



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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Trustee

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25th July 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

25/01962/FUL Installation of Ground Mounted Solar Panels, Landscaping and Associated Works. Land to The East of the Swinton Estate, Located to the East of Swinton Road and South of Masham Golf Course. Swinton Castle, Swinton, HG4 4JH

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, (RPG) in this case Swinton Castle at Grade II*. 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 designed historic park and garden of Swinton Castle is a significant example of the 'rugged picturesque' incorporating extensive rockwork, grottoes, rustic bridges etc. It is a wild and dramatic landscape. There are a number of designated heritage assets within the RPG including Swinton Castle itself at grade II* and the gateways and flanking lodges east of Swinton Castle listed at grade II. These are within 300m of the proposed site.

On 1st February 2023 we responded to 23/00102/SCREEN Screening opinion for proposed 1.3 MWp solar farm with all associated works, equipment and necessary infrastructure. Land Comprising Field At 421265 479957 North of Swinton Estate Office Swinton North Yorkshire. We had some concerns about this proposal, and we queried whether an Environmental Impact Assessment should be prepared for the proposed development looking at the historic environment. We advised that your authority's conservation and archaeology advisors should be closely involved in this process and further advice gained from Historic England.

We are now pleased to be consulted on the current full application on land to the east of the Swinton Estate. Thank you for the comprehensive suite of documents.

The development proposed is for approximately 704 solar photovoltaic (PV) panels arranged in three linear sections, mounted horizontally at an angle of 20 degrees and the rows positioned 4.5m apart to encourage plant growth between them. The proposal site is outside the RPG boundary to the east. It is backed to the north by Mell Bush woodland that is south of the Golf Course, with additional

boundary woodland along Swinton Road that screens the proposed site from the road. The landform will also largely prevent any harmful impact from the structures themselves and any potential glint and glare.

We have visited the proposed site and agree that the visual separation between the proposed site and the RPG and other designated heritage assets at Swinton Park is strong, (Heritage Impact Assessment 6.17) and that there is unlikely to be any harmful impact on the RPG, other designated heritage assets and little impact on the setting. It is important that during the life of the solar array (c.40 years) that all the woodland that protects the site from any impact on the designated heritage assets, is maintained, strengthened and any tree loss is replanted.

We note the public benefits of the proposal which will play a significant role in helping Swinton Estate become carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2040. YGT acknowledges the scientific evidence that climate change is an existential threat to the future of RPGs, and that shifting from fossil fuels to renewable energy as quickly as possible is a critical tool for mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Overall, we conclude that the public benefit of this proposal outweighs any possible minor degree of harm, and the Gardens Trust and Yorkshire Gardens Trust have no objection to this planning application.

Yours sincerely,

Val Hepworth
Trustee Conservation and Planning

Cc. Cc Kristof Fatsar, Historic England, e-yorks@historicengland.org.uk; Conservation@ the Gardens Trust.