



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

President: The Countess of Harewood

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

Ms Marina Martignoni  
Woodland Officer  
Forestry Commission  
Yorkshire and North East Area  
Foss House, King's Pool  
1-2 Peasholme Green  
York YO1 7PX  
[marina.martignoni@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:marina.martignoni@forestrycommission.gov.uk)

Mrs Val Hepworth  
Trustee  
Conservation and Planning

Callum Davis  
Admin Officer  
[callum.davis@forestryCommission.gov.uk](mailto:callum.davis@forestryCommission.gov.uk)  
[conservation@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:conservation@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk)

9<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Dear Ms Martignoni

**RE: 012/2571/2022 Middleton Lodge Estate - Felling Licence Consultation.**

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to any proposed development that could affect a site included by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks & Gardens – Middleton Lodge at Grade II, (list entry number: 1001699). 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.

Middleton Lodge, (Listed Grade II\*, list entry number 1317085), was designed by John Carr of York and built between 1777 and 1780 for the barrister George Hartley with the grounds being laid out at a similar time. The Registered Park and Garden (RPG) of c 67ha consists of pleasure grounds, formal gardens, landscape park and walled kitchen garden.

The main (west) drive, its entrance gateway and its additional gateway are also thought to have been designed by Carr. The grounds to the south of this were landscaped at the same time by an unknown designer; although the semi-circular clump of trees on the boundary to the south-east of the house, depicted on the 1838 'Plan of the Township of Middleton Tyas', and on the Operations and Restocking maps is characteristic of some of the designs produced by Adam Mickle II, (1747-1810). Mickle II was part of a dynasty of landscape designers, his father worked for Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and he himself completed numerous commissions in Yorkshire and is known to have worked with the architect John Foss at Swinton Park. However, the attribution of a designer at Middleton Lodge cannot be made with certainty on the present evidence. George Hartley died in 1780 before he took up residence at Middleton Lodge and subsequently, the stable block, by either John Carr or John Foss, and the walled garden were constructed. The park, permanent pasture with a scattering of mature trees including foreign specimens, is believed to have been laid out when the house was built in 1780. It is in the English natural landscape style favoured in the later C18. The house overlooks parkland to the north-east and south-east bordered by a belt of trees, which served to frame views in the middle distance while more distant tree planting break longer views to the moors

beyond. Views of the house could be gained across parkland from Five Hills Lane to the south. Several of these original vistas are currently filtered by C20 planting near the house, but those to the east and south-east remain. Views of the park can also be enjoyed from the west drive.

Compartment 1b is a boundary plantation including Rye Hill Plantation to the east, compartment 1d is Acre Howden Plantation and Lodge Covert at some distance to the north/north-east of the house and compartment 1e north of the house and east and north of the stable block (parts used as car parking) are to be thinned. We note Corsican pine on the schedule for this compartment. Corsican pine was introduced in 1759 and grows to form a picturesque tree that grows well in poorer conditions so would probably be a good species to retain here.

Compartment 1a lies to the south of the house, partially outside the registered boundary and partly within, incorporating Lodge Gill a picturesque stream. Regenerative felling is proposed on the schedule. Is the Corsican pine growing in this compartment also being retained? As noted above it is a picturesque tree that grows well.

Compartment 1c also to be regeneratively felled is of interest as it comprises Acre Howden Spring Plantation which is on the north-east boundary of the park. It is depicted on the 1854 6":1 mile OS map with the same name, drawn as rough ground with an open planting of mixed conifers and deciduous trees. The same features are drawn in more detail on the 1892 25": 1 mile map. It does not constitute a main view from the house or carriage drive and so perhaps this is one of the plantations extended by Edmund Backhouse in the mid- 19th century. (The register description mentions that "Edmund Backhouse may have extended some of the plantations, [and] added exotic specimen trees".)

Thank you, Martina for your further information. We understand about ash dieback and that the ash to be felled are of mixed age but mainly less than 70 years old and that no exotics are to be felled. The pines are younger at probably c. 50 years old. The proposed restocking with oak and beech should be fine and to conform with the 19<sup>th</sup> century maps we suggest that some conifer is retained as maybe they are the exotics mentioned.

Yours sincerely

Val Hepworth  
Trustee Conservation and Planning

cc. Chris Mayes, Landscape Architect North of England, Historic England  
[e-yorks@historicengland.org.uk](mailto:e-yorks@historicengland.org.uk); Conservation@ the Gardens Trust