



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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Dear Mr Matthews

24/00583/FUL Change of use of upper floors from residential use to a community venue/hub and single storey side extension comprising a potting shed and buggy park, Rowntree Park Lodge Richardson Street York YO23 1JU

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. 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.

Rowntree Park was York's first public park. Laid out in 1919-21, it is a memorial to the Cocoa Works staff who fell and suffered during the First World War and was designed following proposals by Frederick Rowntree. Plants were provided by James Backhouse Nursery. It was presented to the City by Messrs Rowntree and Co and is Registered at Grade II.

The park is a rectangular shaped site of c. 8.5ha and consists of a formal garden on an east/west axis, with hump- back bridge and dovecote. Other features include a rockery and defunct cascade, The Keepers Lodge/a tea- room built in 1921 and restored in 2002 stands on a raised site above the park, immediately to the north of the Richardson Street entrance at the west of the park. The steps at the Richardson Street entrance lead down into a horseshoe-shaped rockery with a cascade set into the hillside. These were laid out in 1935 replacing an early 20th century flowerbed. Immediately south of the entrance and rockery is a teardrop-shaped rose bed, formerly a small lily pond.

The Friends of Rowntree Park wish to develop proposals for the conversion of the upper two floors of the Rowntree Park Keeper's Lodge to create a new hub for local activities with access for all and intending to reconcile key design issues simultaneously through the renovation of this significant historic building in the park. Keepers Lodge is not listed, nationally or locally, but is recognised as being a non-designated heritage asset because of its contribution to the Grade II registered Park and Garden. It was built in a simple Arts and Crafts manner to designs by Frederick Rowntree and WJ Swain and is an important architectural feature within the designed landscape, including in views from the south when looking towards the listed Lychgate.

This is a well-considered proposal with an informative Design Access and Heritage Statement. The main changes are to the rear of the Keepers Lodge (ie west and north-west) to create a new (and secondary) entrance area with access to the new community venue on the first and second floors. A lift will extend beyond the existing catslide roof and will be clad in a green standing-seam metal. There will be hardwood timber and a sedum roof with PV array. The extensions will be partly hidden behind an existing brick wall and overall, the proposals will have no impact on the appearance of the Lodge from much of the park with the only visual impact being that from the paths a short distance within the Richardson Street entrance.

We have no comments to make about the internal renovation but support drawing on the tradition and details of the Arts and Crafts style.

We propose that careful detailing of hard landscaping and planting for the immediate setting of the Lodge should be a condition of the approval as there is the early rockery at the rear and sides of the building which formed part of the original design and were restored as part of the 2000 HLF scheme.

We do not consider that this application will harm the registered park. It will be an asset for the community and ensure the continued beneficial community use and repair of this significant heritage building in Rowntree Park.

The Gardens Trust and Yorkshire Gardens Trust have no objection.

Yours sincerely

Val Hepworth
Trustee Conservation and Planning

Cc Historic England, e-yorks@historicengland.org.uk; Kristof Fatsar, Landscape Architect North, Historic England; Conservation@ the Gardens Trust