



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

President: The Countess of Harewood

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www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk

Mrs Val Hepworth

Trustee

Conservation and Planning

Planning Team
Tanyeli Scarsbrook
York City Council

planning.comments@york.gov.uk

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conservation@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk

Dear Tanyeli Scarsbrook

25/01407/LBC | External works to include new stabilising piers, repairs and repointing of walls Palace Gardens Bishopthorpe Road York

The Gardens Trust and Yorkshire Gardens Trust welcomed the recent listing at grade II of the walled kitchen gardens of Bishopthorpe Palace, the residence of the Archbishop of York located in the Bishopthorpe Conservation Area.

As you will know the Gardens Trust (GT) is the Statutory Consultee with regard to any proposed development affecting a site listed by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks and Gardens and has a professional interest in the listing of structures that are part of historic designed landscapes and gardens. 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 construction of the two walled kitchen gardens, their associated brick lean-to buildings and canalised stream were begun by Archbishop Drummond (1711-1776) and further work of improvement was undertaken by Archbishop Markham (1777-1807). Archbishop Markham built a 18ft heated wall dividing the gardens to protect blossom and assist in fruit-ripening. A particular feature of the walled kitchen gardens, answering the practical need for water, was the canalising of the stream that runs the length of the larger garden, before being culverted under Bishopthorpe Road to become a pond in the Archbishop's pleasure gardens. This is an unusual feature.

In order to stabilise, repair and maintain the brickwork walls the following are proposed:

- Stabilisation of leaning walls by tying them back to new steel columns, which are then clad in brickwork.
- Strapping and reinforcement of cracks in walls.
- Provision of new brickwork and copings to allow for consolidation of loose areas of wall.
 - Removal of corroded sections of flue in the hot wall and replacement with brickwork.
- Repairs to gateways and doorways (including a replacement door).
- Repointing of walls (deemed to require LBC by the amount proposed).

These LBC proposals are following much good conservation practice and the Gardens Trust and Yorkshire Gardens Trust in principle support this important work to secure the future of the walls of the walled kitchen garden, but we would like to make the following comments:

Although we appreciate that Health and Safety is important, we consider that a key point of the repairs to such an historic structure is to retain the time depth and structural detail in the wall. This will be recognised by a good conservation architect and should be a major part of the work commissioned.

We strongly suggest that careful recording is undertaken as part of the project. There will be much remnant evidence of the history of construction held in the walls and it is essential that this detail is carefully recorded and preserved.

Regarding lime mortars - ideally hot lime mixtures like the original should be used in the restoration. Hot limes are mixed onsite and take some skill - but are now considered best conservation practice. We understand that there are a few local contractors who could carry this out and use the work as training ground for conservation professionals.

The old fruit trees adjacent to the walls are an important resource and will need careful protection throughout. Old varieties no longer commercially available could be an important genetic reservoir for future fruit tree breeding against our changing climate and should be protected and conserved.

We have not noted any repair details for the central dividing wall. This wall contains a lot of detail as it included flues and a range of buildings - not all of which survive.

Walled kitchen gardens are essentially meant to be seen and enjoyed from within. The internal piers being proposed to support the walls will be visually intrusive, so have other alternatives been considered?

The Bishopthorpe Local History Group cited in the Historic England advice report for the listing should be consulted. In 2019 the group published *Bishopthorpe in Blossom, Our Orchard Heritage*, and their research is continuing.

Yours sincerely

Val Hepworth
Trustee Conservation and Planning

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