



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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

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13<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Ms Howson

**Application Ref. ZC23/02517/FULMAJ Retrospective change of use of land to form camping site and wellness retreat to include erection of 12 no. accommodation units, reception/managers lodge, ancillary structures to accommodate wellness facility and parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Yurtshire Site Eavestone Lake Eavestone Ripon**

In 2019 the Yorkshire Gardens Trust was notified by other local organisations and some of our members regarding:

**19/02600/FULMAJ | Change of use of land to form camping site to include erection of 1 no. communal and 12 no. accommodation yurts, spa facility, managers lodge and associated facilities with parking and soft landscaping. | Land Known As Fishpond Wood Risplith North Yorkshire.**

Our letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 explained something of the history and designed aspects of the area of the application site and our concerns which were further detailed in our response to **22/00186/DVCMAJ** to extend the operational season of the campsite and to allow for structures to remain on-site all year round.

As you know the Gardens Trust (GT) is the statutory consultee regarding proposed development affecting a site on the Historic England 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. We appreciate that the area of Eavestone Lake and Fishpond Wood is not on the Register, but we felt that it was important to advise you of our concerns.

We have not been notified of this current retrospective change of use and apologise for the lateness of our response. We trust that you will take our comments and advice into account in the determination; thank you.

The application site is situated on land just off the B6265, c.9km to the west of Ripon, within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The landscape shows signs of historic design with its sinuous lakes which have been dammed, high gritstone cliffs and accompanying careful planting and boathouse. We understand that the lakes may have been medieval fishponds for Fountains Abbey which is located c.5km to the east. **Please See Ref 1 Below.**

It appears that in the 18C Lord Grantley had design work carried out to make this a more picturesque area of his extended pleasure grounds of Grantley Hall (Grantley Hall Listed Grade II\* and Japanese

Garden Registered Grade II) and to include distant views of Nidderdale to the north and north-west. The *Ripon Gazette* 28<sup>th</sup> June 1877 published an account by Forester, 'A Ramble by the River Skell from its Rise to its Outfall' **Please See Ref 2 Below.**

There are obvious similarities to Plumpton Rocks (HE Register, grade II\*) laid out a few years earlier by Daniel Lascelles: both have rivers dammed to produce lakes with towering gritstone outcrops and planted to increase the picturesque experience. It is possible that Plumpton Rocks could have been the inspiration for Lord Grantley.

**Please See Ref 3 Below for Map Evidence.**

This area of the Nidderdale AONB has been used by generations for quiet walks taking in its hidden beauty and tranquillity where there is no traffic just an exquisite landscape with its wildlife habitat.

We are concerned that the proposed further development has the potential to disrupt the tranquillity of Eavestone Lake and Fishpond Wood; a precious resource. Although the original consent was for a camping site that described itself as a low impact eco-retreat set within existing woodland, there are more permanent features in the site, warden accommodation, hard-standing and access, and with the 2022 Variation of Condition 5 there is now year-round use. Looking at this retrospective planning application the impression is that there may be continuing further built change to this tranquil area which would be very regrettable.

**This Retrospective Change of Use Application:**

We note from the Landscape and Visual Appraisal at 4.3 Overall Landscape Sensitivity that 'The value of the site is assessed to be **National** and the susceptibility to change of the site is assessed to be low/medium. The overall sensitivity of the site is therefore assessed to be **medium**.

The applicant is seeking permission for the amended locations of the yurts and for Nos 8,9,10 and 11 nearest the lake to be 7m A-frame structures and a revised appearance for the management yurt. A Treatment Room Yurt is also proposed. The visitor reception/ manager's accommodation yurt will be rectangular in construction and will measure 13.95 x 4.5m. The yurts will provide visitor accommodation between 1st March and 31st December with the yurts to be non-operational and the manager's accommodation unoccupied outside of this period.

We very much regret that the applicant is now seeking permission for a raft of amendments to approvals already granted, and whilst we understand from the Landscape and Visual Appraisal that the yurts are well screened, we have concerns that the 7-8m high A-frame structures close to the lake instead of the yurts at 3.1m, will be visible from the public access along the northern edge of the lake.

We note that the facilities will be for the use of the site's guests only and we advise that this should be a condition if the application is deemed to be given approval.

Overall, we have concerns that this nationally special and tranquil area is at risk of becoming eroded with more intensive development, and the applicants focus of a 'wellness retreat' in addition to camping/glamping will be lost.

We trust that our comments are helpful and will be given full consideration in determining this application.

Yours sincerely,

Val Hepworth  
Trustee Conservation and Planning

Cc. Historic England; Conservation the Gardens Trust

## REFERENCES:

1. The Yorkshire Archaeology Society Record Series Vo CXL, *The Fountains Abbey Lease Book*, 1981, pp168-9; '23 January 22 Henry VII [1507]. Lease by Marmaduke, abbot of Fountains to Emmota Lemyngge, widow, and Maurice her son, for a tenement with appurtenances in Evestone....' Also p168: 'Land Rental income totalled 28s in 1456/7 and 30s in 1535. The monastery was working a quarry in Eavestone in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> C.' The Yorkshire Archaeology Society collection has further deeds and Tithe Awards for Eavestone in the Grantley MSS dated from 1586 until the 19C. (See 'A Guide to Historical Sources for Ripon and District', pub Ripon Records Project 1994 by Ripon Historical Society and Ripon, Harrogate and District Family History Group.)

2. The *Ripon Gazette* 28<sup>th</sup> June 1877 published an account by Forester, 'A Ramble by the River Skell from its Rise to its Outfall' which includes:

'...near the hamlet of Eavestone, are some fine ponds occupying the side glens on the southern slope of the main valley. They were formed about a century ago by Sir Fletcher Norton, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Grantley by making dams across the narrowest parts and throwing back the water. One of these is of considerable size and is known as "Grantley Lake". .... and filled the upper part of it with water, at the same time clothing the lower extremities and surrounding hills with plantations of timber trees. ... it has the appearance of a genuine mountain lake.... Though the length is not more than a third of a mile, and the breadth much less, its curvilinear shape prevents the whole of it being seen at once and gives it an appearance of more extension than it really possesses. At the upper end are groups of lofty gritstone rocks of considerable height, rising directly from the water, one of them bearing the name of the "Raven Crag", which adds much to the variety of the scene. ...'

3. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map (published 1854) and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition OS map (published 1890) give further evidence for the manipulation and embellishment of the site. Comparing the two editions indicates that by the end of the 19C there were footpaths all round the southern side of Eavestone Lake, and the western end notated as 'Fishpond' has been modified and extended with a piece of land between it and the main lake. There is also a 'waterfall' marked and it appears that pedestrians could walk towards the waterfall and "Ravens Crag". The Crag and waterfall would be seen from the path on the opposite side of the lake (northern side) as the Crag is today; the path being part of the Ripon Rowel Walk. The boathouse and small footbridge are marked on the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition OS map.