

Caversham Park | Caversham

Design and Access Statement Addendum

Beechcroft
DESIGNED WITH RETIREMENT IN MIND

BHP HARWOOD
ARCHITECTS

It should be noted that the scale accuracy of images within this document cannot be guaranteed.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1

OVERVIEW

1.1 This Addendum Statement has been prepared by BHP Harwood Architects LLP in support of revisions made to the Planning and Listed Building Applications submitted on behalf of Beechcroft Developments Ltd.

1.2 The applications are for the Redevelopment of Caversham Park to provide a mix of assisted living units, age restricted retirement housing and older persons care home together with affordable housing.

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

1.3 The aim of the addendum statement is to describe the amendments made to the proposed scheme following consultation comments and feedback received. The proposals have been amended following feedback from public consultation on the original proposals and subsequent meetings with the Officers of Reading Borough Council (RBC) and relevant statutory consultees.

1.4 In addition to the direct consultation with RBC, Beechcroft have also engaged in dialogue with local residents and various local interest groups with regard to this proposal. The comments and feedback from this dialogue have been taken on board in the preparation of the revised proposals.

1.5 This addendum statement sets out and explains the rationale behind the design changes made to the scheme following the original submission of the applications.

1.6 Section 2 (Scope of Development) sets out originally submitted site plan, revised site plan and a composite plan showing the revised site layout superimposed over that of the original submission. The changes to each element of the scheme are discussed in subsequent chapters.

THE PROPOSAL

1.7 The scheme as submitted to RBC in March 2022 consisted of:

- The retention, alteration and conversion of the Grade II listed Caversham Park House to assisted living apartments (Class C2) and associated works;
- The construction of a new care home building (Class C2) immediately to the west of the main house;
- Construction of a row of townhouses (C3) in place of the existing car park to the north east of the main house;
- Construction of a group of houses and flats (C3) within the clearing currently occupied by satellite dishes to the east of the main house;
- Construction of a group of houses (C3) in the enclosed field to the north of the BBC Records Centre, fronting Peppard Road and to the south of Caversham Park Drive; and
- Change of use of numbers 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive from their existing ancillary residential use to C3 dwellings and associated works.

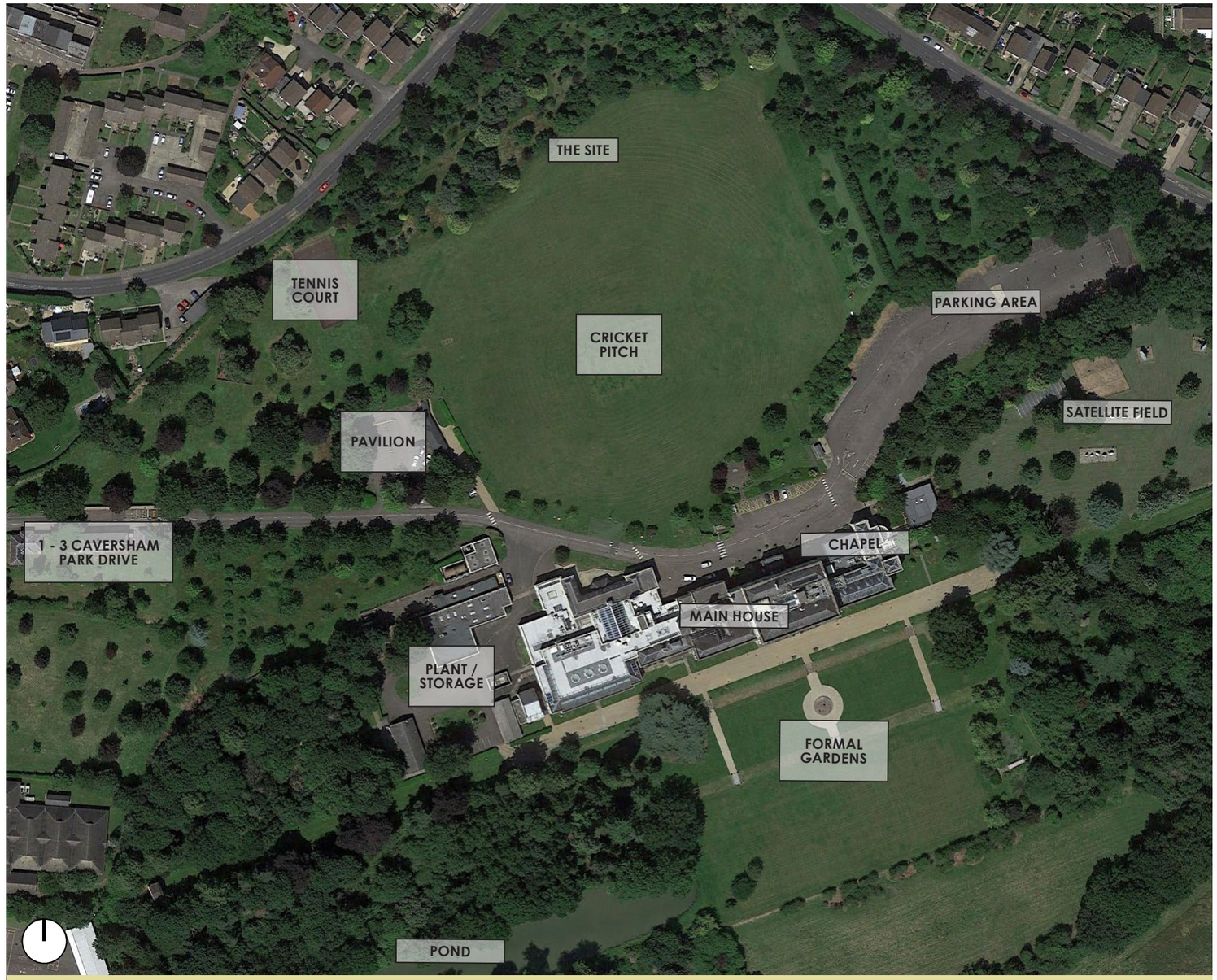
1.8 The last use of Caversham Park House and its ground was as offices which still continues today to a limited degree.

1



Aerial View: Caversham Park , Reading

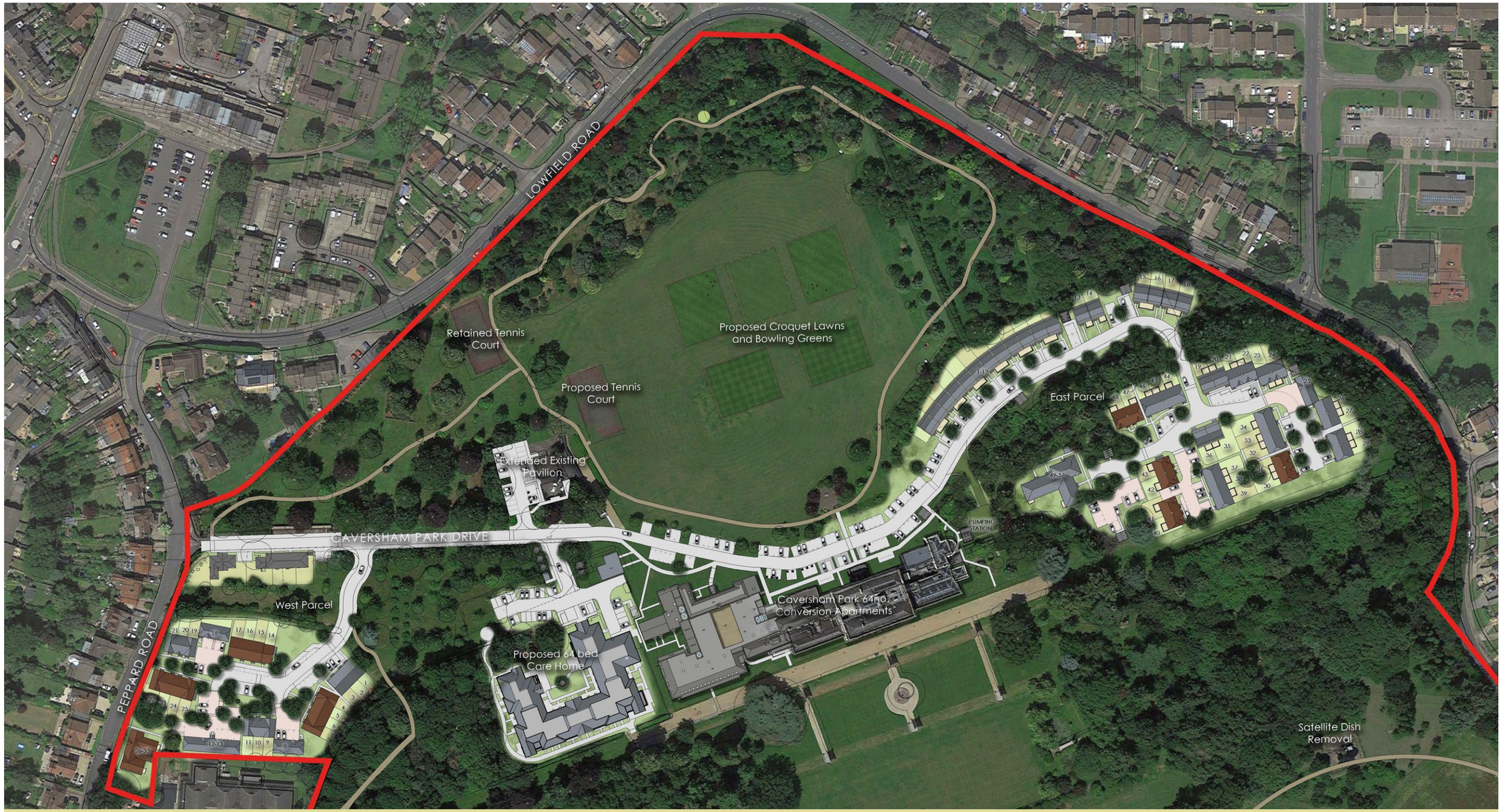
1



Application site

2 SCOPE OF DEVELOPMENT

2



As Submitted Site Plan

2



As Amended Site Plan

2



As Amended Site Plan (As Submitted Scheme Shown in Red)

3 CONSULTATION

3

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

3.1 In response to the feedback received from both Reading Borough Council and the local community a series of meetings were held where the scheme was discussed in detail with the Planning Officer, Conservation Officer and other appropriate specialist disciplines, with a view to working out collaborative ways of moving the scheme forward and overcoming objections and concerns raised by the LPA.

3.2 For more details on these meetings, please refer to the supporting Planning Statement prepared by Savills.

PRE-APPLICATION PUBLIC EXHIBITION

3.3 A second public exhibition was held at Caversham Park and was open to the public on Thursday 8th December 2022 from 2pm until 8pm.

3.4 The timings of the exhibition ensured that the opportunity was afforded for a wide cross-section of the local community to attend. Suitable disabled access was also provided.

3.5 The public exhibition included an extensive level of material detailing the draft development proposals including a series of display boards as shown on the following pages.

3.6 The primary focus of the public exhibition was to provide a welcoming and open environment for the local community to discuss the proposals with Beechcroft's team and provide an opportunity for them to express their views.

3.7 Representatives from both Beechcroft and their professional team were present throughout to assist and answer any questions relating to the proposals.

3.8 The exhibition was well attended and was generally well received by those who attended.

3.9 The process and feedback from the public exhibition is dealt with in more detail in the statement of community involvement, which has been prepared by TFA.

Public Exhibition Boards

3

WELCOME

BACKGROUND
Beechcroft Developments Ltd (Beechcroft) was selected by the BBC as its development partner for the 40-hectare site at Caversham Park, which the BBC acquired in 1941. Caversham Park is however now surplus to the BBC's requirements, and it is looking to dispose of the site which includes the architecturally and historically significant Caversham Park House and its glorious parkland setting.

Beechcroft's vision for the site seeks to address the very real local issues of the severe shortage of retirement housing, affordable housing and publicly accessible open space whilst delivering high quality complementary development that respects the historic significance of Caversham Park. It's an extremely exciting opportunity for the Borough and one that Beechcroft is committed to getting right.

> **Consultation took place in 2021 including dialogue with locals, consultees and stakeholders which has continued across 2022, enabling refinements to be made to the proposals.**

Significant new heritage work, undertaken by Montagu Evans, has led Beechcroft to revisit the history of the park and the historic landscape and has gone on to inform the revised proposals. As with the original submission, enabling redevelopment of the site will preserve a special place from falling into disrepair while providing an opportunity to open Caversham Park to the local community for the first time in generations.

Consistent with the original plans, the revised proposals still seek to sensitively convert the Grade II listed manor house into older persons assisted living units, provide a separate new specialist older persons care home and introduce a range of new housing within the site including independent-living older persons homes, market and affordable homes.

The proposed revisions seek to minimise the interventions required to the Grade II listed Caversham Park House to better respond to its important architectural features whilst significantly amending the siting, layout and design of the new buildings and other infrastructure in order to be more sympathetic to the setting of the listed building and the remaining historic landscape of the Grade II Registered Park and Garden.

Beechcroft is delighted to share the revised proposals with you before these are formally submitted to Reading Borough Council.







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3

Public Exhibition Boards

BEECHCROFT & PORTHAVEN

ABOUT BEECHCROFT
With over 37 years' experience, Beechcroft is one of the UK's leading retirement specialists with an award-winning portfolio of retirement communities in desirable villages, market towns and cathedral cities across the southern counties.

Each new scheme is inspired by local architectural styles: as a result, each development sits comfortably within its setting. Rather than providing the 'finishing touch,' landscaping is integral to each development – carefully planned and lovingly planted.

Some Beechcroft developments comprise new build properties, others include the restoration and careful conversion of buildings of historic or architectural significance – and some schemes include elements of both. Each new home bears the Beechcroft Healthihouse™ brand which means that the fixtures and fittings help promote a healthy and hygienic living environment.

Beechcroft's homes are ideal for those seeking to move from a large family house, often nearer to friends or family, or those looking to spend more time travelling. The Estate Manager, employed by the non-profit making Beechcroft Foundation, takes care of the day-to-day management of the development.

ABOUT PORTHAVEN
Porthaven Care Homes has established itself as one of the leading care providers in the country, with beautifully designed homes run professionally, responsibly, and most importantly, with integrity and care. Every one of our homes offers residential, nursing and dementia care provided by a large team of well-trained and qualified professionals profoundly concerned with every single resident's welfare and happiness. This attitude to individual care drives everything we do and is what makes us different.













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HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

The site comprises Caversham Park, a Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden, designated in September 1987. The park includes the principal house, Caversham Park House, along with the Temple to the west of the park, the Inner Park Walls and Entrance Gates, all of which are Grade II listed.

> **The heritage appraisal, undertaken by Montagu Evans for Beechcroft, has helped create an informed understanding of the history of the site and its historical, architectural, communal and evidential value as a heritage asset.**

Caversham Park pre-dated the current building as early as the 13th century when a fortified manor occupied a position close to the present-day Caversham Park. In the 16th century the manor was demolished and over the next three hundred years several houses, including a Georgian manor, were built on the site by various owners.

William Crawshay II bought the Georgian house which burnt down and was rebuilt to designs of Horace Jones in 1850. The Temple was built in the grounds c. 1844.

The Oratory School added a chapel and sanatorium after acquiring the site in 1922. The BBC subsequently purchased Caversham Park in 1941 which became the home of BBC monitoring from 1943 and was chosen as a site outside of London which was less likely to suffer bomb damage. The service was set up to monitor Nazi broadcasts and by the end of the war there were 1,000 people employed at the site.

Following the war the service continued although it downsized after 2010 when government funding ceased and it was subsequently relocated to London in 2018. Radio Berkshire who also occupied the site moved out at the same time.

The grounds of Caversham Park are also of heritage significance having been originally designed by renowned landscape architect Stephen Switzer and later amended by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Some limited features of the original designs are still evident today. Most of the grounds surrounding Caversham Park House are Registered Grade II on Historic England's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

> **The site has a rich history and one that Beechcroft is keen to preserve and enable the wider community to enjoy.**















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3

Public Exhibition Boards

SUBMITTED APPLICATION

The submitted application proposals sought to respond to the opportunities and the constraints of the site having regard to the feedback received during the original pre-application consultation. The principle of development has been widely supported, and the revised proposals presented here today take the opportunities available to improve the built and natural environment following feedback received during the course of the application consideration by the Council.

The principles of redevelopment remain the same, with affordable and market homes being located in the western parcel of land that lies outside of the registered park and garden, the care home redeveloping the group of buildings west of the main building with the balance of development east of the house focused around the previously developed car park and satellite area.



Public Exhibition Boards

3

A REFRESHED APPROACH

Informed by the new heritage work and continued feedback from stakeholders and consultees, the amended designs aim to provide an improved response to the historic environment.

The history of the site will be retold through an educational 'walking trail' so that the local community is able to enjoy the grounds. Information boards will explain the history of the Grade II Listed Building and the surrounding Registered Park and Garden, including identifying trees surviving from Capability Brown's original design. A retained satellite dish, the largest on site, will evidence the importance of more recent BBC history.

At Caversham Park House, one of the principal rooms will also be opened to the public a couple of times a year for community access so that its rich history can be enjoyed.

The croquet lawns and bowling greens remain as previously proposed, but with the new tennis court moved west and located next to the existing court which reduces its impact on the views north from the main house and the open landscaped grounds to the front. These facilities will be available to residents and the wider community.

The existing pavilion is proposed to be extended and additional car parking provided with an altered layout to enable the relocation of the tennis courts which would be screened by existing tree cover without impact on the landscaped grounds.

Caversham Park Drive is also proposed to be resurfaced to something more appropriate to a manor house and the car parking previously proposed north of the house has been moved and split up further to the east and west to enhance the setting of the main building.

The development proposals at Caversham Park include 65 assisted living units for the over 55's at Caversham Park House, a 64 bed care home, 61 age-restricted retirement dwellings, including conversion of the existing Lodge and Bursars House and 28 affordable / market homes.



3

Public Exhibition Boards

THE MAIN HOUSE

Following detailed discussions with Reading Borough Council's conservation officer, and in response to comments received to date, a number of significant changes will take place in the main house.

The historic main ground floor rooms of the house will now be communal spaces and therefore require less intervention. There is also a reduction of the previously proposed mezzanines in rooms identified as being more significant as well as use of the library as a communal space, preserving its integrity as a principal room.

Restoration work now includes the opening-up of the outer hall ceiling volume. This is led by photographic evidence of its former grandeur and the reinstatement and restoration of the bay window in the original dining room.

Less sensitive parts of the listed building are now proposed for conversion to individual dwellings. In total, the conversion of the main building will result in the delivery of 65 much needed assisted living units.

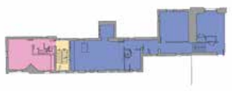
FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

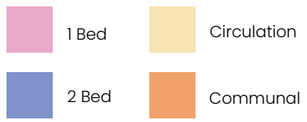


UPPER FIRST



SECOND FLOOR





Public Exhibition Boards

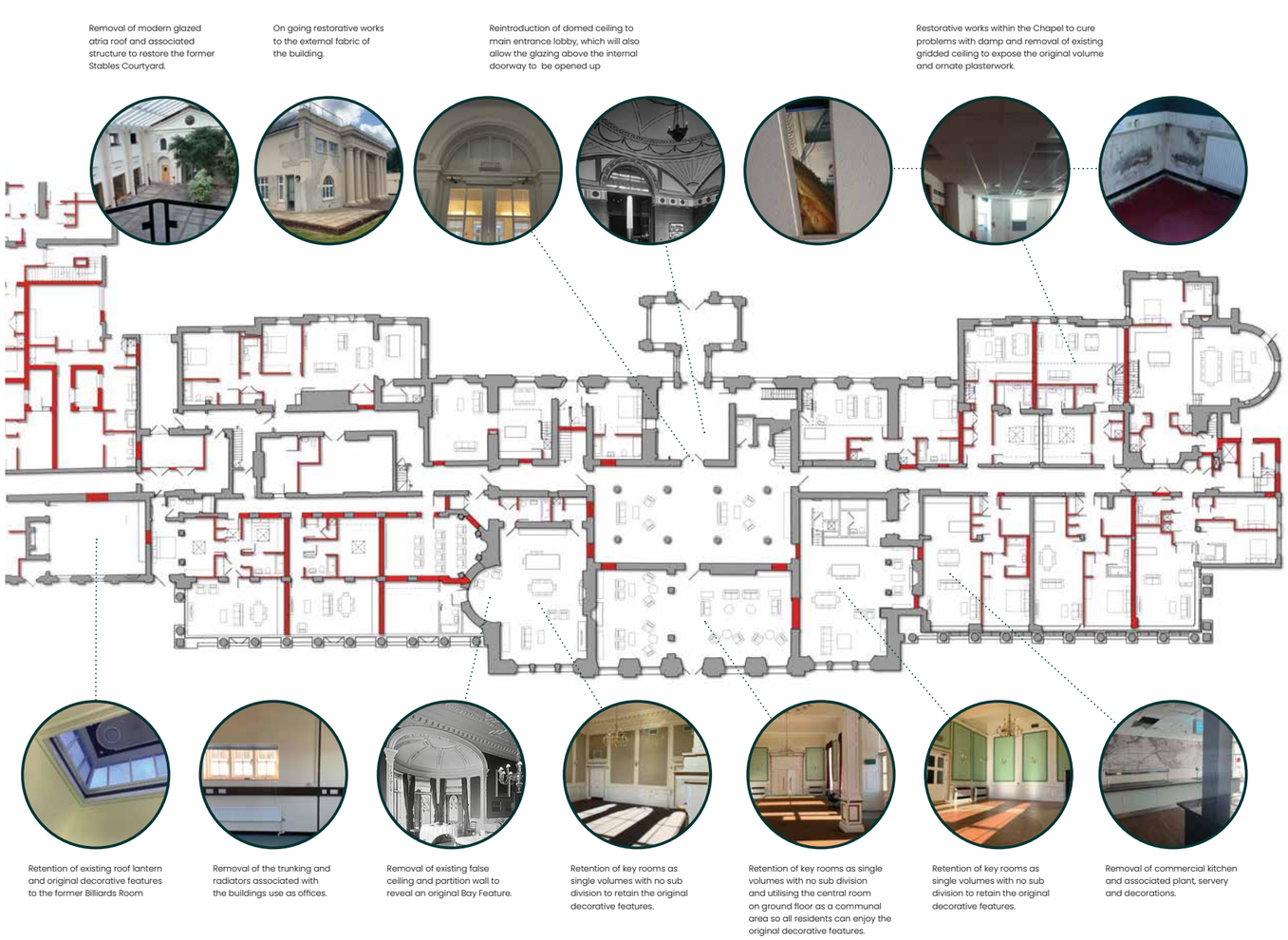
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RESTORATION

Caversham Park House is full of exceptional period features, many of which have been obscured by modern alterations during the buildings use as offices.

> **The high-quality proposals for assisted living units will restore and reinstate a significant proportion of these lost features.**

As you can see in this graphic, which focuses on the ground floor of the main house and chapel, there are many exciting opportunities for restoration work.



3

Public Exhibition Boards

CARE HOME

The 64 bed care home design has been reconsidered to create a contemporary and more architecturally interesting, low key and subservient addition to the grounds.

It has been reduced in scale from three to mainly two storeys and is stepped away from the listed building along its southern and western elevations. This approach reduces the impact on the setting of the building and the contemporary design ensures that the building would be clearly distinguishable as a standalone modern addition to the site rather than a replication of historic architecture. This will allow Caversham Park House to stand-out as the centrepiece of the site.







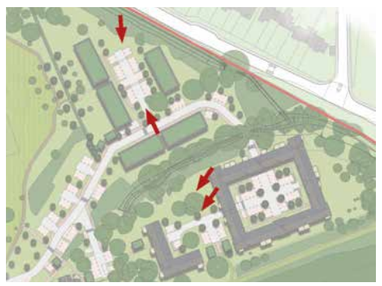


LAND TO THE EAST / NORTH OF THE CAR PARK

The new buildings proposed within the previously developed satellite area have been fundamentally redesigned. They now form a lower scale two storey traditionally designed mews courtyard of 37 homes, similar to what is historically found in the grounds of grand country manors. The layout and design will ensure development remains subservient to Caversham Park House.

> **There is also reduced intervisibility with Caversham Park House and the existing tree cover reduces the visual impact on the openness of the registered park and garden.**

The previous three storey terraced homes along Caversham Park Drive to the north-east have been removed and replaced with a group of five two storey flat green roofed buildings comprising 20 apartments. These are contemporary in style but with a much greater separation from the main house. They are located on what is considered to be a historically less significant area in the parkland.



EAST





NORTH





3

Public Exhibition Boards

LAND TO THE WEST

The layout of the western parcel of 28 affordable / market homes has been redrawn with a combination of two storey houses with low eaves and two storey buildings with apartments.

The houses are now proposed to front onto Peppard Road, with the homes stepped back behind the established building line with existing hedgerows and trees along the boundary retained to ensure a green buffer to existing residents.

This approach improves the interaction with the listed gate house and lodge and addresses Peppard Road in a similar manner to the existing houses.

Two pedestrian links onto Peppard Road are proposed and a layout with less of an inward focus to integrate the scheme with the grain of surrounding development. Furthermore, the access road is proposed to be less formal in its dimensions, surfacing and specification in order to be more in keeping with the parkland setting given that it will act as a spur off the main estate road.

Trees on the southern boundary will also be retained and incorporated into the layout.









3

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

Beechcroft has worked hard to understand and assess the history of Caversham Park and in turn how it can best be developed in order to conserve the historic features of the site whilst delivering the greatest benefit to the local community. There are social, economic and environmental benefits associated with the scheme which we summarise as follows:

- Delivering much-needed housing on a site allocated for development in the Reading Borough Local Plan. This will help ensure that the Council provides the homes it needs, in the right locations.
- Provision of a range of specialist older persons accommodation ranging from retirement homes, assisted living units and care home bed-spaces. There is a significant under provision of this type of specialist housing in the locality and need for older persons housing is only projected to increase in future years as the population ages.
- Provision of much-needed affordable housing, restricted to eligible residents of Reading Borough, as well as market housing.
- Securing the future of Caversham Park House and its grounds to ensure that its special historic interest is conserved for future generations.
- Removal of many of the inappropriate modern additions and alterations made to Caversham Park House itself and unsightly infrastructure within its grounds as part of its conversion to office use by the BBC.
- Making efficient use of an under utilised site in a sustainable location.
- Generation of approximately 65-70 FTE jobs including care workers and grounds maintenance staff.
- Opening up the Caversham Park site from dawn to dusk to the public for the first time and providing a new local recreational resource.
- The ability to put in place a long-term management and maintenance plan for the Caversham Park grounds to ensure that it is maintained to a high standard in the interests of its historic landscape character, wildlife and public enjoyment.
- The provision of additional recreational facilities in the form of a new tennis court, bowls greens, croquet lawns and refurbished/extended pavilion. These facilities would be available to the public and maintained as part of the development.
- Enhancement to the ecological habitats on the site in order to provide a net gain for biodiversity in line with Government objectives including provision of new traditional orchard planting.





Beechcroft considers the amended scheme to deliver a substantial package of benefits and we hope you agree that our refreshed scheme represents a high-quality sustainable use for the site. We welcome your feedback and invite you to fill out one of the available forms either in person or online over the next week – closing date 16 December. This material will also be hosted on our website www.caversham-park.co.uk following today's event.

4 CONVERSION

THE PRINCIPLE OF CONVERSION OF THE MAIN HOUSE

4.1 The proposals seek to create 65 assisted living units in the listed building through alterations to the historic core (1850 with alterations) and chapel (1922), and reforming the late 20th century extensions to each side.

4.2 This is consistent with Local Plan Policy CA2 (Caversham Park) which states that:
"Conversion of the house from offices to residential and/or a cultural, community or heritage use, or other suitable use compatible with its heritage, will be acceptable if it sustains the significance of the listed building. It is currently estimated that up to 40-45 dwellings could be accommodated, but the figure will be dependent on more detailed historic assessment of the building and the precise mix of uses."

4.3 It is accepted by Local Plan Policy CA2, which anticipates multiple residential units as a possible use, that subdivision will be necessary. There would be some harm from subdivision, but that has been minimised and designed to respect the existing plan form.

4.4 It is noted that the school and BBC had already introduced subdivision, and for some spaces the proposed subdivision could sustain the existing condition.

CHANGES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE RE SUBMISSION

4.5 The proposed conversion of Caversham Park House has been designed to be as sympathetic as possible to the historic fabric and to be as unintrusive as possible to the historic exterior of the Grade II listed building. There are a small number of rooms that remain largely intact, with ornate ceilings and woodwork detailing.

4.6 It is proposed that these rooms will be kept as open plan as possible, with no new walls being constructed, instead, new rooms will be formed using mezzanine pods.

4.7 Both Beechcroft and BHP Harwood have undertaken work like this in the past and have found it to be a successful solution, allowing the retention of all the period features and provide a degree of privacy to bedrooms and bathrooms.

4.8 The following amendments have been proposed to the conversion of the Main House following comments and feedback from the Conservation Officer at RBC

- The use of the original Library as communal space
- Reinstate the original volume of the original Outer Hall. This would potentially reveal the original plasterwork decoration above
- Remove modern partitions throughout the listed building, in particular the original Morning Room (proposed Plot 14)
- Remove plant and later accretions at roof level.
- Caversham Park Drive is also proposed to be resurfaced to something more appropriate to a manor house and the car parking previously proposed north of the house has been moved and split up further to the east and west to enhance the setting of the main building.

PROPOSED FIRE LOBBY

4.9 Apart from the retention of the former library as a communal space, one of the most significant revisions in heritage terms is the creation of a glazed fire lobby at the base of the principal staircase.

4.10 It is proposed that the structure will be predominantly glazed within a thin profile metal framing similar to that used on the upper levels to enclose the atria but will not use Georgian wire glass.

4.11 The screen has been designed to minimise contact with and not block views of the historic fabric and detailing. The screen runs from the doorway to the eastern wing to the wall which encloses the stair on the Western side and wraps around existing columns. Care has been taken to ensure the screen is fully removable, if it is no longer required without causing any damage to historic detailing or fabric.

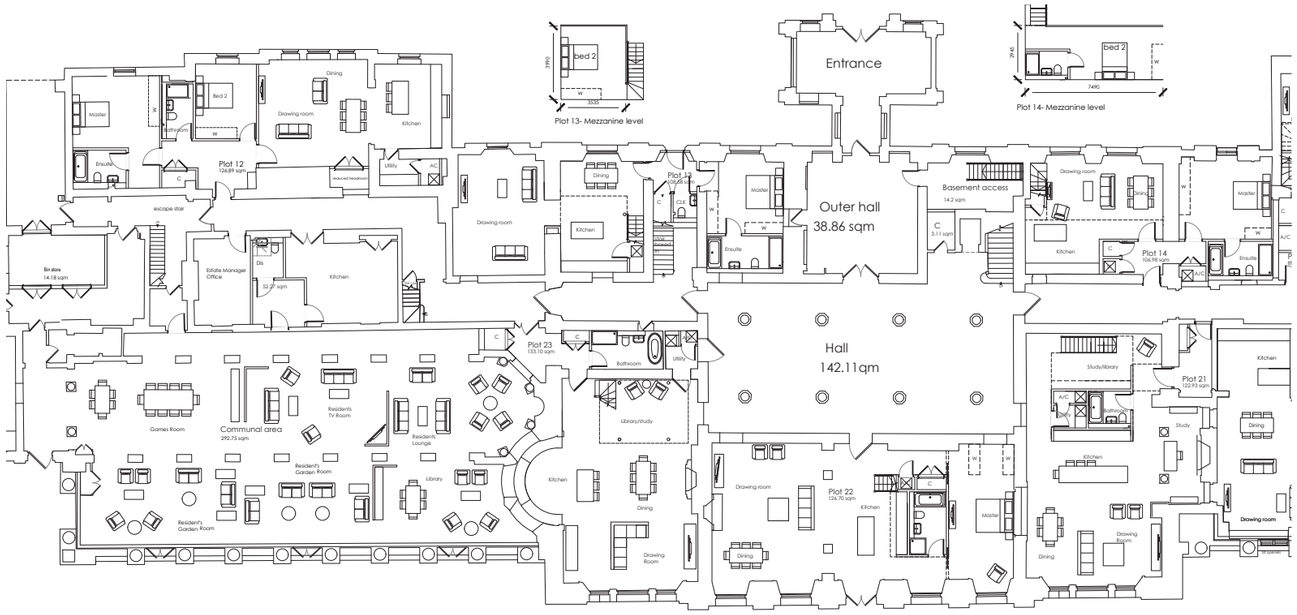


Photo of the stair (As Existing)

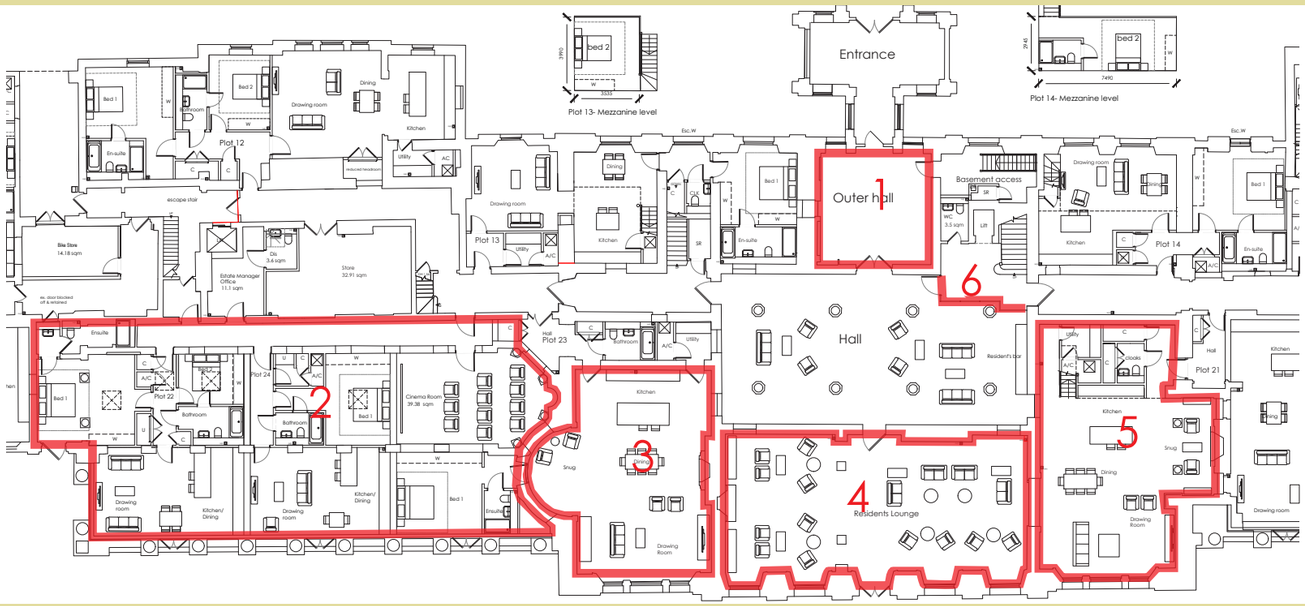


Photo of the stair with the lobby shown.

4



As Submitted Ground Floor Conversion Plan



As Revised Ground Floor Conversion Plan (Changes highlighted in red

COMPARATIVE PLANS

4.12 The floor plan at the bottom of the page set out the proposed amendments to the scheme for conversion of Caversham Park House detailed previously within this report, with key changes outlined in red

1. Reinstate the original volume of the original Outer Hall. This would potentially reveal the original plasterwork decoration above
2. The subdivision of the original Gallery/Conservatory space (bedroom/en suite for proposed Plot 23, proposed Cinema Room and Plots 22 and 24).
3. Removal of the proposed mezzanine level from Plot 23
4. The use of the original Library as communal space
5. Reduction in the extend of the proposed mezzanine level from Plot 21
6. Newly proposed Fire Lobby to Hallway

RESTORATIVE WORKS

4.13 Caversham Park House is full of exceptional period features, many of which have been obscured by modern alterations during the buildings use as offices. The high-quality proposals for assisted living units will restore and reinstate a significant proportion of these lost features.

4.14 The graphic on the following page, which focuses on the ground floor of the main house and chapel shows the main areas of restoration work.

4.15 Minor incursions to the structure are proposed as required by the building regulations.

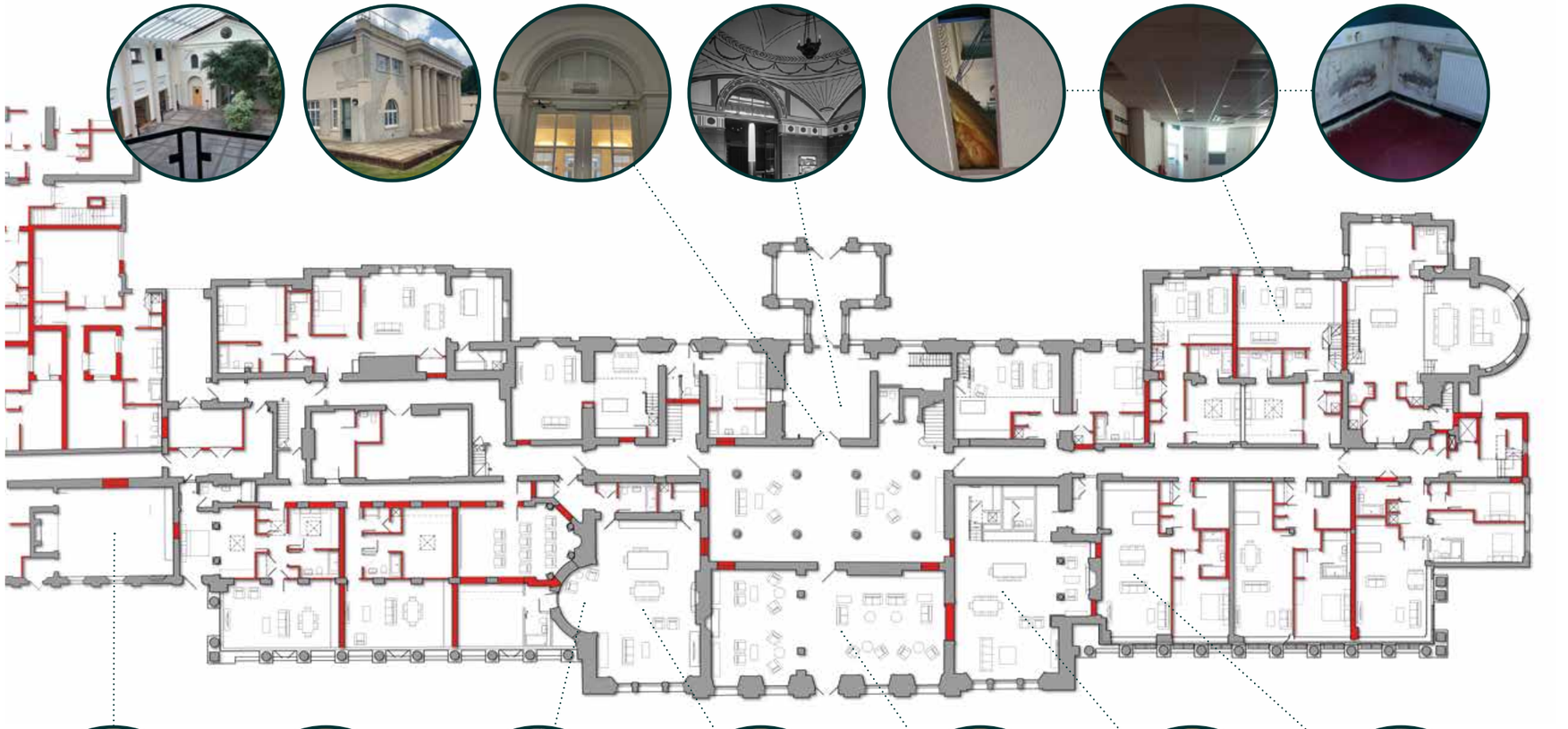
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Removal of modern glazed atria roof and associated structure to restore the former Stables Courtyard.

On going restorative works to the external fabric of the building.

Reintroduction of domed ceiling to main entrance lobby, which will also allow the glazing above the internal doorway to be opened up

Restorative works within the Chapel to cure problems with damp and removal of existing gridded ceiling to expose the original volume and ornate plasterwork.





Retention of existing roof lantern and original decorative features to the former Billiards Room



Removal of the trunking and radiators associated with the buildings use as offices.



Removal of existing false ceiling and partition wall to reveal an original Bay Feature.



Retention of key rooms as single volumes with no sub division to retain the original decorative features.



Retention of key rooms as single volumes with no sub division and utilising the central room on ground floor as a communal area so all residents can enjoy the original decorative features.



Retention of key rooms as single volumes with no sub division to retain the original decorative features.



Removal of commercial kitchen and associated plant, servery and decorations.

5 LAND TO THE WEST

5



Land to the West - As Submitted Site Plan



Land to the West - Layout for exhibition & meetings with RBC

5



Land to the West - As Revised Site Plan

LAND TO THE WEST

5.1 In response to the feedback received from both Reading Borough Council and the local community we have undertaken to review the design proposals for 'land to the West' and have taken a different approach. These changes include:

5.2 Following the established building line on the Eastern side of Peppard Road set out by the BBC Archive building and The Bursar's House and Gate House.

- The parcel of development is now much more outward looking and engages with the street scene of Peppard Road.
- Provision of a green buffer and Local area for play on the land adjacent to Peppard Road.
- Provision of a green heart to the development, an open green space at the centre of the site.
- An 18% reduction in the quantum of development in this Parcel of land from 33 units to 27.
- Changes to the proposed palette of materials and design language to better reflect the best examples of the local vernacular of the area.
- Provision of 1.5 storey homes with lowered eaves levels on Peppard Road to reduce the visual impact of the dwellings.
- Relocation of the apartment block to a location more central within the site, reducing its visual impact on the Peppard Road streetscene.



Land to the West - As Revised Site Plan (As submitted layout shown in red)

5



View 1



View 3



View 2



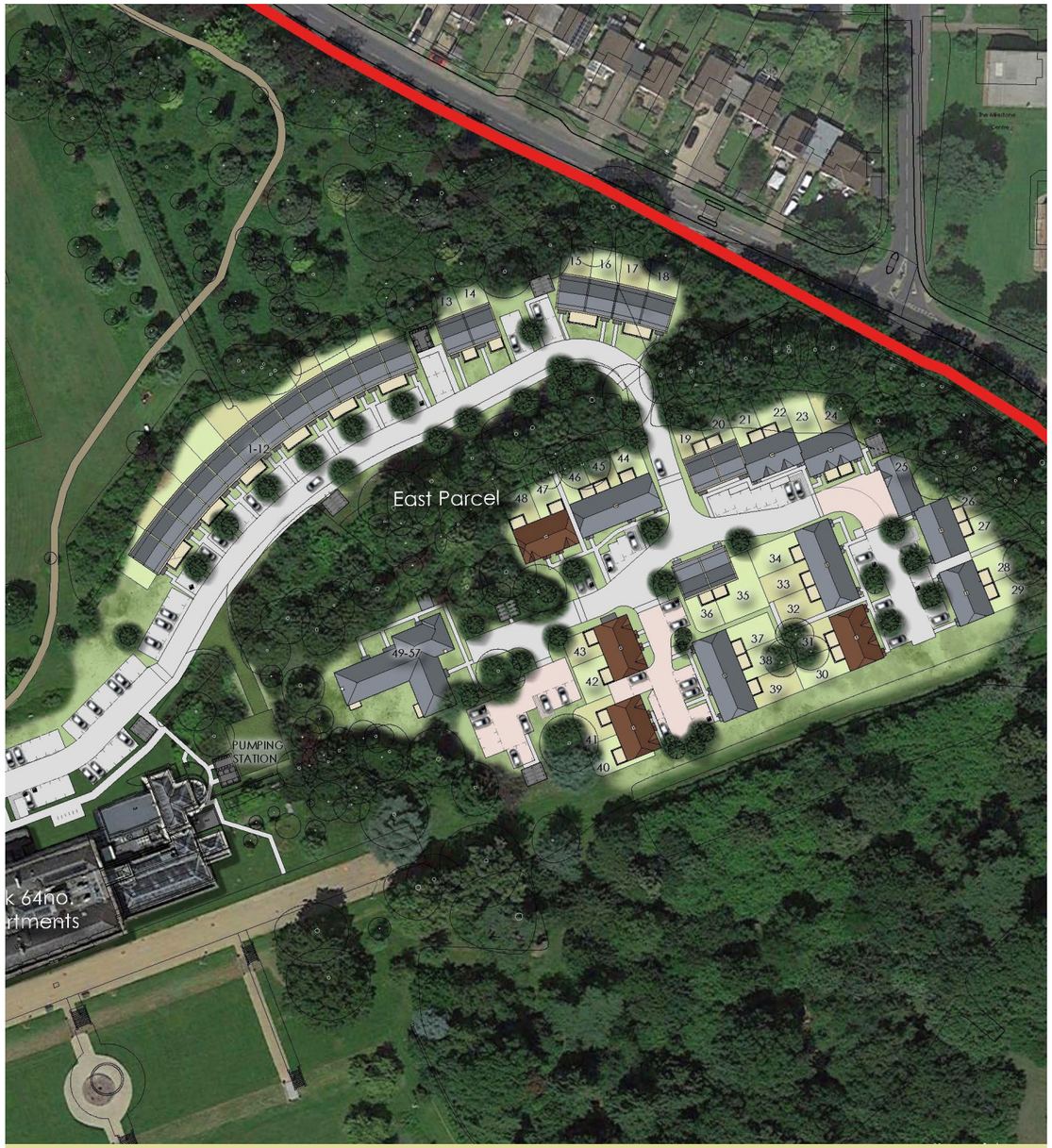
Key Plan

4



Land to the West - View from Peppard Road

6 LAND TO THE EAST



Land to the East - As Submitted Site Plan



Land to the East - As Revised Site Plan

6

LAND TO THE EAST

6.1 In response to the feedback received from both Reading Borough Council and the local community we have undertaken to review the design proposals for 'Land to the East' and now propose a significant different approach to design and layout. These changes include:

- Omission of the Crescent of housing located on the former Car Park.
- Introduction of a much smaller development of 2 storey apartments with planted roofs and a more contemporary design language on land to the north of the car parking area.
- Provision of an enhanced green buffer to screen the development to the north of the car parking area.
- A redesign of the visually sheltered 'Satellite Field' to provide 1.5 storey homes with lowered eaves levels, to reduce the visual impact of the dwellings when viewed from the Main House.

6.2 A study into the 'Estate Architecture' of Country Homes was undertaken in conjunction with the project's Heritage Consultants, where research was undertaken into the types of development that would have been found in the grounds of Country Houses of a similar size and scale to Caversham Park. This research was not only used to inform the themes of the development but also the design language.

6.3 Following on from this, a Stables style block is proposed to the East of the Main House, accessed via a Drive Under with the central courtyard being predominantly hard landscaping made up of a limited palette of high quality materials.

6.4 Care has been taken to remove the development from any long views from the south of the house and to retain much more of the planting than the initial submission.



Land to the East - As Revised Site Plan (As submitted layout shown in red)



Land to the East - Contextual Section (As Submitted Outlined in Red)

6





View 1



View 2



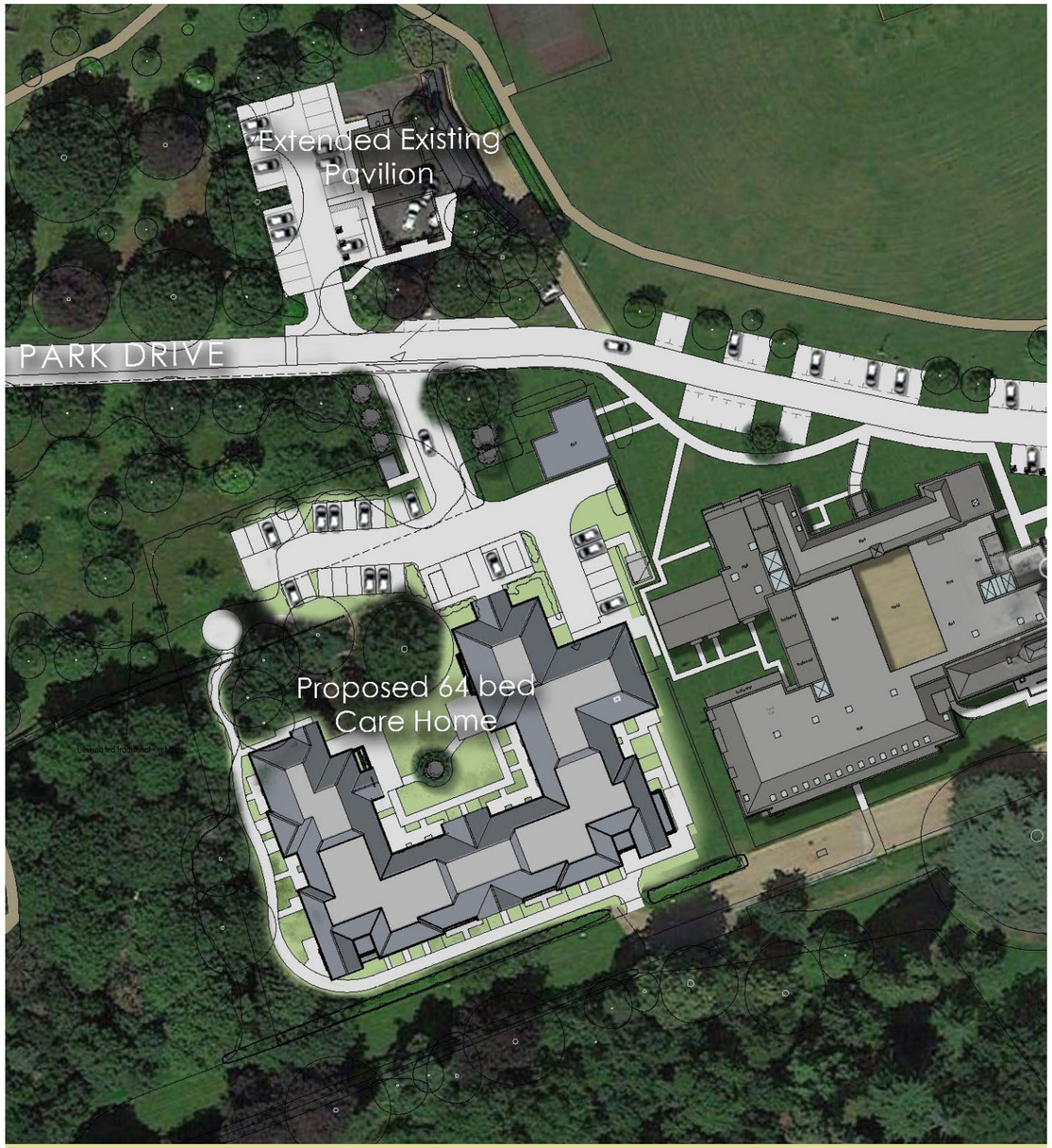
View 3



Key Plan

7 CARE HOME

7



Care Home - As Submitted Site Plan



Care Home - As Revised Site Plan

7

CARE HOME

7.1 In response to the feedback received from both Reading Borough Council and the local community we have undertaken to review the design proposals for the Care Home and have taken a different approach. These changes include:

- Relocating the built form to create a much more meaningful separation between the proposed Care Home and the Main House.
- Moving the proposed Care Home northwards so it is located behind the building line of the Main House
- A reduction in the bulk and massing of the proposed building. By making the proposed building predominantly two storey with a flat roof, the visual impact has been significantly reduced.
- Inclusion of planted ' green' roofs to all single storey elements that are visible from either the Care Home itself or the adjoining Extra Care development within the Main House
- The use of a much more contemporary design language so the proposed Care Home does not appear to be competing architecturally with the Main House
- Allowing a larger 'no build' zone to the Category A tree at the centre of the development parcel.
- Inclusion of a less formal parking court with more space for planting.



View looking back towards the Main House from the Avenue



Care Home - As Revised Site Plan (As submitted layout shown in red)

7



Care Home - Contextual Section (As Submitted Outlined in Red)



View 1



View 3



View 2



Key Plan

8 COMMUNITY BENEFIT



As Proposed Site Plan, Showing Footpath to the North of the Main Road (Route Highlighted)

8



As Proposed Site Plan, Showing Footpath to the South of the Main Road

8

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

8.1 We have sought to set out below the principal community benefits provided by the redevelopment of Caversham park

- Introduction of public access to Caversham Park grounds for the first time in its history, and thus improve the ability to appreciate the significance of the historic registered park and garden. The site has been closed since it was established in the 18th century. This proposal will deliver the opportunity to give public access between dawn and dusk, with controlled access available to facilities outside of those hours through the on-site management.
- The history of the site will be retold through an educational 'walking trail' so that the local community is able to enjoy the grounds. Information boards will explain the history of the Grade II Listed Building and the surrounding Registered Park and Garden, including identifying trees surviving from Capability Brown's original design. A retained satellite dish, the largest on site, will evidence the importance of more recent BBC history.
- Provision of an Interpretation Hub on site to tell the story of the BBC's time at Caversham Park.
- At Caversham Park House, one of the principal rooms will also be opened to the public a couple of times a year for community access so that its rich history can be enjoyed.
- The croquet lawns and bowling greens remain as previously proposed and the existing Tennis Court will be retained. These facilities will be available to residents and the wider community.
- The existing pavilion is proposed to be extended and additional car parking provided which would be screened by existing tree cover without impact on the landscaped grounds.

9 CONCLUSION

9

CONCLUSION

9.1 We believe that the revised proposals address the concerns raised by the LPA in consideration of the originally submitted proposal. The revised scheme has evolved through the application process with direct input from the Planning Officer, Conservation Officer, Landscape Officer and other statutory consultees.

9.2 The proposed development has been sensitively designed with due consideration to the historic environment and local character to produce a development that sits harmoniously within the site and wider context to Caversham Park.

9.3 A listed building is rarely a static place as its function changes over time with consequential alterations taking place both to the building itself and within its setting over the centuries. It has been subject to change and to remain a sustainable and pleasing place it will continue to change. The proposed scheme has been driven by the need to ensure a sustainable solution for the building as recognised by Policy CA2 of the adopted Reading Local Plan.

9.4 The alterations proposed to the Grade II listed Caversham Park House are sensitive to its special architectural interest and the new development within the site is respectful of its setting and in keeping with the wider built environment context.