



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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24th August 2023

Dear Mr Booth-Robinson

Application:19/00480/STPLF. Residential Development for 95 dwellings comprising the conversion of existing buildings into 34 flats and 27 town houses and erection of new buildings to provide 9 flats and 25 town houses following demolition of ancillary buildings. University Of Hull, Thwaite Hall, Thwaite Street, Cottingham, East Riding of Yorkshire HU16 4RE. RECONSULTATION

Thank you for reconsulting 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 – Thwaite Hall, Registered 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 proposed residential development remains unchanged from the previous consultation, and we refer you to our advice in our letters of 19th March 2019 and 30th June 2021 and our e-mail to Ms Jennifer Downs of 16th August 2021. We remain concerned that the proposed development is making a large and excessive built footprint to the east and west of the existing buildings (Hall and University Residential Buildings) encroaching on the setting of the non-designated Thwaite Hall, the Registered Park and Garden and affecting the character and appearance of the Cottingham Conservation Area. In our view the proposal for the new-build 20 semi-detached houses, east and west of the existing building and the total of 135 car parking spaces (the Landscape Management Plan notes c.168 parking bays, p22) is overdevelopment. Additionally, the car parking areas are notated to be of permeable asphalt and block paving; we would prefer to see a 'greener' solution that would support biodiversity and be an ameliorating surface for the future where climate change will be a major issue.

We note the further information for this reconsultation is a 'Landscape General Arrangement Plan', a 'Landscape General Arrangement Context Plan' and a 'Landscape Management Plan' (Masterplan) dated 26th June 2023. The latter's introduction writes, 'The report sets out an historic overview and analysis of the gardens that surround Thwaite Hall, alongside analysis of the design proposals to the south of the site. Detailed management strategies are set out for the first 2 phases of the site, adjacent to the hall and the lower gardens running to the west, with strategic management proposals

set out for the later phases including the lake and woodland areas beyond. All the management strategies should be read alongside the proposed landscape design information contained within this report and on drawings 232-LST-XX-XX-DR-L-0101-General Arrangement-Context Plan and 232-LST-XX-XX-DR-L-0102-General Arrangement Plan'.

You will appreciate that Thwaite Hall Gardens has a history of exotic planting within an impressive 19th century villa garden. About 80 trees in the Thwaite collection were assessed by the 'Tree Register Of Britain and Ireland' (TROBI) who considered no fewer than 37 to be "remarkable" in some way. Of these, 31 were confirmed to be Yorkshire Champions and 6 were National Champions. These have been checked by visits from TROBI officers. This list does not include many other trees which, although not 'remarkable' are nevertheless highly admired - like the Redwoods and Foxglove Tree. Chief recorder for TROBI - Dr. Owen Johnson (author of Collins Tree Guide) described the Thwaite collection as "After Thorp Perrow, it's perhaps the most interesting collection of mature rare trees in N.E. England".

In our letter of 19th March 2019 and our e-mail of 16th August 2021 we advised that there should be a formally adopted Conservation Management Plan (CMP), produced by a heritage professional familiar with this type of historic garden. The expertise of the Friends of Thwaite Gardens and the University of Hull should be consulted.

We appreciate that the submitted information for this reconsultation is a helpful way forward, but in our view, it is not detailed enough to ensure the future security of a significant registered park and garden.

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) uploaded to your application website is dated Feb 2019 and we can't find any update to this which, given that the original survey was undertaken in 2018, makes it five years out of date. As the Trees Team response notes, that's five years of growth which affects form, health and root zones which means it should be updated. We support the comprehensive Trees Team Report uploaded 3rd July 2023 and the Woodland Trust (22nd August) concerns regarding T63 Veteran White Willow.

We have noted the Landscape Management Plan, Mitigation and Management Assessment, and consider that there should be detailed proposals for the landscaping of the setting of Thwaite Hall and the associated buildings to help mitigate the development and its impact on the heritage assets. There is likely to be children's play equipment, washing lines, storage sheds and other domestic infrastructure. How will this be accommodated so that it does not impact on the Registered Park and Garden?

The proposed landscaping is split into phases, Landscape Management Plan p13 – 'The first phase includes the redevelopment of the Hall and surrounding Formal Gardens (zone 1) and the Parkland (zone 2), for the purposes of this appraisal, detailed management prescriptions have been provided for this initial phase (Years 1-5) [but only] **strategic prescriptions provided for zones 3 and 4 [Fishpond and Woodland Shelter Belt].'**

We think that the management proposals should treat the site as one cohesive unit with detailed proposals for each area. More than five years and up to twenty years (p29,30) sounds a long time for no detailed defined management of zones 3 and 4. This is far too vague and definitely needs a CMP.

We also consider that the landscape work, management and maintenance will need to be monitored well into the future. It is in everyone's interest that Thwaite's historic designed park and gardens have a sympathetic and sustainable future; for Thwaite's residents and neighbours, the Cottingham Conservation Area, Thwaite Gardens volunteers and visitors and the community in general.

Yours sincerely

Val Hepworth
Trustee Conservation and Planning

Cc Yorkshire and the Northeast Historic England; the Gardens Trust