



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

President: Countess of Harewood

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

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8th August 2023  
Dear Ms Spriggs

**23/03954/LI Retrospective listed building application for alterations including new external lighting, stone fire pit and flue to plant room; internal alterations to doors and openings, bar area and WC/store. Thehovels Harewood Estate Harewood**

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to any proposed development affecting a site included by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks & Gardens – Harewood House Registered Grade I. 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.

The site currently known as Thehovels lies within the Grade I Registered Park and Garden surrounding Harewood House and thus lies within a historic designed landscape considered to be of international importance. As you will be aware we have responded to a series applications associated with the repurposing of Thehovels and this area of the landscape since 2018, expressing some concerns about the impact on this Grade I landscape.

We note that the external elements included in this retrospective application likely to have an impact on the registered landscape are, the external lighting, the stone fire pit and the flue for the plant building. We assume that the lighting is for safety reasons, and the stone fire pit is of a scale unlikely to have any impact and accordingly we have no further comments on these, although this should not be taken as either approval or disapproval of these retrospective developments.

Where we do have concerns is with the flue for the plant building. At what appears to be around 2.75 times the height of the flue for the kitchen in Thehovels building itself, it is clearly visible in the wider landscape and from Otley Road to the north. Paragraph 7.1.2 of the Heritage Statement refers to the 'unobtrusiveness' of the design of the new building (Thehovels) but this design ethos does not appear to have been applied to the plant building and we note that this appears to be the original Heritage Statement prepared in 2018 for application 18/07108/FU and not since updated. We disagree with the statement that 'the stainless steel finish is considered to be more in keeping with the muted colour tones of the external building materials than black'. The current shiny metal is obtrusive in the wider landscape and we consider it should be painted black to mitigate the visual impact.

To summarise therefore: Whilst the Gardens Trust and Yorkshire Gardens Trust have no comments in relation to the lighting and fire pit elements of this listed building application, we do object to the current finish of the plant building flue.

On a more general note, we are extremely concerned that these developments have taken place in a Grade I Registered Park and Garden historic landscape and retrospective listed building permission is now having to be applied for. As expressed in our previous responses, we very much regret the gradual piecemeal eating away at Harewood's internationally designated site. Although seemingly small-scale when considered in isolation, the cumulative result of developments such as this will ultimately lead to the erosion of the landscape and reduction in value.

Lastly we note that we have not yet seen any details of the proposed landscaping in the area of Thehovels. We expect that these will be the subject of a future planning application, and we look forward to commenting on them in the usual way.

Yours sincerely

Chris Webb  
Chair, Yorkshire Gardens Trust

cc. Historic England; the Gardens Trust