



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

President: The Countess of Harewood

Vice-presidents: Lady Legard, Peter Goodchild, Nick Lane Fox

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Mr Grant Johnson
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18th March 2022

Dear Mr Johnson

21/03002/FUL Installation of decorative gates to the main Southgate entrance Valley Gardens, Friarwood Lane, Pontefract

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 Friarwood Valley Gardens, a public park 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.

Friarwood Valley Gardens in the centre of Pontefract, is a very favourable horticultural site and has a long and interesting history encompassing the vicinity of the Dominican friary, founded by Edmund de Lacy in 1256. After the Dissolution in 1539 it became a cemetery and then orchards and gardens in the 18th Century. Pontefract is noted for liquorice manufacture and the liquorice plant was cultivated in what is now the Rose Garden and Bowling Green from the mid-19th Century until the late 1940's when the land was acquired by Pontefract Borough Council. The design and development work undertaken by Parks and Cemeteries Superintendent, Mr R W Grubb in 1950 transformed the area into Friarwood Valley Gardens, one of the very few public parks on the HE Register from the mid - 20th Century.

The north-north-east side of Friarwood Valley Gardens is bounded by the A645 Southgate, a road which runs c.4m above the park. The boundary here is a stone retaining wall created in the 1930's when Southgate was widened. There are railings inset at intervals into the parapet wall giving views over the park. Unfortunately, the boundary is not in a good state of repair.

The Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens have helped care for this lovely park over a considerable number of years and in fact several years ago the Yorkshire Gardens Trust gave a small grant for the reinstatement of a long herbaceous border.

The Friends plan to repair and renovate the Southgate wall and railings along with this proposal for an Entrance Archway at the top of the main steps down into the gardens. The installation of the metal decorative arch at this main Southgate entrance will be a very pleasing enhancement, a fitting statement for the park. The design will match the style of the railings and we understand that the installation work will not have any archaeological or other heritage implications.

The Gardens Trust and Yorkshire Gardens Trust have no objections to this planning application and support the efforts of the Friends in caring for Friarwood Valley Gardens.

The Yorkshire Gardens Trust continues to run a small grant scheme and details can be found on the website.

Yours sincerely,

Val Hepworth
Trustee and Chairman Conservation and Planning

Cc Yorkshire and the Northeast Historic England; Conservation@the Gardens Trust.