



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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

Mrs Val Hepworth

Mr Ron Allan  
Rights of Way Officer  
North Yorkshire County Council  
ron.allan@northyorks.gov.uk

[conservation@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:conservation@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk)

16<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Mr Allan

## **6.18.116.PROWNY LOCATION: Hackfall Farm Grewelthorpe, Ripon, North Yorkshire HD4 3DE Application for Modification Order 5 May 1984**

We understand from the Woodland Trust that current permissive paths at the Historic England Grade I Registered Historic Park and Garden, Hackfall, are being proposed to become Public Rights of Way (PROW).

We note from the Harrogate Borough Council Document (Case Officer Katie Lois) that it is proposed that path 1 commence at Grid Reference 42308 47670 at Point A on the plan and runs generally north east via Grid Reference 42345 47713 Point B to a junction with path no 15.52/7 at Grid Reference 42360 47718 Point C. Path 2 will commence at Grid Reference 42345 47713 Point B on the plan and runs in a northerly direction to a junction with path no 15.52/7 at Grid Reference 42353 47754 Point D.

The Gardens Trust (GT) is the Statutory Consultee with regard to proposals affecting a site included by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks & Gardens and the Yorkshire Gardens Trust (YGT) is authorised by the GT to respond on the GT's behalf. YGT is a member organisation of the GT and works in partnership with it in respect of the protection and conservation of registered sites.

We are writing in support of the Woodland Trust's submission on this matter of PROW and to express our own concern at the proposal.

The Registered Park and Garden at Hackfall has exceptional heritage significance as an internationally important historic designed landscape. The Hackfall pleasure grounds laid out c. 1749 to 1760's by William Aislabie is strongly linked with the World Heritage Site and grade I registered historic park and garden, Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey. It should also be noted that Hackfall is one of only nine historic park and gardens in the whole of Yorkshire at grade I. In addition, Hackfall is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Although we of course support public access and enjoyment of this very special place, we are concerned that it also needs careful management so that the special significance is not damaged and it is sustained for future generations to also enjoy. Currently the permissive access works very well and enables essential works to be carried out by occasional limited closure of certain sections and careful management to prevent excessive wear and tear on the site and to protect the habitat. It is important that the paths are maintained in a historically sensitive manner and we understand that the Woodland Trust have some footpath repairs in sympathetic materials in hand. The width of paths in

a lot of places is not wide enough for PROWs and any alterations to gain width would cause damage to the historic landscape and SSSI.

Making the paths a PROW will make all this management more difficult and is unnecessary.

Since William Aislable laid out the exceptional pleasure grounds at Hackfall, it has frequently been opened for visitors to enjoy. We understand that there was always a charge for entry at least until 1933. A later owner introduced passes for the locals. The Woodland Trust have followed their normal format of permissive paths.

We strongly propose that in order to maintain Hackfall as a highly designated heritage asset, the permissive access remains and a PROW is not implemented.

Yours sincerely

Val Hepworth  
Trustee and Chairman Conservation and Planning

Cc John Stonard, Team Leader Development Advice, Yorkshire and the Northeast Historic England;  
Margie Hoffnung, the Gardens Trust