



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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Mr Matthew Peck
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10th January 2022

Dear Mr Peck

RB2021/2278 Change of use of the estate from a private residence to use class Sui Generis, opening to the public for house guided & non-guided tours, garden visits, weddings, events, education workshops, ancillary cafe within the mansion house & location filming. Change of use of Camellia House to a cafe and event space (use class E) & associated facilities & services including changing place pod, bin store, 4 No. disabled car parking spaces & new landscape setting to Camellia House. Demolition of teaching accommodation and provision of a new car park to the North- West of the stable block to serve the estate together with temporary coach parking on former tennis court to the East of the main house. New pedestrian and cycle route between stables and the main house and Change of use of part of Stables building to a production kitchen and cafe area and resurfacing of Mews Court courtyard. at Wentworth Woodhouse Cortworth Lane Wentworth Cortworth Lane, Wentworth Rotherham S62 7TQ

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to any proposed development affecting a site listed by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks and Gardens. In this case Wentworth Woodhouse, which is registered grade II*. 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 registered sites, and is authorised by the GT to respond on GT's behalf in respect of such consultations.

We responded to the previous application **RB2021/1729** on 22nd September 2021 and note that this application was withdrawn on 21st December 2021. The application above, **RB2021/2278**, is a similar Change of Use but with the addition of the pedestrian and cycle route and café in the stables plus resurfacing of Mews Court that we responded to in our letter of 22nd September 2021. We presume this RB2021/2278 is a replacement application.

Wentworth Woodhouse (Listed Grade I) is the magnificent centrepiece and focal point within a hugely impressive Grade II* Registered Park and Garden. The surrounding parkland and the wider landscape with its assemblage of highly significant buildings many listed grade II* all combine to form an almost unparalleled historic landscape design in England.

The Camellia House, Listed Grade II*, north- west of the Ionic Temple (Listed Grade II*) and to the south- west corner of the former baroque garden, began its life as the early 18th century garden buildings, which formed part of the Menagerie created there. It has gone through two changes since then, following the fashions of the time; the Camellia House being a remodelling by Watson and Pritchett in 1812 of an early 18th Century greenhouse.

The demolition of Lady Mabel College Teaching Accommodation will enable the provision of a new 205 space car park (187 standard bays and 18 DDA bays), to the North- West of the Stable Block to serve the Estate together with Temporary Coach Car Parking on the Former Tennis Courts to the East of the Main House. The Stables, Riding School and Mews (Listed Grade I and II) were built in a style, and of a quality, that offered an appropriate compliment to the Mansion. They are of exceptional significance in relation to their physical stature, design as a set piece by a national architect of great note, and their substantial survival. They were designed to form an aesthetic part of a substantial remodelling of the gardens and wider landscape.

We strongly support the aims of the Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust to sustain this nationally important heritage and make it accessible for the nation and future generations.

Unfortunately, we have not had sight of the Landscaping Masterplan, can't find a Landscape Designer's Drawing, planting schedule for the car park and the details in plans by The Landscape Agency in the Transport Statement are impossible to read on screen. We have not noted any details about the future husbandry and management of the camellias when the camellia house becomes a café.

We have the following comments:

Main Car Park and New Paths

As noted above this is to be situated adjacent to the Stable Block and Riding School and at the pedestrian entrance to the site. It is hoped that this will not intrude on the garden and that it will not be visible in the garden vista from the baroque façade of the mansion, or from the walk from the Camellia House to the Riding School/Stable Block.

We assume that this car park is exclusively for visitors to the historic site, and that it is not also intended to cater for the commercial occupants of the Stable Block and Riding School?

We note from the Planning Statement at 3.40 'The car park is to be laid out with tar, spray and chip surfacing to parking areas to promote a heritage aesthetic with buff coloured, locally sourced gravel top dressing. A high- quality natural York stone paving is proposed to the footpaths and building thresholds with existing areas of stone to be retained and restored where necessary. Contrasting, high quality natural stone paving setts are proposed to high pedestrian crossing and the entrance/exit to the car park.' The Site Access Proposed plan indicates that there is to be some additional tree/shrub planting, but we are not aware of the detail. It is important that this whole new area does not negatively impact the heritage assets.

The Site Access Proposed plan shows overflow parking is to be accommodated on the grass to the north of the access road/stables using protective ground matting but is this only for large events? We note from the Planning Statement at 3.46 'Additional overflow parking is located on the (grass over hard-standing) hockey pitch adjacent to the current "main" car park on the east front.' This sounds a less than ideal situation/location in terms of the heritage but is it for the short-term?

We are pleased to learn from the Planning Statement: 3.42 'As a result of discussions with officers and concerns raised regarding the shared use of the main drive by estate vehicles and pedestrians, it is proposed to develop a new shared pedestrian and cycle route between the Stables block and the main house from a crushed stone material. Access and Parking Management 3.43 Carborne visitors to Wentworth Woodhouse will enter the site via Cortworth Lane at Octagon Lodge. Once they have parked in the new car park, they will be directed through Mews Court into the Stables yard. An electric land train will pick people up from the turning point in the stable yard and deliver them to the Mansion, thereby minimising both vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the drive beyond the carpark. 3.44 This route was decided after extensive discussions with representatives from Historic England, who wanted to ensure that visitors experience the stable yard in order to get a more complete historic story of the site, and not just visit the Mansion. It also allows for better control of people on the drive

as the electric land train will pick people up from the turning point in the stable yard and deliver them to the Mansion, thereby minimising both vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the drive beyond the carpark.'

That visitors will be given the amazing experience of seeing the great Palladian facade across the lawn in front of it is to be applauded. We trust that great care will be taken with new shared pedestrian and cycle route – see our comment at the end of this section below.

Visitors to the garden only, can enter through the pay point in the Stables.

We note that temporary coach parking on the former tennis courts to the east will be retained for the time being.

We would expect a planning application seeking permission for the development of a new car park or introduction of new paths within a Grade II* registered park and garden and within the setting of Grade I listed heritage assets, to include an assessment of potential impacts, including impact on views, and considerations for any mitigation. We have been unable to find this information.

Stables/ Riding School

While the façade of the Stable Block has a spectacular relationship with the park, the façade of the companion Riding School has a discrete relationship with the garden. Any proposed service parking for the Riding School should not intrude on the historical relationship between architecture and the garden, or on the garden vista from the baroque façade of the mansion, or from the walk from the Camellia House to the Riding School/ Stable Block.

In the applications absence of parking for the commercial occupants of the Stable Block and Riding School, our assumption is that this must be in the courtyard of the Stable Block. If so, access would presumably have an impact on the wrought iron gateway from the park and thus on the visitor's view of the building's façade.

We assume there will be future planning applications for these buildings. Once again, it would have helped to have seen the landscape masterplan proposals now so that an understanding of the plans for the whole site could have been reached.

Camellia House

We understand about disabled access and the importance of making the site accessible for all, however we remain concerned about the proposed disabled car parking, Changing Places Pod etc outside the Camellia House. It would be preferable for all cars to be in the main car park and for buggies to take disabled visitors to the Camellia House. This would minimise the intrusion of vehicles in the garden and in the garden vista from the baroque front of the mansion. However, if this parking is deemed absolutely necessary, it should not be visible from the historic Camellia House. Like the bin store, it should be carefully screened from harmful impact on the Camellia House.

It is important to appreciate that the rear of the early 19th Century Camellia House is, in fact, the façade of the earlier, 18th Century, garden building which is a very important landscape feature.

In the previous application **RB2021/172** (our letter dated 22nd September 2021) we supported the sympathetic hard landscaping treatments, the new grass path and existing fountain to the south of the building that is to be restored. We have not seen them in this application.

Similarly, we wrote that we have no objection to the removal of the small number of trees.

We remain concerned about the necessity for the Changing Places Pod which seems, along with the disabled car park, and new bollard lighting to be an intrusion into the historic area of the Camellia

House. In the proposals there is provision for male, female and an accessible WC within the rear area of the Camellia House and there is level access throughout.

The Camellia plants are important in the history and significance of Wentworth Woodhouse and probably date from the early 19th century. They need to be carefully looked after in the future including being well-watered during the summer months after flowering so that the flower buds for the following year are laid down and then in the winter when they are dormant being kept at a cool ambient temperature. What arrangements have been made to ensure that any heating system that is incorporated into the Camellia House will have no ill effects on the camellias? If necessary, advice could probably be sought from those who manage the camellia collection at Chatsworth or Sheffield Botanical Gardens.

We trust that our concerns will be addressed and look forward to being consulted on further proposals as they develop.

Yours sincerely,

Val Hepworth
Trustee and Chairman Conservation and Planning

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