



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

Bishop's Palace, Ripon

Statement of Significance

This statement of significance for Bishop's Palace Ripon, created by the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, is derived from research carried out as part of the Historic Designed Landscapes project.

1. Heritage Values Summary

The designed landscape of the Bishop's Palace at Ripon was mainly created from the 1840s to enhance the mansion built to accommodate the newly appointed incumbents of the See of Ripon. The layout was carried out by the landscape designer, William Pontey, although the first Bishop of Ripon, Charles Longley, would appear to have had a large influence. Despite the sale of the property in the 1940s and the addition of some modern buildings, the designed landscape remains largely intact.

2. Historical Value ('Narrative')

William Railton, the fashionable London architect and designer of Nelson's Column, was appointed for the project to create an estate for the new post of Bishop of Ripon. As well as designing the palace in the Tudor style, he also directed the additional construction works that included a lodge, cottage, stables, coach house and other components of the gentleman's country house. In 1846, Railton also designed the new chapel in the Perpendicular style. A stained-glass window in the chapel is dedicated to Charles Dodgson, chaplain to Bishop Longley and Archdeacon of Richmond. His son, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson was also a regular visitor when staying in Yorkshire.

The designed landscape was created with the aid of William Pontey of Huddersfield. Substantial shelter belts were laid out to the north and west of the house, an area of open parkland was formed to the south and a lawn laid out to the west. The design included a walled kitchen garden and attached orchard. Bishop Longley, the first Bishop of Ripon, played an active part in laying out and planning the private gardens.

The designed landscape remained essentially unmodified through the tenure of the successive bishops up to 1940, when the palace was taken over by Barnardo's and subsequently sold. Since then, the main residence and ancillary buildings have been converted to private use, resulting in some fragmentation of the pleasure gardens. The open parkland to the south and east has witnessed the construction of several new structures adapted to the function of the site as a residential school and three further private homes have been built adjacent to the palace.

3. Evidential Value ('Research')

Little is known about the extent of the full contribution of William Pontey to the development of the designed landscape and further research is needed to establish this. Additionally,



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geophysical survey might reveal below ground survival of features associated with formal plantings and beds in the areas surrounding the house, which are no longer extant. Further research might also shed light on any involvement of Bishop Longley's successors in developing the designed landscape or any features within it.

4. **Aesthetic Value ('Emotion')**

The original designed landscape forms a secluded and distinct enclave on the outskirts of the city providing an enhanced setting for the buildings within it. When the palace was built, it took advantage of its slightly elevated central position with southern views towards the city and cathedral, the sheltering woodland planting and the tranquillity of its rural setting outside the boundaries of the city. Many of these features survive for the residents of the present buildings. The restored walled garden also provides an aesthetically attractive and stimulating environment for the community.

5. **Communal Value ('Togetherness')**

The bishop's palace is an important link in the history of Ripon as a cathedral city. Many elements are now Grade II listed: the lodge, stables and coach house, the palace, the entrance gate piers and wall. The walled garden and orchard, newly restored and redesigned, and accessible to all is an important community educational and social space which is enhanced by its context.

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