Glandŵr Cymru
Canal & River Trust in Wales

Your Ref P/2025/0366

Our Ref CRTR-PLAN-2025-44872

Friday 5 September 2025

Wrexham County Borough Council
The Guildhall
16 Lord Street
Wrexham
LL11 1AY

Dear Tyler Fox,

Proposal: Erection of Summer House in Conservation Area and World Heritage Site

Location: Chain Bank, Castle Road, Chirk, Wrexham

Waterway: Llangollen Canal

Thank you for your consultation.

We are the charity who look after and bring to life 76 miles of canals in Wales. Our waterways contribute to the health and wellbeing of local communities and economies, creating attractive and connected places to live, work, volunteer and spend leisure time. These historic, natural and cultural assets form part of the strategic and local green-blue infrastructure network, linking urban and rural communities as well as habitats. By caring for our waterways and promoting their use we believe we can improve the wellbeing of Wales. The Trust is known as Glandŵr Cymru, the Canal & River Trust in Wales and we are a statutory consultee in the Development Management process.

Based on the information available our substantive response (as required by the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (as amended)) is that the Trust has **concerns** relating to the following issues:

Structural Integrity

Based on the submitted details we do not consider that the proposed works would have an adverse impact on the structural integrity of the canal infrastructure.

Impact on historic environment

The proposal relates to a detached summerhouse, set on stilts, with an aluminium roof and vertical timber cladding, surrounding by decking with glazed balustrading. The summerhouse would be sited in the rear garden of Chain Bank, an early 20th Century property of Arts and Crafts style.

The site plan also refers to a single storey garage with a workshop below the patio, which it is understood to have planning permission.

Canal & River Trust Spatial Planning Team
E: planning@canalrivertrust.org.uk **W:** canalrivertrust.org.uk **T:** 0303 040 4040

Patron: King Charles III. Canal & River Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, Registered office address National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port, South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH65 4FW

Heritage setting

Llangollen Canal passes to the west of the site and the canal corridor is Scheduled Ancient Monument. The dwelling sits to the east of the Grade ii * listed Chirk aqueduct, viaduct and tunnel, that falls within the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct World Heritage Site and Chirk Conservation Area.

The surrounding context comprises numerous historic designations reflecting its importance for spectacular and innovative engineering responses to a difficult terrain. The scheduled monument listing identifies that "the highly engineered lengths of the Ellesmere Canal represent the apogee for canal building in Britain...as an exceptional example of a pioneering, heavily engineered cutting and embankment associated with an impressive aqueduct which when built was the tallest in the World".

There is a public footpath to the west boundary of the rear garden, leading down to the Chirk Aqueduct, which provides an important public access to the canal. The Chirk Conservation Area Appraisal identifies that the Copper Beech tree, referred to in the submitted heritage Statement, 'adds variety of colour to wider views during the summer' implying that the site has important view points from the valley. The landmark features of the above heritage assets are adjacent the proposed site, and the application site forms part of the setting of the adjacent historic designations.

There is a concern that that the proposal would appear unduly prominent and incongruous in this historically sensitive and public location.

The Chirk Conservation Area Appraisal refers to the high architectural value of Chain Bank, and the conservation area in general, and how the application is of particular value due to positioning, architectural design and integrity, retaining elements of original configuration and prevailing materials are also referred to. The proposal would not represent a traditional response to surrounding materials, and it is not clear how the proposal would appear sympathetic to or be in harmony with the prevailing material palette and character of the conservation area. There is a concern that its siting, form (on stilts), materiality and detailing would appear incongruous to its historic context, and the setting of the adjacent heritage assets.

In addition, the Conservation area Appraisal outlines the contribution of landscaping to wider landscape setting and visual quality of the grade II* listed Chirk Aqueduct and Viaduct.

The submission refers to 'ap*proximately 70m of new beech hedge being planned to be planted along the western boundary... the lower part of the boundary will be a mixture of native trees such as hazel, hawthorn and hornbeam. It will be kept to a height of 2 metres, high enough to give some screening from the Pontcysyllte site, but not so high as to be unmanageable.'* The submitted Heritage Statement outlines that there may be glimpses of the summerhouse from the canal footpath especially in the winter months, how this is not believed to have any significant impact on visitors' enjoyment of the canal and aqueduct.' The Trust would seek for an amendment to the materials (reflective/illuminated glazing) and a sufficient landscaping, all year round, screen to protect the value of the historic setting.

The Trust would seek for the Council to satisfy itself that it has sufficient information to assess any potential impact on the above designations and listed assets, and to ensure no harm to the settings of the adjacent heritage assets.

The applicant should be advised that the Canal & River Trust's ownership abuts part of the western site boundary. Any works on our land would require our separate approval and consent.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any queries you may have.

Yours sincerely,

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Rebecca Wyllie MRTPI
Area Planner

Rebecca.Wyllie@canalrivertrust.org.uk

https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/specialist-teams/planning-and-design

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