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Andrew Frost
Head of Planning Services
Chichester District Council
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Submitted by e-mail

31st October, 2018

Dear Sir,

CC/18/02538/FUL Priory Park, Chichester. Temporary change of use for Christmas season of grassed area to ice rink with ancillary food and drink uses including installation and removal of ancillary temporary structures.

Sussex Gardens Trust (SGT) has considered the above application. Whilst the Trust has reservations about the use of the park as envisaged in the application, it is recognised there would be public benefits that may justify approval. Detailed comments are shown below.

Priory Park is recorded as an "Historic Park" at para 19.67 of the Chichester Local Plan (2014 - 2019), hence under the National Planning Policy Framework it is a "*non-designated heritage asset*". In determining the application, the Planning Authority should make a balanced judgement with regard to the scale of any adverse impact on the significance/ harm and any public benefits (NPPF para 135).

The application does not include a "Statement of Significance" or an assessment of the effect of the proposals. The Trust considers the significance of the park is associated with the many listed historical buildings within and surrounding the park (Roman and medieval walls, Guildhall, the Motte, Priory Lodge and White Pavilion) - together these Heritage Assets have great **Historical Significance**; moreover, the park provides the setting for all of these and hence has great **Aesthetic Significance**. Additionally, the Park has great **Evidential Significance** because the site is thought to have extensive unexplored roman and medieval remains. As a public park it also has **Communal Significance**.

The Trust has reservations about the use of the Priory Park for unrelated events which cause visual harm or physical damage to this non-designated heritage asset. In this case this application, the proposals, if approved, would cause harm to the **Aesthetic Significance** of the Park due to the visual impact and noise intrusion, which could be substantial harm during the short period the ice rink is in use – and this has been reflected in the objections from some nearby residents. Nevertheless, the Trust recognises the use of the park as proposed for a short period during the quieter winter period might be acceptable, particularly if the public benefits are used to help fund the continued repair and maintenance of the park.

There is a risk that grass and other garden features (ie trees, shrubs, plantings etc) could be damaged during the period the ice rink is used. For this reason, it is suggested any approval should include a condition that *“the land should be restored to its condition immediately prior to the buildings being situated on the land by [say 31st March 2019].* This mirrors a condition attached to the approval of the Brighton ice rink; in practice we understand new turf is laid each year at Brighton.

Yours faithfully

Jim Stockwell

On behalf of the Sussex Gardens Trust.

CC: The Gardens Trust