



FAO: Matthew Thomas,
Development Management,
Telford & Wrekin Council,
PO Box 457
Wellington Civic Offices
TELFORD
TF2 2FH

February 22nd 2016

Dear Matthew Thomas,

Re: Planning Application TWC/2016/0070: Variation of Condition 3 of application TWC/2014/0463 to allow 250 days of community and recreational activities in any calendar year. Chetwynd Deer Park, Edgmond Road, Newport, Shropshire.

We have received notification of the above proposal, which was forwarded to us from the offices of The Gardens Trust (*formerly* The Garden History Society) on February 4th 2016. The Gardens Trust is a Statutory Consultee in planning matters relating to historic parks and gardens which are included on the Historic England *Register of Parks & Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* and we are acting on its behalf in this matter.

Chetwynd Park is among other things a deer park which dates from at least the mid-18th century, although there may be parts of it which are considerably older (Historic England *National Heritage List*: Chetwynd Park). It is included in the Historic England *Register of Parks and Gardens* at **Grade II**. As well as its recognised historic interest, it is also an area of significance for nature conservation and is a working deer park - one of very few in Shropshire.

The Shropshire Parks & Gardens Trust supports the use of the park for educational and other visits by schools, training colleges and outdoor education visits. We are however concerned at the proposed expansion from the current 150 days a year overall, including a number of very large events, to a total of 250 days per year, with the extra 100 days being used for additional 'Tier 4' access and events at the property.

We note that 'Tier 4' events allow for 'up to 500 attendees', presumably at any one time, although stated figures for 'Tier 4' usage at present range from 8-10 up to 50-80 attendees. Actual numbers for 'Castle House School Summer Camps' are not given, although these are likely to be at the upper end of the stated ranges as quoted above.

Notwithstanding the high level of community use among the various attendees at the site, our principal concerns are focussed on the extra wear and tear that Chetwynd Park would be likely to suffer from as a result of the extra use put on it by the proposed changes. With the best will in the world, access even at current levels and in dry weather inevitably causes compaction and erosion to soils and this will impact detrimentally on historic trees, as well as on grassland and other communities. Such an impact is also greatly exacerbated during wet conditions, over which the applicant has no control.

Aerial photographs publicly available show an appreciable amount of wear and tear to grassland areas of the park, although it is possible that these image were taken immediately following a major event at the property. It is clear nonetheless that the majority of the southern part of the park is used for these events and that the current level of usage is having a noticeable impact upon it.

The applicants have set out clearly what they are requesting, but have not attempted to match this against the carrying capacity of the site, or to provide evidence that existing or future plans will not cause harm to it or damage the significance of the Registered Park & Garden. It would be prudent in such circumstances to commission an expert appraisal of proposals, to ensure that these fall within the range of what the site is capable of supporting. We request therefore that this be made a prerequisite to the granting of permission in this case, or a condition of it.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Gallagher". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Christopher Gallagher

for Shropshire Parks & Gardens Trust & The Gardens Trust