



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

President: The Countess of Harewood

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[www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk)

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14<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Dear Mr Walsh

**22/04808/FULMAJ Construction of annex to provide support facilities for Ripon Cathedral, including a refectory, a Song School and toilets, involving the demolition of a toilet block, outbuildings and a stone wall plus the replacement of trees which will be lost and the enhancement of part of Minster Road. AMENDED DETAILS RECEIVED. Ripon Cathedral Minster Road Ripon North Yorkshire HG4 1QT**

Thank you for reconsulting 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. 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.

The public garden, Minster Gardens, the area of this proposal is not registered but is within the Buffer Zone for the World Heritage Site (WHS) of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal, (Registered Grade I).

We refer you to our letters of 27<sup>th</sup> February and 29<sup>th</sup> May 2023 where we explained our concerns.

We have looked at the amended details and do not think that the current proposals will have any significant impact on the WHS Buffer Zone.

However, we remain concerned that the loss of garden and trees and the proposed new construction, will still result in harm to Minster Gardens, and to the Ripon Conservation Area, to the Old Courthouse, the Old Jail and Old Deanery due to this proposal within their setting.

We note the critique by the Woodland Trust of the assessment of Tree T14's veteran status by the applicant. In particular we accept their rebuttal of that assessment, and join with the Woodland Trust's concern that, in order to protect T14 a buffer zone is required; and accept also that T19 and T23 are ecologically and culturally important in their own right and likely to become successor veterans in due course.

We understand that Minster Gardens has recently been listed as an asset of community value by North Yorkshire Council, and in terms of the already limited public benefit of greenspace in the

centre of Ripon, loss of some of this garden area and trees will inevitably have some impact. New trees planted out beyond the WHS will increase the biodiversity of that area but will not compensate for the loss of part of the present garden at the centre of this historic Cathedral setting.

Whilst we understand Ripon Cathedral's ambitions to provide facilities that are desirable in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century we still do not think that the current proposal addresses the concerns and objections that have been expressed about Minster Gardens and the heritage assets in their vicinity.

Artist Image 3 indicates that the bulky Song School will distract from the nearby elevation of the Cathedral. This area would be enhanced by soft landscaping which is totally absent but if the building could be pulled back and further north there would be an opportunity to do that. Artist Image 1 shows that the new building would completely hide The Old Deanery which is grade II\* listed (1174464) with its grade II listed (1174466) Old Deanery Boundary Wall.

We have nothing further to add and advise your authority to examine the relevant issues and come to a balanced planning decision.

Yours sincerely,

Val Hepworth  
Trustee Conservation and Planning

Cc. Historic England; conservation@ the Gardens Trust