RIPON CIVIC SOCIETY

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Ms Emma Walsh
Planning Services
North Yorkshire Council
County Hall
Racecourse Lane
Northallerton, DL7 8AD

26 September 2023

Dear Ms Walsh

- **Applications Ref. Nos: ZC23/02883/FUL and ZC23/02884/LB - Remodelling of and extension to Canal Gates/Studley tea-room**

- **Application Ref. No: ZC23/02903/FUL Partial change of use of existing building from toilet block to provide refreshment kiosk**

Ripon Civic Society has considered the above applications and has the following comments:

We welcome the proposal for the new facility; we consider that, on balance, it will improve on the existing arrangements. We appreciate the fact that changes were made to the original scheme as a result of meeting RCS and others; these changes have met most of our concerns about the prominence of the new facility.

We do, however, have the following serious concerns about the ramifications of these proposals:

- There is no plan or proposal in these applications to take improve the existing car park. This is – and has long been – a very unsightly feature in the deer park. It would benefit, as we suggested earlier, from screening by planting and/or mounding; this was acknowledged in a supporting document, but has not, for whatever reason, been taken further. We would wish to see it tackled as part of these applications.

- We would also question whether the Canal Gates car park is adequate to provide both for those paying visitors who choose to enter the gardens through an improved access with enhanced facilities and also for visitors to the deer park for whom the proposed kiosk would be provided. Any enlargement of the car park would be totally unacceptable; consideration should be given to providing separate parking for deer

park visitors away from the lake in a less prominent location. A new access at Lindrick Gate, or from the Visitor Centre approach road, to serve a new car park would help reduce traffic through the deer park.

- We are concerned at the proposal to limit access to the tearoom to paying visitors only. A kiosk will not provide the same experience or benefit of sitting, with refreshments, in the lakeside location that local residents have enjoyed for many years.

- We share the concerns of Studley Roger residents about increased traffic and parking in the village. It is inevitable that improved facilities at Canal Gates will lead to increased numbers of paying visitors entering the gardens and abbey through this entrance and avoiding the steep paths down from the Visitor Centre. Indeed, the application documents refer to the benefits of enhancing the designed entrance to the gardens. We therefore recommend that traffic management measures be introduced in Studley Roger and that consideration should be given to a new access to the deer park, at Lindrick Gate or at another suitable option.

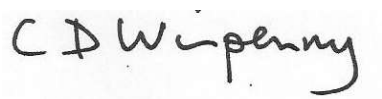
- We are concerned that the suggested route that would take pedestrians from the Visitor Centre to the Canal Gates facilities is past the abbey and through the gardens. This is the opposite direction to the eighteenth-century designed experience and is a relatively long walk. We suggest that the existing shorter pedestrian route past the church through the deer park should be improved and signed and that in the longer term the walk through the shoot area should be reinstated. Visitors should be encouraged to take this route to begin their walk through the gardens in the intended direction, after visiting the interpretation area and tea-room; this would have the added benefit of reducing pressure on the Canal Gates car park.

In summary, the Society would look for a more creative approach to the problems of traffic management and parking at the Canal Gates, and would like to see a thorough appraisal of all options.

Yours sincerely



Richard Taylor



David Winpenny

Co-Chairs, Ripon Civic Society