



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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Chris Webb

Chair

Yorkshire Gardens Trust

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Dear Planning Officer

**ZC24/02227/LB | Removal and rebuild of two inner walls using appropriate materials in the Temple of Piety, along with installation of 5 no. airbricks on the north elevation and 4 no. airbricks on the south elevation and redecorate the interior following building works. | Temple Of Piety Fountains Abbey And Studley Royal Water Garden Fountains North Yorkshire**

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee for any proposed development affecting a site included by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks & Gardens, in this case Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey, listed at Grade I and a World Heritage site. The Temple of Piety, the subject of this application, is a listed building at Grade I in its own right. The Yorkshire Gardens Trust (YGT) is a member organisation of the GT and works in partnership with it in 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 Temple of Piety is a key feature in the designed landscape created by John and William Aislaby in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Water Gardens in which it sits cannot be understood or appreciated apart from the buildings sited within it; together they form a significant allegorical scheme as well as a site of great visual beauty. The importance of the Temple's external appearance as a landscape feature is obvious, but the Temple's interior decoration is of equal importance, being integral to the reading of the allegorical scheme by visitors in the Aislabies' day as well as at their 21<sup>st</sup> century counterparts.

YGT and GT would not normally comment on a listed building application dealing with internal features. However, in this case, the conservation reports (and my site visits to see the progress of the remedial works already undertaken and the serious damage and future risks they have revealed) make it clear that the present physical state of the building represents an existential threat to the Temple, and hence to the Water Garden in which it sits. The works proposed are critical to the building's continued survival. We therefore support this application.

We have one observation. We would have expected the application to be accompanied by an expert assessment of the nature and timing of the works in relation to the presence of brown

long eared bats (*Plecotus auratus*) on site. The application notes the existence of a roost, but does not say whether this might be a maternity roost. If this information is known it would be helpful to see it as part of the application pack. If it is not known an expert survey should be made: the non-human creatures that live in and around the World Heritage site are as critical to its sustainability as the buildings and landscape features that give us its outward form.

Yours sincerely

Chris Webb

Chair, Yorkshire Gardens Trust

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