RIPON CIVIC SOCIETY

c/o Workhouse Museum
Allhallowgate
Ripon
HG4 1 LE

info@riponcivicsociety.org.uk
www.riponcivicsociety.org.uk

North Yorkshire Council (Harrogate area)
PO Box 787
Harrogate
HG1 9RW

31 October 2024

Dear Sirs

APPLICATION REF. ZC24/03271/FUL
INSTALLATION OF PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS ON THE LIBRARY ROOF AND THE SOUTH NAVE AISLE ROOF OF RIPON CATHEDRAL.

Thank you for consulting Ripon Civic Society on the above application. We have the following comments.

Ripon Civic Society supports the ambition to provide renewable energy for the Cathedral in the light of the Government's target for the United Kingdom to reach net zero carbon by 2050. We are also pleased that the Cathedral has taken account of the comments from heritage bodies at the pre-application stage and is proposing to install the panels on the lower Library and South Aisle roofs, where parapets will provide some screening, and not on the more prominent and higher Quire roof. We accept that the panels will not be visible from ground level around the Cathedral but they will have some impact of longer distance views, although not from the Studley Royal World Heritage Site.

We note the concerns raised by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and would support their request that the applicant addresses the following points they raise:

- Where possible, further energy saving measures and efficiencies to the building should also be made, preferably before PV panels are installed.

- An understanding of the Cathedral's wider estate decarbonisation strategy would be helpful in justifying this application.

- It is not clear from the supporting documents whether the Cathedral will be able to use all the energy that will be generated by the proposed panels and there does not appear to be a battery to store any surplus. This needs clarification to ensure there is no wastage and the number of panels is kept to the minimum necessary.

- The proposed tilt of the panels on the South Nave Aisle is 35 degrees which means they will be visible above the parapet. SPAB believe it may be possible to reduce the angle of tilt to 20 degrees without appreciable yield drop-off. We support their request that this is explored further.

- We are concerned about the potential visual impact of the proposed white painted frame system on the Library roof. We support SPAB's request for mock-ups of the actual PV panels and frames on both roofs to enable further assessment of any visual impact. We would also ask that the frames are painted in a darker colour if possible.

In conclusion, the Civic Society considers that, subject to the above issues being satisfactorily addressed, the potential harm to the significance of the Cathedral's heritage from the panels in the proposed locations can be justified by the benefits of addressing climate change in this instance.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Wigginton

Planning Lead
Ripon Civic Society