



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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9th September 2022

Dear Ms Martignoni & Mr Varju

**012/2496/2022 Harewood Estate – Felling Licence Consultation, the Harewood Estate, near Leeds (Grid Ref SE 320 437).
ADDITIONAL LETTER**

You will have received our letter on this felling consultation dated 22nd August where we explained the difficulties that we have assessing such a complex consultation and thank you for your additional summary information as follows:

“Harewood (Grade I Registered Parkland) is proposing maintenance felling on approx. 340 ha of their woodland Estate. By maintenance felling it is meant thinning, which is mostly overdue on the Estate as very little felling took place since 2008, and regeneration felling.

The plan of operation spreadsheet might contain multiple entries for the same compartment (cpt). This happens in the instances where the Estate wants to undertake more than one felling operation type on the same cpt (e.g. T – thinning – and RF – regeneration felling).

For the vast majority of cpts, the proposal is in line with standard felling operations i.e. discerning felling followed by adequate restocking, avoiding monocultures and non-natives (*the latter being a recent common spread tendency rather than a UKFS prescription). In fact, you will see a blanket approach by the Estate to restock with 40% pedunculate / sessile oak, 20% mixed broadleaves, 10% shrubs, 10% open space, 10% lime, 10% mixed conifers (Scots pine preferred) at a density of 1800 stems / ha. Again, this is a standard approach and we (FC, NE and HE) had no concerns over it so far.

However, we would particularly appreciate your comments on the proposed felling for cpt 17a and 17b (Carr Park). The Estate is proposing the partial deforestation (75% felling) and restock 5% to convert the site into woodland pasture. “

Unfortunately, my colleague, Peter Goodchild, has been unwell and he has more knowledge than I of the historical development of the designed landscape at Harewood. He may be able to give you further insights via e-mail next week, but I would like to offer the following comments:

I would like to point out two sources of information in addition to the early OS maps that I've been looking at.

There is the Teal's map of Harewood of 1796 which is very helpful in relation to compartments 17a and b, and probably for others. For 17a and b it shows one or two small clumps on the edge of Carr Park and one around a pond further out in the park. There are a number of scattered individual trees but no large areas of woodland within it. Clearly it, Carr House Park, was then open space with a few small clumps and individual trees to animate it. We are sure it was meant to be seen from the House as part of the whole expansive scene. It would make the lake much less enclosed on its southern side and the space of the park, as a whole, more freely flowing, instead of being rather restricted at its western end.

The other source of possible information is Plate 16 from John Claudius Loudon, 'Country Residences' London 1806, vol 2. I think that Loudon shows the view of the lake as seen from the 'lawn' in front of the house both as it existed at that time and his proposals. Peter will have a good copy but there are clearly on the drawing as existing, individual trees, small clumps and longer groups all very attractively laid out with pasture between. I don't think that Loudon's proposals were actually carried out but Peter will be able to advise.

Clearly Cpts 17a and 17b are significant in views from the house and the boat house terrace across to the south side of the lake/fish pond.

Looking at the 1909 OS map it was clearly pasture with tree clumps and this was the case largely until 1951 estate map. The OS 25 inch sheet CLXXXVIII.10 surveyed 1888-1892 is much as 1909 ie Carr Plantation doesn't exist, as the whole area is parkland (Carr House Park) including cpts 17a and 17b with clumps and loose belts and scattered trees.

OS 1st Ed 6 inches surveyed 1846-47 and published 1851 (sheet 188) is an even sparser treed version than 1888 with some lines of trees possibly from old field boundaries, so largely pasture as a backdrop to the lake when looking from the house but the east (Piper Wood) and south (Hazelwood Leys) are flanking boundary plantations of Carr House Park. The term Hazelwood Leys makes me think that was originally a hazel coppice wood with meadow perhaps, so more open than dense canopied trees.

We would say therefore that 1888/1909 maps should be the guide to felling and replanting – this would be a type of wood pasture but not evenly planted rather following the OS map as a guide.

Cpt 18a has Stub House Beck running through it and I would be concerned to expose this by felling but it will be replanted. Only deciduous trees are shown on OS sheet CLXXXVIII.SW surveyed 1891-2, published 1894.

Cpt 23b to East of New Bridge and North of Beech Bank is woodland on 1st Ed (surveyed 1846-7) with some conifers on OS 1891-92.

Cpt 25g is Grey Stone Whin immediately south of Grey Stone Pasture. Shown as woodland, presumably lots of gorse too, and more or less no conifers on CLXXXVIII. SW surveyed 1891-2 and published 1894.

We can't find cpt 32a.

With our time limitations and my lack of detailed knowledge of the woodland at Harewood, we have not considered the species suggested for replanting. We would also point out the importance of any relationships between historic walks/rides and views.

So, in summary as far as we are able, we think that the 1888/1909 maps should be the guide to felling and replanting. This would be a type of wood pasture but not evenly planted rather following the OS map as a guide (and also maybe Loudon as noted above). The several veteran trees should remain – they must have been present when the early OS maps were being surveyed. Could the English bluebells and dog's mercury come in from adjacent ASNW in the past 60/70years? As I wrote in our previous letter Harewood is a grade I for its designed landscape and breadth of significant designers that have been associated with it. So, we think that to return to the historic designed landscape situation as shown on the early maps for cpts 17a and 17b would be an interesting contrast to ASNW elsewhere and would also give a breadth of land management for the future.

We would also like you to note particularly in complex consultations such as this one, that it would be useful to us to know of the particular areas, where our knowledge can be most helpful.

Peter has compiled some comments about the documents that the Forestry Commission sent to YGT in connection with the Felling Licence for the Harewood Estate. They indicate our difficulties as volunteers with historic designed landscape expertise, but without the detailed forestry knowledge of officers at the Forestry Commission. We are attaching these comments.

Yours sincerely

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DEFINITION NOTE from Marina:

Thinning is defined as the felling of up to 30% of standing timber volume, evenly distributed across the site and in a way that the retained canopies will be allowed to rejoin in due course. This does not require restocking as it is generally assumed that the increased light will promote both the ground flora and natural regeneration.

Regeneration felling is the felling of small groups of trees within a woodland (sometimes defined as coupes, generally <0.25 ha each). This must be followed by restocking (whether through planting or natural regeneration). Regeneration felling is a silvicultural technique often implemented to allow light demanding species (e.g. oak, birch) to establish.