in its present form will harm Kenwood Hall, the Nether Edge Conservation Area and the Kenwood Character Area.

Yours sincerely

Val Hepworth  
Trustee and Chairman Conservation and Planning

cc. Historic England; Margie Hoffnung, the Gardens Trust