



Scotland's Garden & Landscape Heritage

Planning & Economic Development
East Ayrshire Council
Kilmarnock

KA1 1HU

19 October 2021

By email only consultations@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

21/0665/PP Proposed farmshop, cafe and tack shop with associated parking and external seating area: Land to north of Milton Road, adjacent Loudoun Castle entrance, Galston KA4 8PB

Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage (SGLH) is grateful to be consulted on the above application which affects the Loudoun Castle designed landscape, included in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland and therefore assessed by Historic Environment Scotland to be of National Significance.

We are familiar with the Loudoun Castle landscape from previous applications and have not made a specific site visit on this occasion. The following comments are therefore based on documents submitted in support of this application, a desk-top study of historical records and our knowledge of the site from previous visits.

The presence of a castle at Loudoun with enclosed woodland is indicated on maps as far back as Joan Blaeu's Map of Cuninghania circa 1654, based on information stated to have been taken from Timothy Pont's mapping probably undertaken some 50 years earlier. A detailed layout of the Loudoun Castle designed landscape is first depicted on William Roy's Military Survey of circa 1755. This layout is thought to have been implemented by the 4th Earl of Loudoun in the first half of the 18th century.

The application site lies between the A819 (the Glasgow Road) and the West Belvedere, an area of Ancient Woodland, with both of these features depicted on Roy's Military Survey and clearly elements of the designed landscape well established by the mid-18th century. Remarkably much of the design depicted, particularly in this area has survived to the present day, including the West Belvedere and western boundary planting belts. Historic Environment

Scotland's Garden & Landscape Heritage

Page 2

Scotland assess in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland that this layout is of Outstanding Scenic Value in the local landscape.

We accept that the applicant is attempting to reduce the visual impact of the development through the use of suitable materials, although substantial areas of south-facing glass are likely to cause reflection and glare from the building, only increasing visibility and intrusion in the landscape. We also note the positioning of the development and the attempt to use the existing designed landscape features as screening, together with the proposed removal of surplus structures from the existing site at West Loudoun Farm 'to offset the physical impact and density of the built environment within the GDL'.

However, this proposal is yet another incremental development within the Loudoun Castle Landscape which is gradually leading to the loss of integrity and erosion of the layout and for this reason Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage wishes to record their objection to the application. We have advised in the past, particularly in response to application 19/1018/PP, that there should be no further development or expansion of the facilities in this area of the designed landscape. We can only advise that, as an alternative, the applicant investigates a limited expansion of the existing facilities at West Loudoun Farm.

We would be grateful to be advised of the outcome of the application in due course and to remain included in any future consultations impacting on the Loudoun Castle and other designed landscapes in East Ayrshire, of national, regional or local significance.

Yours sincerely,

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