HERITAGE STATEMENT

CAVERSHAM PARK

JUNE 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

CAVERSHAM PARK

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Montagu Evans have been instructed by Beechcroft Developments Limited (hereafter 'the Applicant') to prepare this Heritage Statement to support applications for the redevelopment of Caversham Park, Peppard Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8TZ (the 'Site').

1.2 The current proposals are amendments to a scheme that was submitted to the local planning authority, Reading Borough Council ('RBC' or the 'Council'), in March 2022. The application is being determined under RBC planning references 220409 and 220410.

1.3 We understand that the current proposals will substitute the originally submitted scheme, and the applications will be determined under the same references.

1.4 The proposals are summarised in the description of development for application ref. 220409 (planning permission), which is as follows:

Redevelopment of Caversham Park for 65 assisted living units (Class C2) for the over 55's through the conversion of Caversham Park House, 64 bed care home (Class C2), 61 age-restricted retirement dwellings (Class C3), including conversion of the existing buildings The Bursars House and The Lodge, 27 affordable dwellings (Class C3), and refurbishment and extension of the existing pavilion to provide changing facilities, café/studio/interpretation hub and sports provision comprising 2 no. croquet lawns, 2 no. bowling greens, refurbishment of the existing tennis court and associated parking.

1.5 The description of development for 220410 (Listed Building Consent) is:

Works associated with the redevelopment of Caversham Park to provide assisted living units including alterations to the main house and demolition of existing extensions. Works associated with the residential conversion of Bursars House, The Lodge and 2 Caversham Park Drive, associated works with details for access included.

1.6 Montagu Evans did not provide heritage advice or prepare the Heritage Statement for the original application.

1.7 We were instructed by the Applicant in May 2022 to give an independent view on aspects of the scheme after feedback from RBC and Historic England during determination. This led to a full instruction on heritage advice, including fresh research, design advice, meetings with the Council, a public exhibition and preparing this report.

1.8 This report has been prepared by Dr Timur Tatlioglu, Dr Paul Stamper and Helen Marrison. Dr Tatlioglu is a Partner at Montagu Evans and holds a PhD in 18th century estate landscapes. Dr Stamper is a landscape historian and academic who has worked at the Victoria County History and later Historic England, as a Senior Adviser working in landscape designation.

1.9 This report should be read alongside the full submission, in particular the drawings and Design and Access Statement ('DAS') by BHPH Architects and Porthaven, the landscape information by Beechcroft (Landscape & Visual Appraisal and Landscape Strategy) and the Planning Statement by Savills.

1.10 The Heritage Statement forms the basis of the heritage chapter in the Environmental Statement ('ES') submitted with the applications. The heritage ES chapter has been prepared by Montagu Evans in coordination with Savills (planning and landscape).

THE SITE

1.11 The Site is located approximately 3km north-east of Reading town centre in the residential suburb of Caversham. It is approximately 37.7 hectares (ha) of largely open landscape with developed land to the north on the main drive which includes the main house. The Site has been owned and occupied by the BBC since the 1940s.

1.12 The Site comprises Caversham Park, a Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden ('RPG'), and contains the principal house which is a Grade II listed building. There are other listed buildings in the RPG which are associated with the historic domestic use.

1.13 A Site location plan is reproduced at **Figure 1.1** with an aerial view at **Figure 1.2**.

1.14 This report provides a description of the history, character and significance of the designated heritage assets in accordance with policy and guidance (see **Section 2.0**) at **Sections 3.0 and 4.0**.

THE PROPOSALS

RELEVANT BACKGROUND

1.15 The Site has most recently been occupied by the BBC for monitoring purposes and we understand that they will vacate once applications for a redevelopment scheme have been positively determined.

1.16 The Applicant submitted applications for planning permission and Listed Building Consent in March 2022 for the redevelopment of the Site for residential use, care home and assisted living.

1.17 As before, Montagu Evans were not involved in the original submission. We were initially instructed by the Applicant in May 2022 review the original application and identify opportunities to better conserve the significance of the RPG to achieve the new uses. Our instruction was then extended to include the listed buildings and prepare this report and built heritage ES chapter.

1.18 The amendments to the proposals respond to the comments raised by the Council and Historic England during determination of the applications.

1.19 The amendments have also been informed by discussions with a range of stakeholders including Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA), Keep Emmer Green (KEG) and Council officers for planning, highways, landscape, trees and ecology. These consultations are discussed in the Planning Statement.

1.20 In their response, the Council's Conservation Officer (dated 27th May 2022) and Historic England (dated 6th May 2022) identified harm to the RPG and the listed buildings from the original scheme.

1.21 Historic England identified a 'significant' level of harm, but explicitly stated that it was 'less than substantial'. The planning officer identified 'substantial' harm. Substantial harm is formally enshrined in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ('NPPF'), and it is a policy test of the highest magnitude when it comes to impact on a heritage asset.

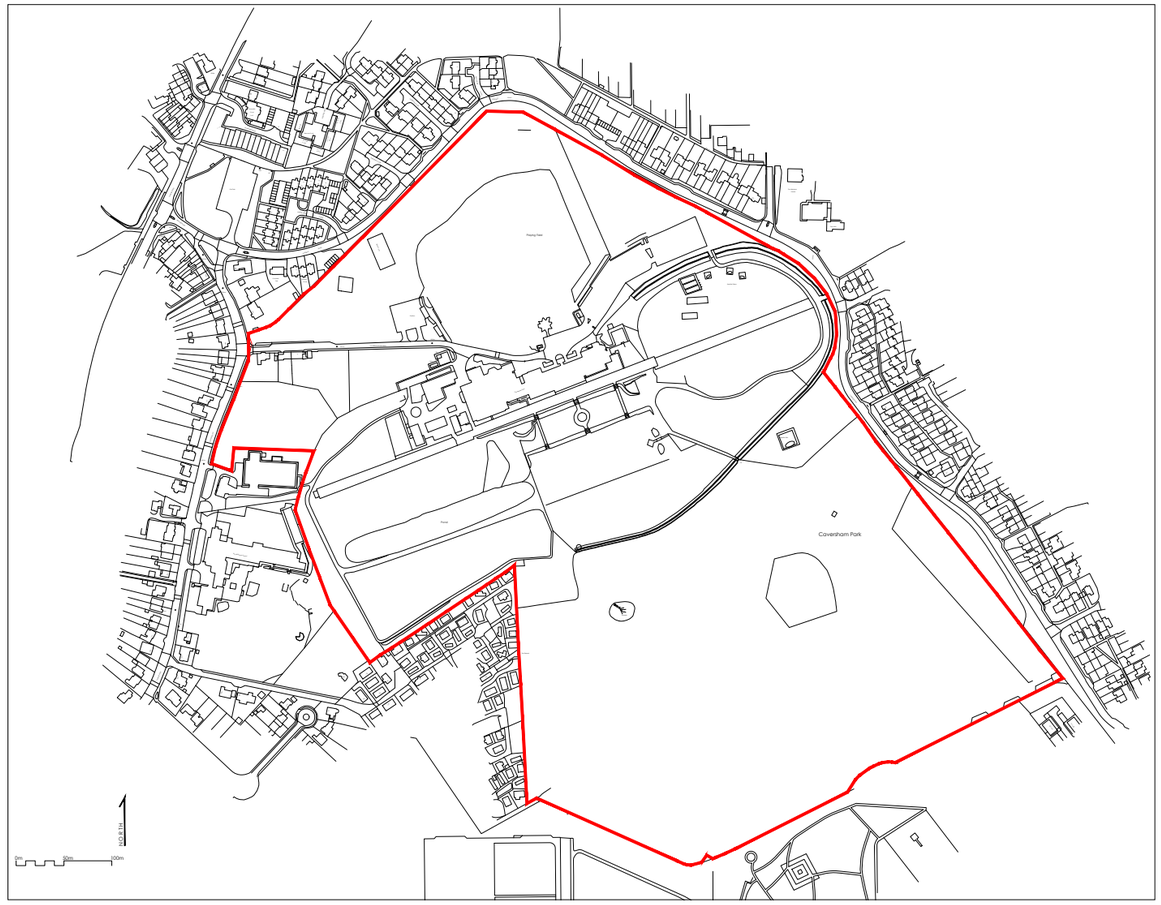


Figure 1.1 Site location plan.

Figure 1.2 Aerial view of the Site.

1.22 The changes to the original scheme may be summarised as:

- Main house:
  - Change the use of the former Library at ground floor on the south elevation to communal space and relocate the residential units to the former Gallery/Conservatory area. It is noted that this was also suggested by the conservation officer in first consultation comments on the application.
  - Omit the mezzanine pod from the former Dining Room at the ground floor (proposed Plot 23) and use the re-instated bay window to form an access to the former Gallery/Conservatory and the area proposed for a bedroom.
  - Change the design of the mezzanine pod in the former Drawing Room at the ground floor (proposed Plot 21) to better respect architectural details and proportions.
  - Remove the modern ceiling in the Outer Hall to reinstate the original room volume and ceiling form.
  - Rationalise the demolition to reduce extent and make use of existing partitions where possible.
  - Reinstate a window on the north façade by removing the modern door associated with the proposed Plot 13.
  - Introducing clarity to the demolition drawings, including the modern fit out to be removed.
- RPG:
  - The development in the East Parcel has been redesigned to be redolent of the service yards associated with country houses of the period appropriate with Caversham Park. The courtyard arrangement and polite estate vocabulary give the new buildings a historical precedence.
  - The courtyard building has been moved northwards away from the principal east/west axis to ensure that the principal views are not affected.
  - The formerly proposed crescent to the north-east of the house has been replaced with four blocks designed to be lower in form, built in natural materials with green roofs, and located in an area of the landscape that is less sensitive.
  - The car parking has been spread along the drive and broken up to smaller parcels in order to minimise the extent of hardstanding. Crucially, a clear area in front of the main house will be clear of car parking which gives an uninterrupted vista of the north lawn.
  - The new tennis court that was proposed in the north lawn has been omitted.
  - The proposed care home has been reduced in floor plan, scale and in plan. It has been moved northwards away from the east/west axis south of the house. The plan has been minimised, as has the height in order to preserve the primacy of the main house and its later extensions.
  - The approach road/drive will be minimised in width with footpaths spread through the landscape in order to reduce the urbanising character of the existing road and reinstate an appearance that is more often associated with carriage drives to historic buildings of this sort.
  - Finally, the form and layout of the buildings adjacent to Peppard Road (outside of the RPG) has been changed to better reflect the surrounding area and setting of the RPG.

THE AMENDED PROPOSALS

1.23 The amended proposals seek to minimise the overall impact by taking a revised and nuanced approach to the development. In summary, they involve:

- Works to convert the Grade II listed Caversham Park house for assisted living – amendments to layouts and proposed alterations to address Historic England and Council comments and benefit the listed building;
- Convert the existing gatehouses to Peppard Road for residential use;
- Four areas of new development on brownfield land in the park:
  - A new care home on the Site of existing hardstanding and buildings immediately adjacent the listed house – design and location of the building relative to the listed buildings and RPG improved;
  - Redevelopment of the satellite area, car park and area north of the car park to the east of the house adjacent to Lowfield Road (the 'East Parcel') – as above: design and location relative to heritage assets is improved;
  - Housing to the west boundary at Peppard Road (the 'West Parcel') – as above: design relative to heritage assets is improved;
  - Landscaping for sport recreation and enjoyment including public paths – as above, improved from original application; and
  - Associated works to the main drive for access and to improve the form and appearance of the drive as a feature of the landscape and setting of heritage assets.

1.24 It is noted that the West Parcel area is not within the boundary of the RPG, however there would be setting impacts on the RPG and the listed buildings from development on this part of the site.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

1.25 This report will assess the effect of the proposals on the significance of heritage assets in accordance with legislation, policy and guidance. The report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2.0** identifies the legislation, planning policy and guidance which is relevant to the proposals and heritage assets;
- **Section 3.0** describes the history of the Site;
- **Section 4.0** provides a description of the significance of the heritage assets which are affected by the proposals;
- The proposals are summarised at **Section 5.0**;
- **Section 6.0** assesses the effect of the proposals on the significance of the main house, the Grade II listed Caversham Park (BBC Records);
- An assessment of the proposals as they relate to the RPG is provided in **Section 6.0**;
- **Section 7.0** assesses the effect of the proposals on other listed buildings on the Site; and
- The report is concluded with policy compliance at **Section 8.0**.

2.0
LEGISLATION, PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE
CAVERSHAM PARK

LEGISLATION, PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

2.1 This section sets out the legislation, planning policy and guidance which is relevant to the assessment of the proposals on heritage assets.

LEGISLATION

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS ACT) 1990

2.2 The statutory duties of a decision-maker when considering proposals which affect listed buildings and conservation areas are set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the 1990 Act).

2.3 There are five statutorily listed buildings on the Site, comprising the main house and buildings and features in the grounds. The listed buildings are all Grade II and they are identified at **Section 4.0**.

2.4 Section 16(2) of the 1990 Act states that:

> *"In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."*

2.5 Section 66(1) provides a similar provision that applies when applications requiring planning permission.

2.6 The Site does not fall within a conservation area, and provisions relating to conservation areas do not apply (i.e. Section 72).

2.7 The Site does, however, comprise an RPG.

2.8 RPGs are a non-statutory designation which do not enjoy the same statutory provision equivalent to Sections 16(2) or 66(1). The impact on RPGs is assessed in terms of policies as set out in the development plan and the NPPF.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2.9 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with that plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.10 In this case the development plan comprises:

- Reading Borough Local Plan (2019);
- Proposals Map (2019); and
- The Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2020).

RELEVANT POLICIES

2.11 The relevant development plan policies are as follows. They are considered in more detail as part of the 'Discussion' which concludes this section:

- Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment);
- Policy EN5 (Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest);
- Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context); and
- Policy CA2 (Caversham Park).

NATIONAL POLICY AND THE APPROACH TO HARM

2.12 The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies and how they are expected to be applied. These may, in the interests of brevity, be expressed as a series of principles:

- The significance of any designated heritage asset affected by a proposal should be identified and assessed (NPPF paragraph 194).
- Heritage interest – or significance – may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic (see Glossary to the NPPF).
- The setting of a heritage asset may contribute to that significance or an appreciation thereof. Hence a change to setting can harm significance.
- The impact of a proposed development on the significance of the identified asset is then to be considered.
- If the proposed development is held to cause harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, such harm should be categorised as either less than substantial or substantial (NPPF paragraphs 202 and 201 respectively), and within each category the extent of harm should be clearly articulated (Planning Practice Guidance or 'PPG' paragraph 18). The nature and extent of harm is important to ascertain because that analysis informs the balancing out of any harm under the terms of paragraph 202.
- Underpinning this approach is the principle of proportionality. Whilst any harm to a designated asset is 'weighted harm', it is important for the decision maker to assess the extent, nature or degree of harm in order to undertake a balancing exercise.
- Less than substantial harm can range from a limited harm up to a high level of harm which could be at the threshold of substantial harm. The level of less than substantial harm is a professional judgement determined on the significance of the asset, the nature of the works and how they affect significance. This approach has been recently clarified in the *Bramshill*[1] judgement.
- In either case, if a proposal would result in harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (NPPF paragraph 199), meaning the avoidance of harm and the delivery of enhancement where appropriate.
- Notwithstanding the 'great weight' provision, it would be unreasonable for an impact that is minor in nature or limited to lead to a refusal of permission. What matters, then, is the nature and extent of any harmful impact. Benefits to heritage assets likewise attract great weight in the planning balance.
- Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require 'clear and convincing justification', as per NPPF paragraph 200.
- As before, a clear and convincing justification does not create a freestanding test requiring the demonstration of less damaging alternatives. To the extent that there is a test it is to be found in NPPF paragraphs 201 (in the case of substantial harm) and 202 (in the case of less than substantial harm).
- In either case, and particularly looking at less than substantial harm, the clear and convincing justification the NPPF requires is thus made out through no more than the countervailing public benefits delivered by a proposal. Public benefits can include heritage benefits and can also include benefits to the way an area appears or functions or land use planning benefits.

1 Bramshill v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government [2021] EWCA Civ 320

- We take the *Palmer*2 approach and apply the 'internal heritage balance'. This is where any harm and benefits are balanced out to reach a net position. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF would only be engaged when there is net harm, and then public benefits are required to off-set the level of residual harm.
- The alternative approach is that any harm to a heritage asset engages paragraph 202 automatically and any heritage benefits form part of the public benefits to off-set that harm in the planning balance.
- Both approaches are legitimate (see *Bramshill*1) and the Whitechapel Bell Foundry3 decision) and would arrive at the same conclusion.

2.13 The approach to attributing the weight given to harm in cases involving listed buildings and their setting was recently clarified in the Citroen Garage4 appeal decision, which was agreed with by the Secretary of State.

2.14 The considerable importance and weight to the *desirability of preservation*, should tip the scales to produce an unequal balance in its favour.

2.15 However, the decision maker should take account of the scale of change, and so the extent of impact, as well as the relevance to its significance, and the importance of the asset.

2.16 The overall weight to be given to any harm, and the conflict with policy, should be a product of these factors and determined by the decision maker.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

2.17 In addition to legislation and national policy, the assessment will take into consideration other relevant planning guidance and material considerations, including:

- Planning Practice Guidance (online);
- Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015); and
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017).

DISCUSSION

SITE DESIGNATIONS

2.18 The Site is subject to specific policy under Local Plan Policy CA2 (Caversham Park). A change of use on the Site is established by this policy, alongside the opportunity for new development. The policy wording is reproduced in full below:

> *"Caversham Park and Caversham Park House are key features of the heritage and landscape of Reading. Caversham Park is a Registered Historic Park and Garden, and the site contains a number of listed features. These assets will be conserved. 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.*
> *Any development or conversion proposals should open as much of the park as possible up to public access, including reinstatement of any historic public footpaths where possible and appropriate.*
> *This policy does not allocate the site for additional development over and above conversion of the house. There may be scope for some limited development on previously developed land within the site, which will need to be justified at application stage. Such development must comply with the criteria below:*
> - *No development will negatively affect the significance of heritage assets and their setting;*
> - *Development will not detract from the character or appearance of the important landscape; and*
> - *Development will not negatively affect significant trees or areas of biodiversity importance."*

2.19 It is noted that Policy CA2 seeks to 'conserve' the heritage assets on the Site.

2.20 Historic England define 'conservation' as *"the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and where appropriate enhances its significance"*[5].

2.21 This definition, and Policy CA2 in reference to the Site, recognise that heritage assets are capable of change, and conservation does not mean maintaining the *status quo* for its own sake.

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.22 Local Plan Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) is the main development plan policy for heritage assets. It states that:

> *"All proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located".*

2.23 This applies to listed buildings and RPGs.

2.24 The significance of heritage assets which may be affected by the proposals is described at **Section 4.0** of this report in accordance with Policy EN1 and NPPF paragraph 194.

2.25 The setting of a heritage asset is defined in the NPPF as follows:

> *"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."*

2.26 Importantly, the setting of a heritage asset is not a heritage designation in its own right. Rather, it is necessary to understand the contribution that elements of setting make to the significance of the asset. This is made clear in the Historic England guidance, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) ('GPA3').

2 Palmer v Herefordshire Council & ANOR [2016] EWCA Civ 1061
3 PINS references APP/E5900/V/20/3245430 and APP/E5900/V/20/3245432
4 PINS reference APP/G6100/V/12/3226914
5 https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/generalintro/heritage-conservation-defined/#:~:text=Conservation%20is%20the%20process%20of,requirements%20refer%20to%20'preservation' [accessed 3 January 2023]

2.27 This assessment has followed the guidance set out in GPA3.

2.28 For listed buildings, proposals should meet the requirements of the 1990 Act and preserve their special interest. In this context, 'preserve' means 'to do no harm'6.

2.29 This is reflected in Local Plan Policy CA2 which states that the conversion of the house should *"sustain"* the significance of the listed building, and Policy EN1 which states:

> *"Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings".*

2.30 In terms of RPGs, Policy EN1 states that applications will:

> *"safeguard features which form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park or garden. Development will not detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance, features or setting of the park or garden, key views out from the park, or prejudice its future restoration."*

2.31 As part of the design process key views have been identified, and there has been due regard to view 8 identified by Local Plan Policy EN5 (Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest): 'View towards Caversham Park House from the A329(M), railway and surrounding streets'.

2.32 Designated heritage assets, like listed buildings and RPGs, receive great weight in decision-making (see *Barnwell*7). The great weight applies equally to heritage benefits (works which would enhance or better reveal the significance of an asset) as it would to harm to a heritage asset.

2.33 Policy EN1 states that *"Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification".* The requirement for 'clear and convincing justification' imports the wording of paragraph 200 of the NPPF.

2.34 The *Bedford*8 judgement confirmed that 'clear and convincing justification' is not a freestanding test, and *Pugh*9 clarified that clear and convincing justification is no more than the tests set out at paragraph 201 and 202 of the NPPF as relevant, and thus effectively the balance of benefits.

2.35 The approach to an adverse impact (i.e. harm) on the special interest of a heritage asset is discussed as part of the section on national policy above.

2.36 In summary, the NPPF differentiates between 'substantial harm' and 'less than substantial harm'.

2.37 Substantial harm is a very high test. Substantial harm has been defined as the total draining away of the significance of the asset (see *Bedford*8). This type of harm would not arise from the proposals and the high tests set out at paragraph 201 of the NPPF are not engaged.

2.38 Less than substantial harm can range from a limited harm up to a high level of harm which could be at the threshold of substantial harm. The level of less than substantial harm is a professional judgement determined on the significance of the asset, the nature of the works and how they affect significance. This approach has been recently clarified in the *Bramshill1* judgement.

2.39 Professional judgement is also required to determine whether harm to a designated heritage asset is outweighed by heritage or other public benefits in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF.

2.40 We take the *Palmer2* approach and apply the 'internal heritage balance'. This is where any harm and benefits are balanced out to reach a net position. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF would only be engaged when there is net harm, and then public benefits are required to off-set the level of residual harm.

2.41 The alternative approach is that any harm to a heritage asset engages paragraph 202 automatically and any heritage benefits form part of the public benefits to off-set that harm in the planning balance.

2.42 Both approaches are legitimate (see *Bramshill1*) and the Whitechapel Bell Foundry3 decision) and would arrive at the same conclusion.

HERITAGE AND DESIGN

2.43 Local Plan Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) is relevant because the proposals seek to introduce new buildings on a Site which contains designated heritage assets that represent a single historic estate. The policy states that: *"New development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development".*

2.44 The policy says that the following factors will be considered:

> *"a. The positive contribution of the development to the existing historic townscape (scale, height, mass, proportion, plot size, street form, materials, significant vistas and views, and open space);*
> *b. Sensitivity to historic context;*
> *c. Reflection of borough-wide major heritage themes that contribute to local distinctiveness (e.g. patterned brickwork or former worker terraced housing);*
> *d. Whether development promotes and/or improves access to previously undiscovered or neglected historic significance."*

6 See Barnwell v East Northamptonshire District Council [2014] EWCA Civ 137
7 ibid
8 Bedford Borough Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and another [2013] EHC 2847
9 Pugh v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2015] EWHC 3 (Admin)

3.0
HISTORY OF THE SITE
CAVERSHAM PARK

HISTORY OF THE SITE

3.1 This section describes the history of the Site which has informed the assessment of significance and design development.

3.2 This section has been prepared with reference to the sources which are listed at **Section 10.0**.

3.3 We note that an authoritative history of the manor and parish of Caversham from the Middle Ages onwards is in progress[10].

3.4 In addition, a large number of images and historic photos have informed this assessment. We have collated them in full at **Appendix 1.0** and reproduce some in this section to support the narrative.

3.5 This section is arranged in two parts:

- First, the history of the estate and the development of the house; and
- Second, Dr Stamper has prepared a specific history on the main phases of the landscape design which is recognised by the RPG.

HISTORY OF THE ESTATE

EARLY HISTORY

3.6 Some evidence for prehistoric habitation has been found in the wider Caversham area. During the bronze age, settlers likely created a semi-ordered field system in the landscape. Land use or habitation may have waned during the Iron Age, but isolated interspersed settlements were present in the Caversham area during the Roman period, with a Roman field system in place. Roman road systems were established in the Reading area in this period.

3.7 The settlement of Caversham village was most firmly established in the early medieval period (450-1066AD) when the Romans withdrew from Britain and Germanic settlers arrived, creating new villages and towns.

3.8 Initially it is likely the farmed landscape was served by a farmstead, and some associated small dwellings constructed of wood. A larger, more permanent, manor house was probably in place by the later part of this early medieval period, at the site of Dean's Farm today. A mill may also have been sited near to this house, which was built adjacent to the bridge over the River Thames.

3.9 There are several theories surrounding the origins of the name 'Caversham': it may be in reference to the grazing meadow or open pasture of the early landscape, perhaps the prefix 'Cavers' linked to calves. It may also be a derivative of the Old English phrase 'Cafhere[s] Hamm', with Cafhere referring to the name of the landowner, and Hamm meaning home (an enclosed section of land with farmstead). Others have suggested the name recalls 'Cave Home' owing to underground chalk caverns that lay under the settlement (rediscovered in the late-20th century).

MEDIEVAL PERIOD

3.10 By the 11th century and the Domesday survey of 1086, Caversham was recorded as an established and fair-sized settlement, with 43 households (though at this point without a church or parish priest).

3.11 The manor or estate of Caversham had been taken by William I to from the ownership of a Saxon lord called Swein and gifted to the son of one of his own lords, Walter Giffard, Lord of Longueville, Normandy, France, 'Giffard of Barbastre'. Gifford was one of the organisers of the Domesday Book, and was also Keeper of Windsor Castle, maintained his primary residence in Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire, and was in possession of 107 lordships by this death.

3.12 In addition to the settlement Gifford's land at Caversham contained open pasture and woodland.

3.13 The dwellings of the village were planned piecemeal and not likely placed according to any formal plan. Some were grouped around the River Thames, owing to its importance to water-based industries and trade activities. The Church of St Peter was first established in its present location in 1162, just north of the river. Further medieval buildings were then laid out around this focal point.

3.14 The church would become a popular location for medieval pilgrims on their way to the Abbey of Reading. A Cell of Augustin Canons from Notely Abbey in Buckinghamshire (on lands gifted to them by Walter Giffard's grandson) established a presence on the Caversham estate from 1162, sometimes referred to as Caversham Priory.

3.15 A Shrine to Our Lady of Caversham was also located here, with a relic gifted to the shrine by Prince Robert, Duke of Normandy in 1106 as well as several others. This shrine was a significant pilgrimage point in Britain during the medieval period, in the group of those shrines dedicated to the worship of the Virgin Mary it was perhaps second only to the great shrine at Walsingham.

3.16 The shrine was suppressed in 1538, removing the income that the people of Caversham received from receiving and entertaining pilgrims.

HIGH MIDDLE AGES (1000-1300AD)

3.17 From the high Middle Ages onwards the manor of Caversham was in the possession of a series of high-ranking courtiers and politicians.

3.18 The land upon which the 19th-century Caversham Park now stands has consistently been the site of several large residences for these overlords from that period onwards. The location provided a convenient rural base for these nobles within easy distance of London.

3.19 In the 12th century Walter Giffard's son (also Walter, made 2nd Earl of Buckingham) died without an heir and the manor of Caversham was granted to Henry II's chancellor and then later fell to the husband of a relative of Walter Giffard.[11]

3.20 The lands at Caversham and the house were inherited in 1190 by William Marshal (1146-1219) who also gained the title of Earl of Pembroke. Marshal's important social and political position in England during this period as one of the greatest Lords of Plantagenet England is reflected in his favour with Richard I and appointment as Regent during the minority of Henry III (1216-1226).[12] Marshal also acted as negotiator between the barons and King John at Runnymede in 1215 when the Magna Carta was signed.

10 To appear in VCH Oxfordshire, on which this account of the manor's descent to the 17th century is based: https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/file-uploads/2019-08/4%20Caversham%20Social.pdf and https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/file-uploads/2019-08/2%20Caversham%20Land-ownership.pdf

11 Victoria County History, Oxfordshire, Caversham (texts in progress) (2019), VCH Oxfordshire, https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/file-uploads/2019-08/2%20Caversham%20Landownership.pdf.

12 B. Rotheray, A History of Caversham Park (n.d., c.2010).

3.21 Marshal may have been responsible for building the first manor house on the estate (see below) and maintained a household here. It was at Caversham in 1219 that Marshal, realizing he was about to die, called a meeting of the barons, Henry III, the Papal legate Pandulf Verraccio, the royal justiciar (Hubert de Burgh), and Peter des Roches (Bishop of Winchester and the young King's guardian) in order to decide the future of the Regency. Marshall was also instrumental in the establishment of the shrine and chapel at Caversham, with a generous endowment.

FIRST MANOR HOUSE, 13TH AND 14TH CENTURY

3.22 The first significant addition to the land upon which Caversham Park now stands was in the 13th century: sometime after 1218 a fortified manor house (sometimes referred to as a castle) was established at the edge of the current park, probably in the area know occupied by Dean's Farm, near the ferry and the mill.[13]

3.23 This house was probably built on the site of a previous dwelling (perhaps the aforementioned early farmstead). The house likely followed a typical plan form for medieval manor houses: a complex of buildings comprising a large hall, residential wing, domestic ranges, along with features of fortification (in this case a crenelated wall and moat).

3.24 The land surrounding this manor was in use as a deer park by the 14th century, a popular addition in this period.

3.25 Records show that in the 13th century Marshal (or his eldest son) established a huntsman at Caversham, and either maintained or created the deer park, which was stocked with ten does in 1223. Free warren (the right to small game) was enjoyed as 'of old'.

3.26 Caversham was one of Margaret de Lacy's regular residences during her widowhood (1245–66), and the park was well stocked in 1349 when it was reckoned that 50 deer could be taken from it every year. The park keeper was mentioned in 1430–1.

3.27 The medieval deer park has been claimed to have been oval, of c.300 acres, and to have covered much the same area as the later landscape park.[14]

LATE MIDDLE AGES (1300-1600)

3.28 After the death of the last of the sons of William Marshal without surviving heirs, the house (or castle) passed through many hands, including the Earls of Gloucester and Hertford, the le Despensers, and the Beauchamps. These owners maintained the house, and hosted sporadic royal visits from Henry III, Edward I, and Edward II.

3.29 By the 15th century the estate was in the possession of the Earls of Warwick, who also resided here at times. After the demise of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick ('the Kingmaker') and his death at the battle of Barnet in 1471, Caversham was granted (in 1474) to King Edward IV's brother George, Duke of Clarence. Upon Clarence's execution in 1478 the manor was taken into the possession of the Crown. This period saw the gradual transformation of feudal ownership of land and such frequent change in ownership of estates.

3.30 Caversham was not yet a major seat or caput of the region. The considerable local influence of its lords was tempered by their wider interests and frequent absences, as well as by the presence of other landowners, especially in the northern part of the parish.

THE 16TH CENTURY

3.31 A new era for Caversham began in the 16th century, as one prominent family gained possession of the estate and established a firm presence in the area over the course of several decades.

3.32 The Crown retained possession of the estate until the mid-16th century it was acquired for £28 by Sir Francis Knollys (c.1511/14–1596), a high-ranking courtier, MP and treasurer to Queen Elizabeth I.

3.33 Knollys was a relatively modest local landowner who had established a position of trust at the court of Henry VIII. He was one of the first members of Henry VIII's new bodyguard, the Honourable Company of Gentlemen of Arms; gained a reputation as a soldier in France and Scotland; and was knighted. He married Catherine Coney, daughter of Mary Boleyn, and was tasked with supervising the imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots in Carlisle Caste, Bolton Castle and Tutbury Castle in the late 1560s.

3.34 The surrounding estate was, however, divided and granted in part to the Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Warwick.

3.35 By the later part of the 16th century Knollys had obtained the entire manor of Caversham: In 1542 he was given a lease on Caversham with permission to pull down the old manor house by the Thames and build a new one in the medieval deer park. Knollys was granted the land outright in 1552.

3.36 During the reign of catholic Queen Mary I, the protestant Knollys family fled into exile in Switzerland and Germany, returning to their lands upon the accession of Queen Elizabeth I in 1558. As a result, construction of a new house at Caversham did not begin until c.1590. The site of this house was likely a pre-existing medieval park lodge (mentioned in 1478) which was probably maintained for the royal park keepers who were appointed until the mid-16th century.

3.37 Knollys likely wished to establish an additional mansion house as befitting his status near to his main residences at Reading and Rotherfield Greys, Oxfordshire. Though it seems the new house at Caversham (now located in the park) became Knollys' favourite residence, as reflected in his Will, where he is described as 'of Caversham' rather than of any of his other residences.

THE 17TH CENTURY

3.38 The new mansion was still incomplete by the time of Knollys's death in 1596, and his son, Sir William Knollys, Earl of Banbury (1544–1632) completed the house by 1601, and apparently enlarged the park.

3.39 Banbury was also a high-ranking courtier and MP, and he entertained Queen Elizabeth I and James I with Queen Anne of Denmark at Caversham in 1601 and 1613.

3.40 On the latter occasion an account of the entertainment for Anne of Denmark mentioned a 'fair' brick house with an apparently large hall, located on a hillside 'within view of Reading', and set above upper and lower gardens linked by steps, while the park incorporated an avenue of trees implying an established residence. The main entrance was via a southern gate directly opposite the house, before which *"a new passage"* had been *"forced through arable land... lately paled in"*.

3.41 Banbury's widow, Elizabeth, and her new husband sold the majority of the estate in 1633 to William Craven, Baron Craven of Hamstead Marshall (1608–1697). This included Knollys's mansion (still called the 'mansion house called Caversham Lodge').

13 D. Nash Ford, Royal Berkshire History, Caversham Park (and other pages) (2002), http://www.berkshirehistory.com/castles/caversham_park.html
14 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).

3.42 Craven was an extremely wealthy magnate and successful soldier and claimed to have spent £20,000 on improving the estate and house before the time of the English Civil War (1642–1651).

3.43 During Craven's time at Caversham King Charles I took Caversham Park as his headquarters for the English Civil War battle known as the Siege of Reading (1642–43). It was also at Caversham that King Charles I was held as a prisoner for a number of weeks.[15]

3.44 Craven was punished for his support for the Royalist cause and Caversham confiscated by the new parliamentarian government and sold to a speculator. The diarist John Evelyn wrote in 1655: *"Saw my Lord Craven's house at Caversham, now in ruins, his goodly woods felled by the rebels"*.[16]

3.45 The estate was eventually restored to Craven in 1660, and in 1665 he was made an Earl under King Charles II, whom he served as a Privy Councillor as a prominent courtier.

3.46 Following his return to Caversham, Craven employed the leading architect William Winde (c.1645–1722) to restore the surrounds of the house, and probably to rebuild the house itself.

3.47 Winde built the famous terrace at Cliveden (Berkshire) c.25km to the north-east, and at Caversham he is known to have created a tiered garden on the Thames side of the house; a 'ground platt' of 1663 is among his papers[17].

3.48 That garden comprised a terrace leading down to a square of flower beds with a further garden below and a double line of trees to either side. Presumably the terrace was absorbed 50 years later into Switzer's grand design.

3.49 In 1681 Craven sold the manor to John Fitzgerald (1661–1707), earl of Kildare, for £8,700. Fitzgerald made Caversham his main seat and in 1687 entertained Queen Mary II at Caversham while she was on her way to Bath. He was succeeded by his cousin Robert Fitzgerald.

THE 18TH CENTURY

3.50 During the 18th century, from around 1718, the house that had been completed in the early 17th century was extensively remodelled, or perhaps even demolished and rebuilt.

3.51 It was at this time that the house and estate (that covered 1,212 acres) was acquired by William Cadogan (1672–1726), soldier and politician who enjoyed success during the reigns of William III and George I. As a result of his rise, he was made Baron Cadogan of Reading, perhaps owing to his purchase of Caversham Park.

3.52 Cadogan likely wanted to rebuild the, now old-fashioned, house in line with the latest styles. The majority of the extensive building works for this house were completed by the time of Cadogan's death in 1726.

3.53 Cadogan allegedly spent £130,000 on the works to the house and grounds, aiming to emulate the nearby great houses at Blenheim and Cliveden. His house and park were described as *"one of the noblest seats in the kingdom"*.[18]

3.54 This house was imposing, it was visible from the valley and enjoyed views of the River Thames. The house was of three-storeys, the main wing with a rectangular plan. Two wings flanked the central part of the house and there were a further two wings to the rear. This house followed the conventions of the day in its classical proportions and appearance.

3.55 Cadogan reconfigured the house at the same time as commissioning Stephen Switzer and to work on the landscape. Magnificent gardens surrounded the house, with a formal terrace and gardens to the south front, later canals or lakes at the east and west of these. A deer park was beyond.[19]

3.56 Further details of Switzer's design are provided later in this section. They are particularly relevant because it is this phase of development which represents the landscape recognised by the RPG designation.

THE LATE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURIES

3.57 During the later 18th century, the house that had been built on the estate earlier that century by the Cadogans was damaged by a large fire.

3.58 Charles Cadogan's son, Charles Sloane Cadogan (1728–1807) sold the Caversham estate, by now around 2000 acres, in two parts in 1784–6. Just over 1000 acres were purchased by Major Charles Marsack (1747–1820).

3.59 Conspicuously wealthy, Marsack (or Marsac) had made his fortune in India working with the East India Company and held a number of positions at court.[20]

3.60 Following the example of other newly wealthy local men who had made their fortune in a similar way, Marsack rebuilt, restored and enlarged the house in the Greek style, including the installation of a large Corinthian colonnade at the front. Another flanking wing may have been added in 1824.

3.61 Marsack (characterised by Horace Walpole as 'Mr Massacre' for having trees felled at Caversham) was also criticised for charging entry to the park, removed Brown's winding approach from the north[21], and by 1809 the main later approaches from the west and south-east (this drive linking with the London-Bath coach road via the new Sonning Bridge of 1773) were apparently in place. It was perhaps in this phase that the road which, until then, had skirted the park to the west was largely removed.

3.62 In 1786 Caversham was visited by Thomas Jefferson, then Ambassador to France and later the American president, as recorded in his *Memorandums Made on a Tour to Some of the Gardens in England* published in the same year. He wrote:

> *Caversham. Sold by Ld. Cadogan to Major Marsac. 25 acres of garden, 400 acres of park, 6 acres of kitchen garden. A large lawn, separated by a sunk fence from the garden, appears to be part of it. A straight broad gravel walk passes before the front and parallel to it, terminated on the right by a Doric temple, and opening at the other end on a fine prospect. This straight walk has an ill effect. The lawn in front, which is pasture, well-disposed with clumps of trees.*[22]

15 Nash Ford, (2002), http://www.berkshirehistory.com/castles/caversham_park.html
16 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).
17 Noted in G. Tyack et al, Buildings of England Berkshire (2010), 483.
18 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).
19 Ibid.
20 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).
21 J. Phibbs, Place-Making: the Art of Capability Brown (2017), 148.
22 Thomas Jefferson, Notes of a Tour of English Gardens, 1786, Jefferson Papers, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-09-02-0328, reproduced in Julian P. Boyd, ed. The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, vol. 9, 1 November 1785–22 June 1786 (1954).

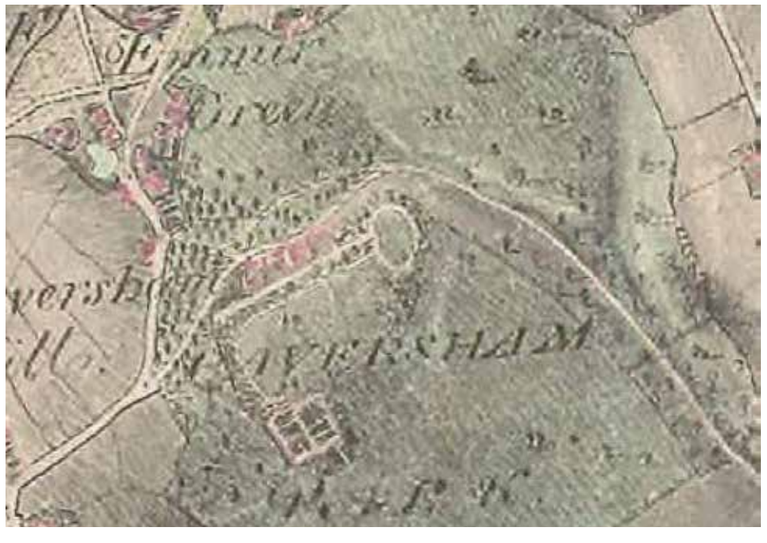


Figure 3.1 Caversham Park in 1809, Ordnance Survey Map

Figure 3.2 Caversham Park in 1824 from Neale, p1, 132

THE 19TH CENTURY

3.63 Marsack's changes resulted in a highly impressive house and grounds. Yet, Charles Marsack's heavily indebted son, Lieutenant Colonel Richard Marsack began to sell the estate piecemeal in order to pay his debts.

3.64 The Marsacks made three attempts to sell Caversham Park in the 1820s and 1830s by when the property was a ruin: *"dilapidated within"* and with the gardens entirely overgrown, *"hot houses leaning in all direction"*'.[23]

3.65 The leasehold of the mansion and 593 acres of land were eventually sold to William Crawshay II (1788–1867, known as 'the Iron King', his family owned the Cyfarthfa works in south-west Wales in 1838 (and the freehold in 1844, when the parish tithe map was drawn up).

3.66 The Cyfarthfa ironworks was one of the world's largest, employing over 2000 people by 1800. Crawshay was a very wealthy individual, at the time of his death leaving a fortune of £700,000 as well as much property (a vast amount by the standards of the day).[24]

3.67 The tithe map of 1844 emphasises that the wooded planting – or shrubberies – east and west of the house had each been set out in a circle, with each with a circular walk close to its perimeter, This may have been the hooked end to the canal. If so, this had been straightened again by 1877.

3.68 As a *nouveau-riche* capitalist, Crawshay was eager to exhibit his wealth and status. He had already built a lavish house in Merthyr Tydfil (Cyfarthfa Castle) and now sought to establish a country residence in England, within easy distance of London and Wales. The Caversham estate was of a reasonable price and in a desirable location. The construction of the Great Western Railway in the area had begun in 1836 and Crawshay could be confident of a fast and reliable link from London to Caversham and on to Wales (the Paddington to Bristol route). Country living would advertise his position as a man of fortune and prominence. It was also an opportunity to illustrate his ability to join the landed classes and enjoy leisured country pursuits. Such aspirations were common to the *nouveau-riche* families of this period, who benefitted from the impoverishment of many older aristocratic dynasties.

Figure 3.3 Caversham Park on the 1844 tithe map, the year it was purchased by William Crawshay

3.69 Crawshay may have begun work to enlarge and modernise the existing house at Caversham upon initially taking possession.

3.70 An architect named John Thistlewood Crew (born 1811, called T. J. Crews by Pevsner and English Heritage) was engaged to design two flanking wings perhaps in the 1840s or slightly earlier. Little is known about Crew, except that he was living in Brewer Street, Woolwich, London in the 1840s and provided some architectural assistance to by the Admiralty at Woolwich for ongoing works here.[25]

3.71 A fire in 1850 caused significant destruction to the (already dilapidated) house. Only the columns to each side of the main house remained standing.[26]

23 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).
24 Ibid.
25 Survey of London, Woolwich, Cardwell and Woolhill Areas, Volume 48, Chapter 8, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/architecture/sites/bartlett_architecture/files/sol-woolwich10-ch8.pdf
26 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).

3.72 An article in the Illustrated London news recounts the incident:

"...an extensive conflagration broke out at Caversham-park, near Reading, the seat of Mr. William Crawshay, the well-known ironmaster...which, we regret to state, was entirely destroyed... the house had for some days previously been undergoing a proper airing; and the flues having unfortunately become over heated, was the cause of the outbreak...Unfortunately, no water was near at hand, there being only a pond at some distance from the house...The conflagration presented a scene of fearful grandeur, especially on some portions of the roofing giving way, when the flames burst forth with increased fury...The greater portion of the household furniture, plate, and other valuable effects was saved, though other property, to a considerable amount, was destroyed. The mansion and effects, we regret to find, were uninsured..."

3.73 Soon after, probably after 1853 and before 1858, Crawshay took the opportunity to build another house on the site, this time to a design by Sir Horace Jones (1819-1887). A biography for Jones is at **Appendix 2.0**.

3.74 Crawshay engaged Jones in his project at Caversham early in his career as an architect. Why Crawshay hired Jones as his architect is as yet unclear. In the early 1850s Jones was still in his early 30s and had not yet firmly established his reputation as an architect.

3.75 It may be that Jones's work in Cardiff for the new town hall afforded him an introduction to this significant local magnate, who decided to take a risk and entrust this large project to an up-and-coming practitioner.

3.76 Caversham Park is Jones's only known executed country house. Crawshay's judgement was sound, and by the end of his life Jones had built a significant reputation as a leading architect of the 19th-century, with an impressive portfolio of works incorporating many prominent and highly regarded public and commercial buildings.

3.77 The house at Caversham was to be a *"symbol of modernity"* and Crawshay employed Jones to *"create a new building on the site of the old with a classical exterior, a modern structure and modern facilities"*.[27] The funds available to Jones for the project were likely generous. Crawshay was evidently pleased with his work, also engaging him to design several other small buildings in Caversham (including two schools and his only church).

3.78 Jones inserted his new seven-bay block between the two existing colonnades of 1840 by John Thistlewood Crew that had survived the fire. The footprint of the new house was largely similar to its 18th-century predecessor, though perhaps a little less symmetrical overall. It was designed to have three storeys with a basement floor also.

3.79 The ashlar stonework of the house was constructed over an iron frame, an early use of this new technology in England, its use perhaps owing to the nature of Crawshay's business empire and interest in new building materials and techniques. Crawshay was one of the first clients to employ a cast-iron frame for a country house, no doubt encouraged in the idea by his architect. Jones would become rather an expert in the use of such technology, using this material many times in designs for other buildings (for example the Surrey Music Hall in Walworth of 1853, which, unfortunately did burn down in 1861).

3.80 The use of his material also reflected the spirit of the time of the new industrial age. It was at this moment that Joseph Paxton was unveiling his monumental structure in iron and glass at Hyde Park for the Great Exhibition of 1851 (later dubbed the Crystal Palace). Paxton's commission was a result of his successful experiments in the creation of glasshouses of a monumental size in the grounds at Chatsworth for the 6th Duke of Devonshire in the 1830s. This epoch-making building in Hyde Park enjoyed national fame and was hailed as a miracle of glass and iron. The idea that iron could afford a building certain fire-resistance also endeared it to 19th-century clients, architects and builders.

3.81 The house was designed in a Classical style, illustrating many common elements of this design style, including for example, clear symmetry in its form, and the hierarchy of classical orders (the Doric, Ionic and Composite orders all featuring). It is possible that Jones was inspired in his design by his travels in the 1840s to Europe, including Italy, where he made extensive stetches of the vernacular architecture.

3.82 The building was reportedly inspired by Italian Baroque or Renaissance palaces, and has some relation to the style that would be known as the Neo-Renaissance. This was one of many revival styles favoured by architects and their clients in this period. Features such as open and arcaded Renaissance courtyards and grand staircases were some of the most favoured features of Neo-Renaissance design.

3.83 Jones seems to have exhibited a preference for the European Neo-Classical style, an influence that can be seen in many of his designs for a variety of different buildings. One critic wrote *"The Architect's favourite style seems to be degenerate Italian with a large infusion of French taste"*.[28]

3.84 The plan form of the new house at Caversham also reflected Victorian preferences and sensibilities in the mode of living and amenities for a large mansion house – this included provision for the physical separation of servants within differing wings of the house and circulation routes and a large number of rooms for varying purposes (e.g. billiard room, smoking rooms, dressing rooms and library).

3.85 A possible apocryphal suggestion is that Crawshay and his wife desired a house in which they could both live, but not have to meet. This story is a suggested explanation for why the house contains two separate staircases. In reality, the provision was likely intended to allow for the separation of male and female servants on their way to their respective accommodation areas.[29]

27 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).
28 S. K. Knowles, Sir Horace Jones, Architect and Surveyor to the Corporation of London, October 1995, as presented at the Guildhall Historical Association, with research from J. M. Freeman, "Sir Horace Jones, Architect of Landmarks", postgraduate thesis for Architectural Association, 1981.
29 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).

3.86 To the exterior of the house, at the south or garden entrance, the ground floor is rusticated with a Doric frieze over and a piano nobile sits above this level. This central block is of seven bays, the outer two bays are wider with tripartite windows and divided by engaged Composite columns (end piers). There is also a dentil cornice and balustraded parapet at this frontage. The sash windows of this block have glazing bars, raised surrounds and bracket cills, which are pedimented on the piano nobile (alternately triangular and segmental). As noted, the Ionic colonnades of nine bays that had been constructed in 1840 by J T Crews remain and flank this central block, slightly set back. Each with a balustrade over, the orangery was the colonnade to the west.

3.87 At the north entrance front a large porte cochere was constructed, providing cover to those arriving at the house. At the east side are now various extensions

3.88 On the inside of the house, after passing through the carriage entrance, the visitor entered in turn a vestibule, an outer hall and a great inner hall. There was a morning room, a dining room (with a mantelpiece from Chesterfield House in Mayfair), a library, a stately drawing room (over 12 meters long), a billiard room, smoking room, a set of gentleman's lavatories plus a winter garden.

3.89 The large central hall of the house is over 15 meters long, and has two balustraded galleries, Doric on the ground floor, Ionic on the first floor. The revival of the great hall was one of the main changes to occur to the planning of the 19th-century house.

3.90 Such halls began to be a popular feature and were included in a large number of country houses in the 1830s and 1840s as part of a general revival of what Girouard has termed 'old English hospitality'.[30]

3.91 Numerous 19th-century architects began to produce plans for country houses with large, central great halls in the medieval tradition.[31] Furthermore often the very grandest houses of the 19th century were expected to function like luxury hotels, entertaining and serving the needs of numerous guests and house parties.

3.92 As a consequence, many new houses featured impressive two-storey great halls at the centre of their plans, often centrally top-glazed. Prominent examples include the Gothic-style Alton Towers in Staffordshire and the Jacobeathan Harlaxton Manor and Gothic Bayons Manor, both in Lincolnshire.

3.93 Great halls continued to rise in popularity throughout the century and experienced a change in usage: no longer simply for formal dinners or balls, they were instead increasingly used as an extension of the general living space of the family and their guests.

3.94 From the middle of the century they began to resemble modern-type informal living rooms, where all kinds of activities could be enjoyed, for example writing, billiards, reading, games, music and general socialising.

3.95 The other principal rooms of the ground floor were also impressively presented during Crawshay's time. This was a house intended to impress and fit not just for the occupation by a wealthy and successful family, but also for large-scale and frequent entertainment. Photographs of the 1890s show that the library, dining room and drawing room for example all had elaborate interior schemes with decorative plasterwork to the ceilings and fireplaces, interior columns, flock wallpaper, wood panelling, parquet flooring and enriched doorpieces. The colonnades flanking the main block of the house were arcaded with a columned screen to that at the west (orangery) and an apse colonnade to that at the east.

3.96 On the first floor of the house were six principal bedrooms, four dressing rooms and a large boudoir on the first floor. On the second floor there were seven large secondary bedrooms, four dressing rooms as well as eleven large servants' bedrooms and three housemaids' pantries.[32]

3.97 The servants' area also included the kitchen, servants' hall, housekeeper's room, butler's pantry with silver safe, a cook's parlour, and a housemaids' sitting room. [33]

3.98 In the 1890s a classical Doric portico to a linked lodge was added to the north-west. There was also provision for stabling with a stable block providing a harness room, hay lofts and a coach house.

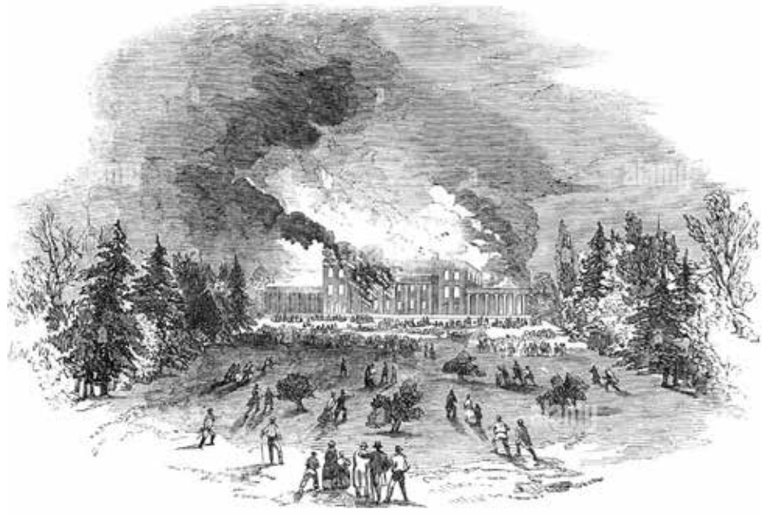


Figure 3.4 An image that appeared in the Illustrated London News of 1850 "Destruction of House by Fire"

3.99 The new house is visible in Ordnance Survey maps of 1870 and 1890. Here the various sections of the building are depicted: the symmetrical principal block can be seen flanked by an unsymmetrical wing to the south-west. To the west a number of the ancillary buildings evident on the previous tithe map had been either removed or augmented (for example at the stable block to the north).

3.100 According to the Historic England archive, photographs were taken of the exterior and interior of the mansion in the 1890s by Bedford Lemere for C. J. Crawshay (perhaps Charles Crawshay). They were intended to record and celebrate the work carried out by Horace Jones and interior work by C. E. Sayer, a sought-after and fashionable architect and interior designer of the time. The full set of photographs are reproduced in **Appendix 3.0**.

3.101 Some changes were also made to the gardens at this time in order to make them as impressive as the new house. Details are provided in the landscape history later in this section.

30 M. Girouard, Life in the English Country House: a social and architectural history (1978).
31 One of the major advocates for the revival of great halls for country houses was A. W. N. Pugin; Franklin (1981) p. 70.
32 Rotheray (n.d., c.2010).
33 Ibid.

Figure 3.5 A photograph of Caversham Park of the 1870s by Robert Thompson in the collection of the National Museum of Wales

Figure 3.6 Caversham Park in 1877, Ordnance Survey Map (published 1882)

Figure 3.7 Caversham Park in 1877, details of pleasure grounds, Ordnance Survey Map (published 1882)

Figure 3.8 The exterior of the mansion in 1892

Figure 3.10 The Garden Front in 1897, Berkshire Record Office

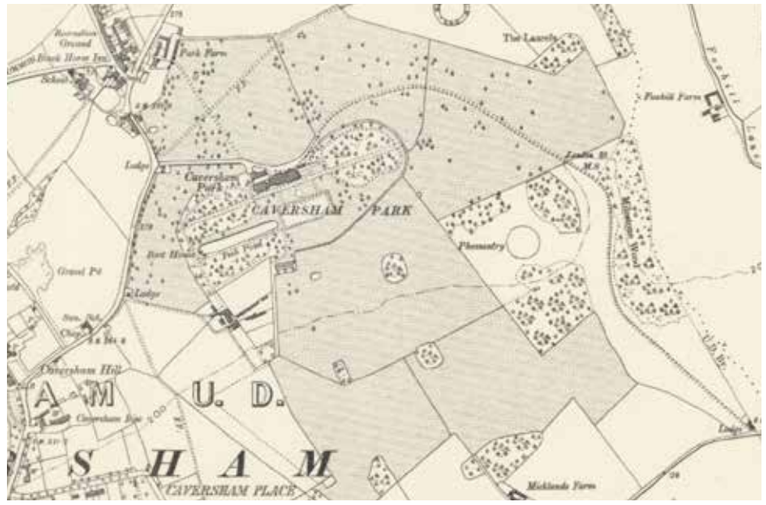


Figure 3.11 Caversham Park in 1897, Ordnance Survey Map (published 1900)

Figure 3.9 The Terrace in 1897, Berkshire Record Office

Figure 3.12 Caversham c.1900, Ordnance Survey Map

THE 20TH CENTURY – THE ORATORY SCHOOL

3.102 In 1919 the estate was put up for sale by the Crawshays, presumably considered by them as an unwanted asset in a time of financial hardship and social change. The family's enterprise was in decline, and they were forced to sell their foundries in 1902. The estate failed to sell in a depressed post-war market. By 1921 the extent of the estate was around 1,750 acres.

3.103 Caversham Park was also used as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers in this decade.

3.104 William Crawshay II's nephew, Jack Crawshay, finally sold the estate and mansion to local investors Lieutenant Colonel R.A. Mudie, William May, and Charles Hewett, who broke it up into parcels, a common practice of this period.

3.105 Extracts from the sale catalogue for the house and estate of May 1920 are reproduced in **Appendix 4.0**. The house and estate was advertised for a greatly reduced price, reflecting the post-war depression and general lack of interest in the purchase of country house and estate.

3.106 The house and 52 acres of grounds (some reports make this figure closer to 300 acres) were eventually bought in 1922 by the Oratory School, a Roman Catholic independent boarding school, run by the Oratorians, a Catholic order based in Birmingham, to replace the school they ran in Edgbaston. Since its foundation in 1820s, the Oratorians had sought to establish a Catholic boarding school operating on British public-school principles.

3.107 Significant money was spent on expanding the school at this time and making Cavendish Park fit for its new purpose. Further ancillary accommodation was added to the mansion and grounds: a new chapel wing was constructed (in order to commemorate pupils who died during the First World War) and a large sanatorium was built adjacent to the main house. These additions can be seen on the Ordnance Survey map of 1930.

3.108 Other investment included new sports facilities at the north section of the park, presumably including the pavilion north of the house which overlooked the school's playing fields.

Figure 3.13 The exterior of Caversham Park, taken by photographer Phillip Osbourne between 1905 and the mid-1930s, Museum of English Rural Life, Reading

Figure 3.14 The exterior of Caversham Park, taken by photographer Phillip Osbourne between 1905 and the mid-1930s, Museum of English Rural Life, Reading

Figure 3.15 The exterior of Caversham Park, taken by photographer Phillip Osbourne between 1905 and the mid-1930s, Museum of English Rural Life, Reading

Figure 3.16 Caversham Park in the early 20th century

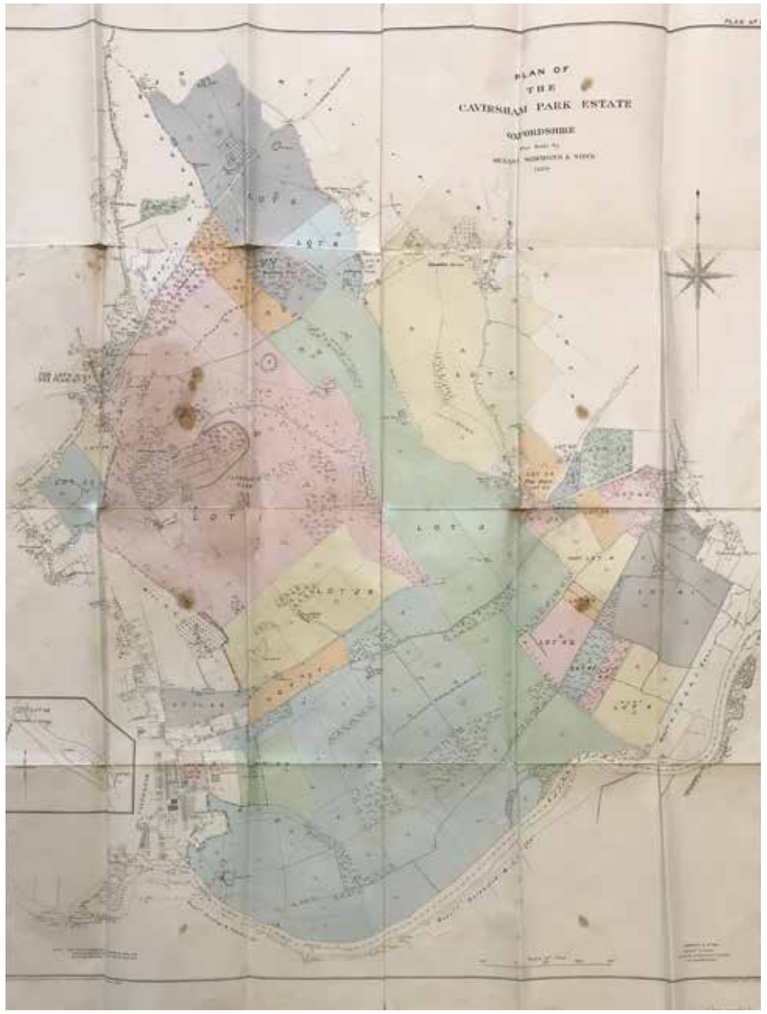


Figure 3.17 A map from the sales catalogue of 1920 for Caversham Park, Berkshire Record Office

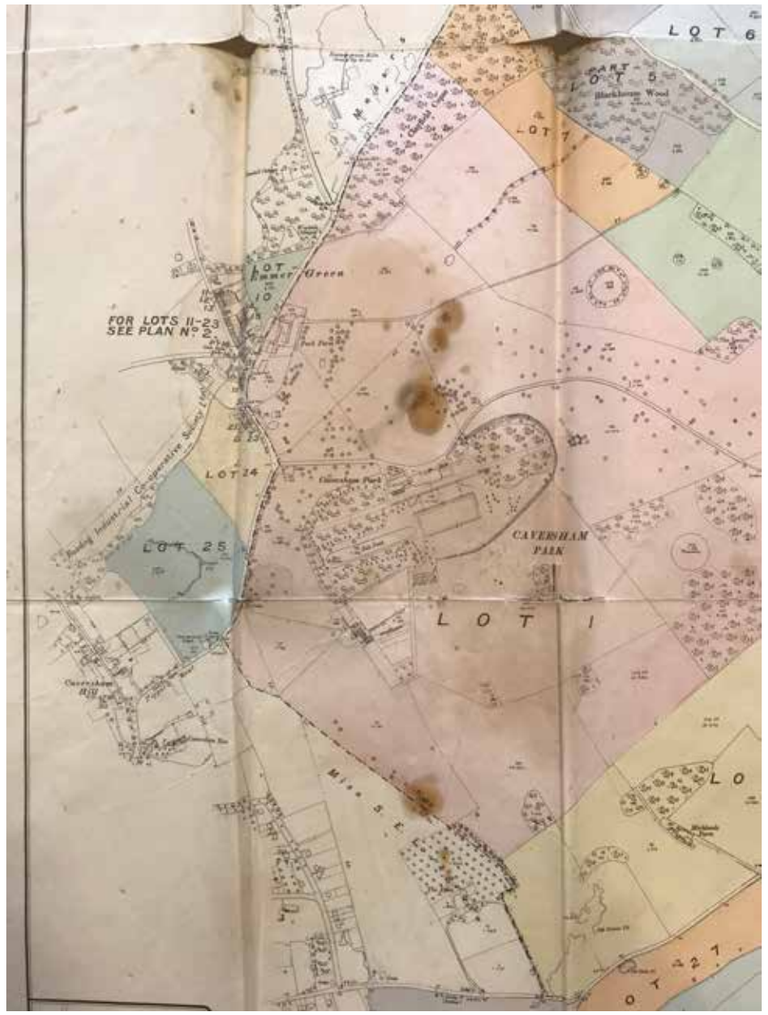


Figure 3.18 Detail from a map from the sales catalogue of 1920 for Caversham Park, Berkshire Record Office

Figure 3.19 A fire at the Oratory School in the 1920s, Berkshire Record Office

3.109 In 1926 a fire within the house caused substantial damage to the first and second floors as well as the roof; all of which were shortly repaired afterward.

3.110 In the same decade the south end of the park began to be encroached upon by housing, Reading's Henley Road Cemetery which opened in 1923, its Crematorium of 1932, and allotments.

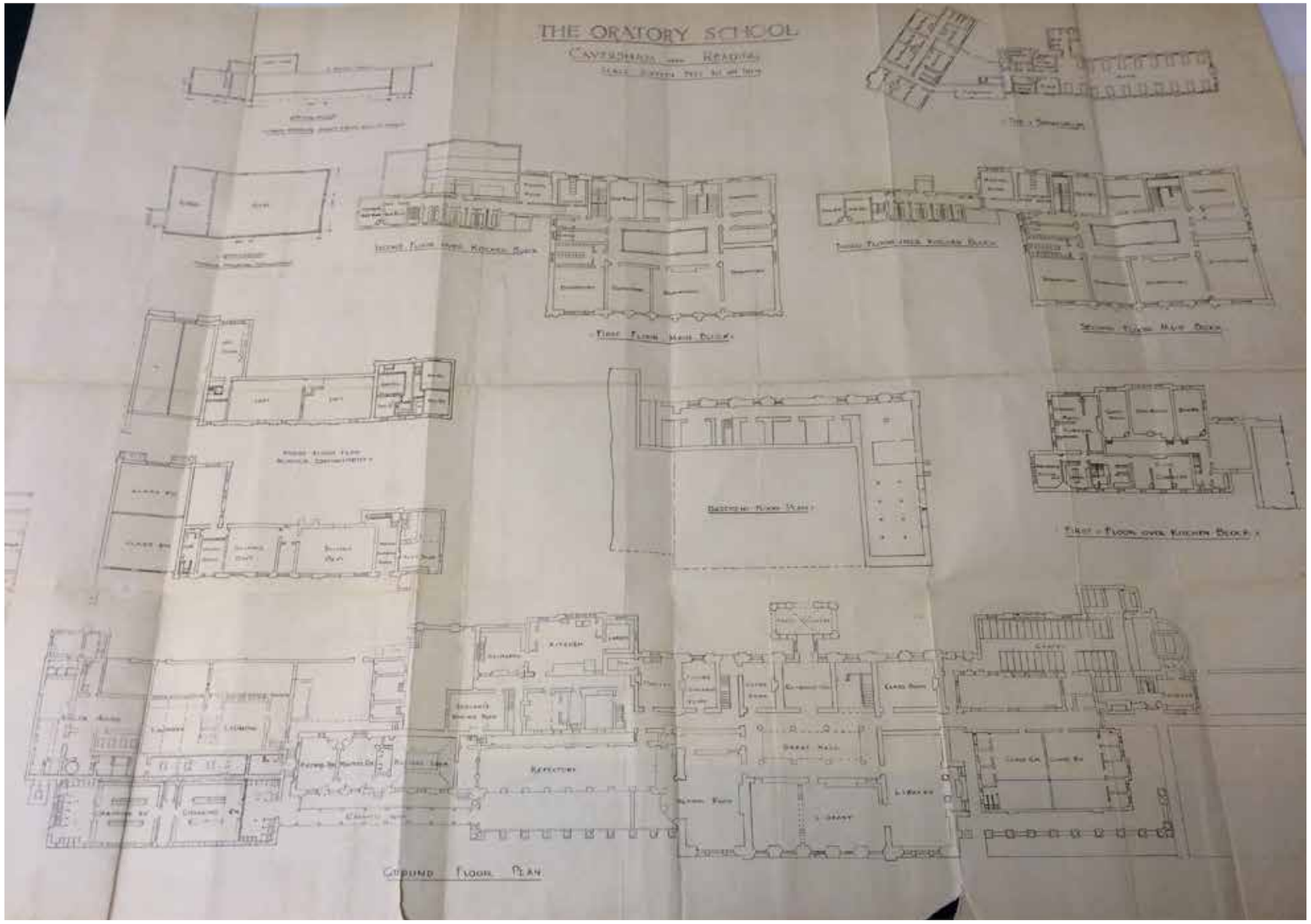


Figure 3.20 Ground floor plan, BBC archives, c.1922 to 1940s

Figure 3.21 A photograph of 1929 from the collection of the Oratory School

Figure 3.22 1930s The Library, Oratory School Archive

Figure 3.23 1930s Museum, Oratory School Archive

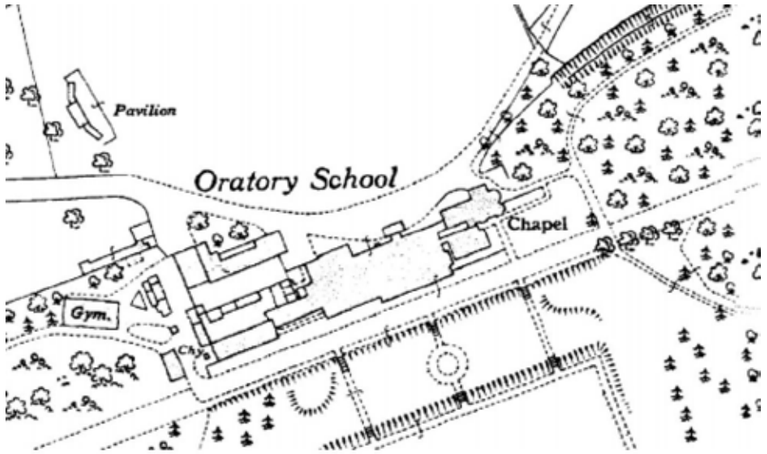


Figure 3.24 Ordnance Survey Map of 1930

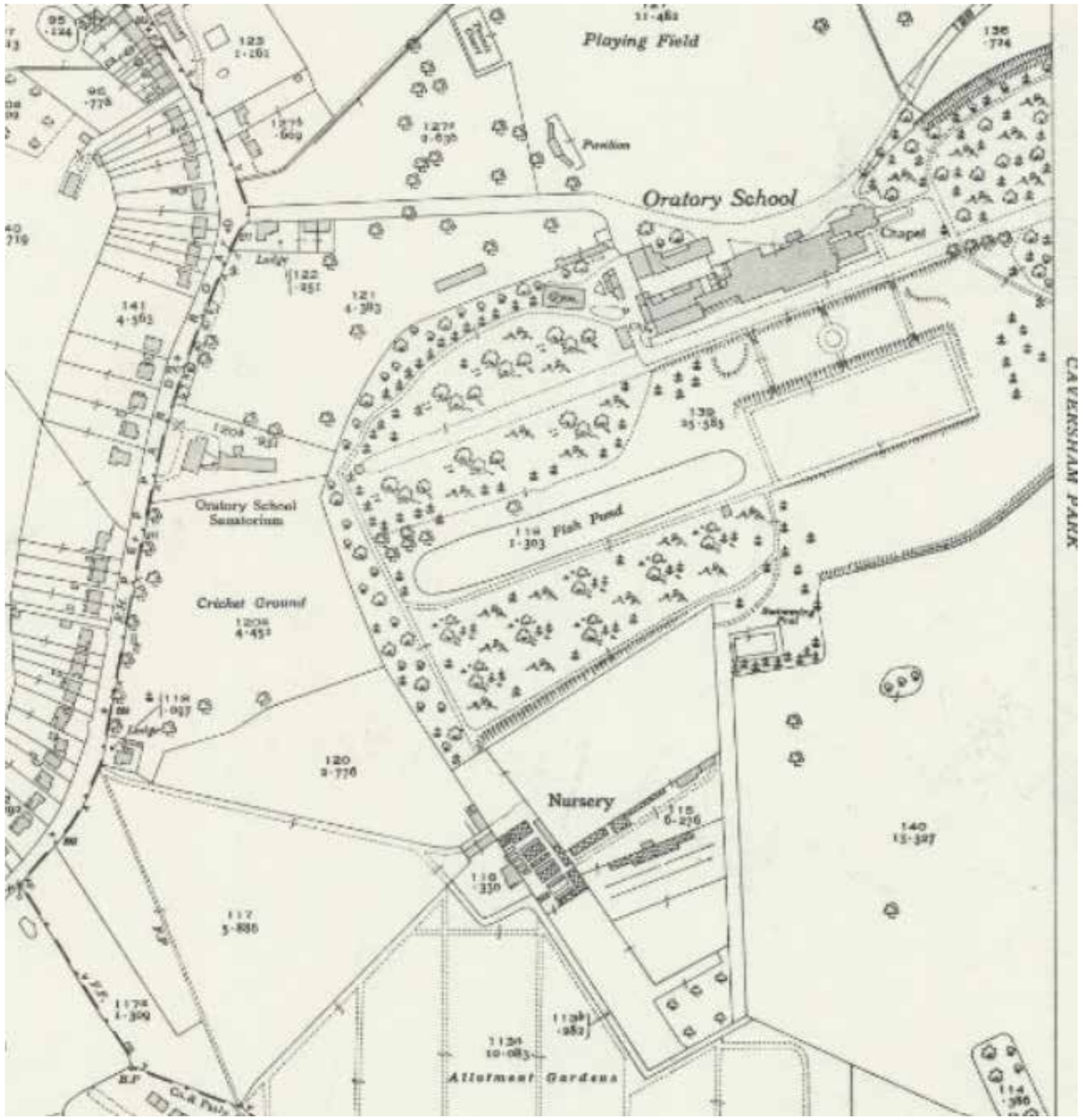


Figure 3.25 Ordnance Survey Map of 1936

THE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES – THE BBC

3.111 The Oratory School experienced financial difficulties and the number of pupils at the fell in the 1930s. In 1941 the school made the decision to relocate to alternative premises.

3.112 Some reports suggest the house was initial requisitioned by the Ministry of Heath for use as a hospital. In the end the house and grounds were sold to the BBC for £55,000, which used grant-in-aid funding to purchase it.

3.113 The house was used for the BBC's monitoring service during the Second World War. From 1939, the UK government tasked the BBC with monitoring and translating foreign wireless broadcasts.34

3.114 The purpose of the BBC Monitoring Service was to gather information and news – open source intelligence – as efficiently as possible. Several hundred 'monitors' were employed, many of them refugees, and the Service expanded rapidly so that it could monitor all of the European language stations likely to be of use to the war effort. The Service was also useful, as after the war, in the compilation of news bulletins.

3.115 Initially the Service occupied Wood Norton Hall (Worcestershire), but from early 1943 the entire Monitoring Service moved to Caversham Park and Crowsley Park, both near Reading. Sites outside London were chosen in part because they were less likely to suffer bomb damage.

3.116 By the end of the Second World War 1,000 people worked at Caversham Park helping to provide the War Office and BBC journalists with up-to-date information from Axis Power news agencies.

3.117 An employee of the service, German-Jewish refugee Karl Lehmann, described the working conditions at the house in this period.

> *"It was a very sociable place to work, in fact staff would often come in on their off days and eat in the canteen, which greatly eased the effects of rationing. 'There was a library in the building, and the park – so a pleasant place to spend a day off. In fact the building was almost like a club and the service was like one big family – even though there were nearly 1,000 of us here in total, from monitors to engineers and editors. We were all totally united in the one aim of winning the war."35*

3.118 Shortly after the end of the Second World War, the BBC Listening Service halved to about 500 members of staff, and attention turned to the growing threat of the Soviet Union.[36] It also played a key role in the Cold War, monitoring the events of this conflict. In the later 20th century BBC Monitoring continued to listen in on radio transmissions from around the world, as well as translating and analysing print journalism in a hundred different languages. In time, alongside this came monitoring internet traffic.

3.119 Later the house was also used for the BBC's Written Archives Centre and as a base for BBC Radio Berkshire (1943 to 2017).

3.120 Until c.2013 the Oratory School retained a connection with Caversham Park as it maintained the graves of three boys who had died at the school and were buried in the grounds. At that point, the bodies were exhumed with a Home Office licence and reburied elsewhere.

Figure 3.27 The Garden Front in the 1940s

Figure 3.26 The Entrance Front in the 1940s

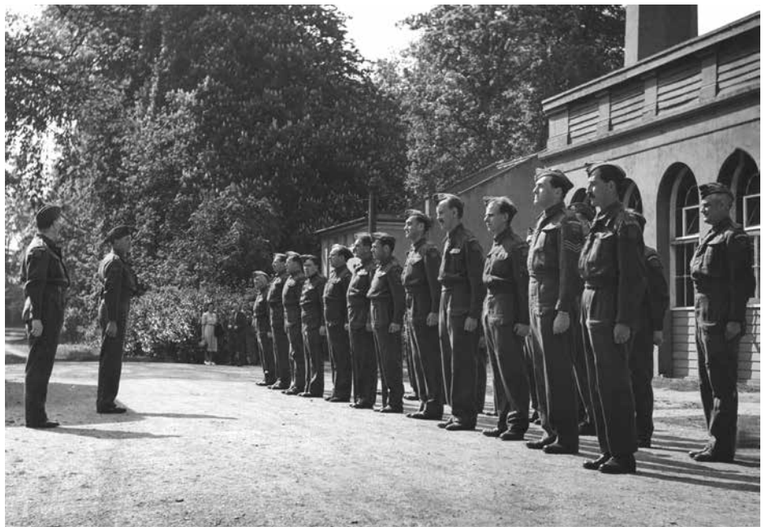


Figure 3.28 Caversham Park in the 1940s when used for training

34 John Cain, The BBC: 70 Years of Broadcasting (1992), 44.
35 BBC News, Caversham Park: End of an era for BBC listening station, 7 July 2016, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-36712152
36 BBC News, Caversham Park: End of an era for BBC listening station, 7 July 2016, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-36712152

3.121 During the time that the house was in use by the BBC, several schemes of refurbishment and remodelling were undertaken.

3.122 As can be seen on Ordnance Survey mapping dated to the 1950s and 1960s, the mansion appears to have been further extended following its purchase by the BBC. This is most clearly shown to the east and west; the latter seen through the expansion of the chapel and additional building to the south, both of which appear to have been merged as a result.

3.123 To the west, the addition of a further wing incorporated or resulted in the demolition of a separate exterior structure. A number of historic plans relating to this phase of development are shown in figures below.

3.124 Permission was sought in the 1980s by the BBC's Architectural and Civil Engineering Department for several external and internal changes to the mansion, including:

- The building of a large new west wing to house the listening room by architect Norman Lucey;
- Minor alterations to the atrium and adjoining areas, including new glazing;
- The conversion of the Orangery (at this time used as a canteen) into editorial offices;
- The insertion of an additional window into the chapel façade;
- the demolition of some parts of the building in order to provide new offices, library and listening rooms;
- The external redecoration of the mansion;
- Removal of certain utilitarian brick buildings that had been erected to the east side of the mansion during the Second World War; and
- Works to various minor buildings in the grounds.

3.125 This programme of works included the creation of a major new operations building room at the west end of the building.

3.126 In the 1990s permission was also granted for demolition of some 1940s fabric behind the façade of the colonnade, as well as the addition of a new two-storey east wing that was intended to house a new kitchen, dining room, editorial area and office space. Some other minor interior works were also consented, including:

- The removal of steps, addition of a partition and some fire doors in the chapel;
- Alterations so the front entrance hall and 'post room'; and
- The replacement of a lift.

3.127 Applications were also made for works to the gardens surrounding the mansion, the car parks and various ancillary buildings in the grounds.

3.128 In the 2000s applications were made to carry out alterations to the interior of the house as part of a refurbishment programme. This included, for example:

- The addition and removal of various partitions; replacement of windows and ceilings;
- New fit outs and redecoration of several suites of rooms (most especially the west wing, which was converted to house all of the operational staff);
- The addition of a single storey extension;
- The addition of a lift in the atrium; and
- Changes to the porch and doorway of the stable block.

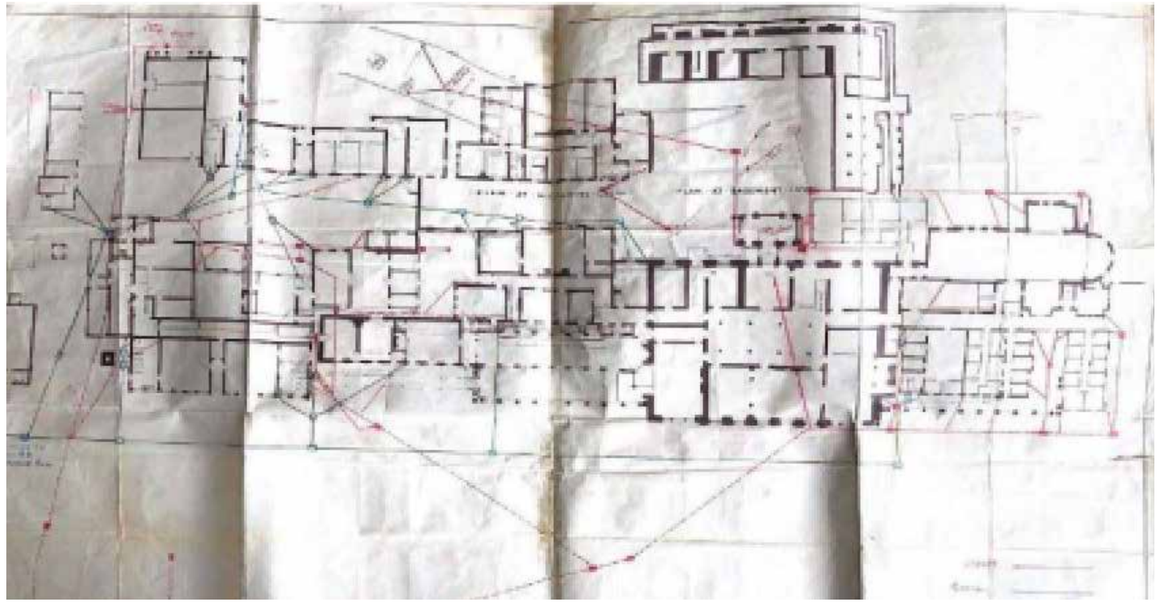


Figure 3.29 A plan of the house from 1941

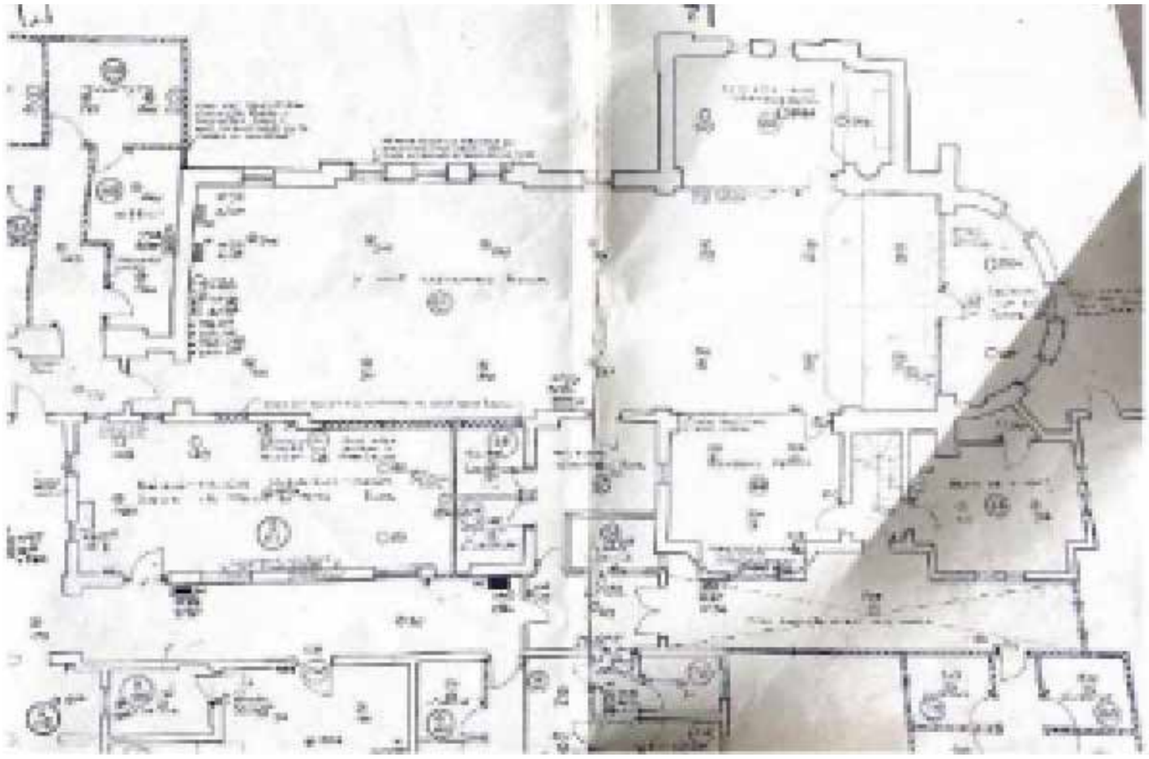


Figure 3.30 A floor plan of 1942

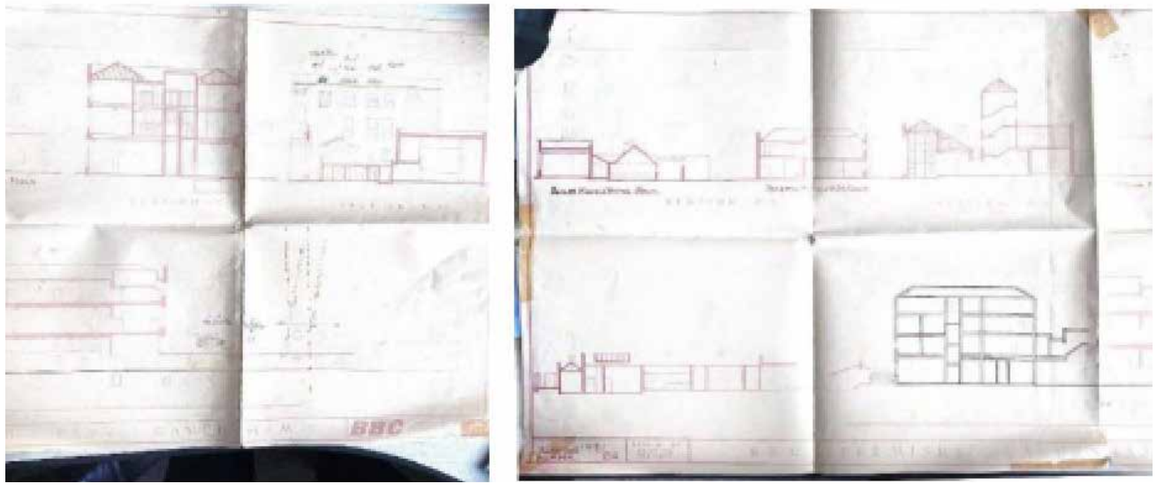


Figure 3.31 A floor plan of 1942

Figure 3.32 The house in 1945 when in use by the BBC monitoring service

3.129 From the 1960s, satellite dishes were installed east of the house.

3.130 The wider park surrounding the mansion underwent significant change in the 20th century: a primary school was built to the south-west of the mansion in 1950; the kitchen garden south-west of the house became a commercial nursery before being turned into a mobile home park in 1951; while in the 1960s and 1970s the park was much reduced on all sides by the construction of Caversham Park Village.

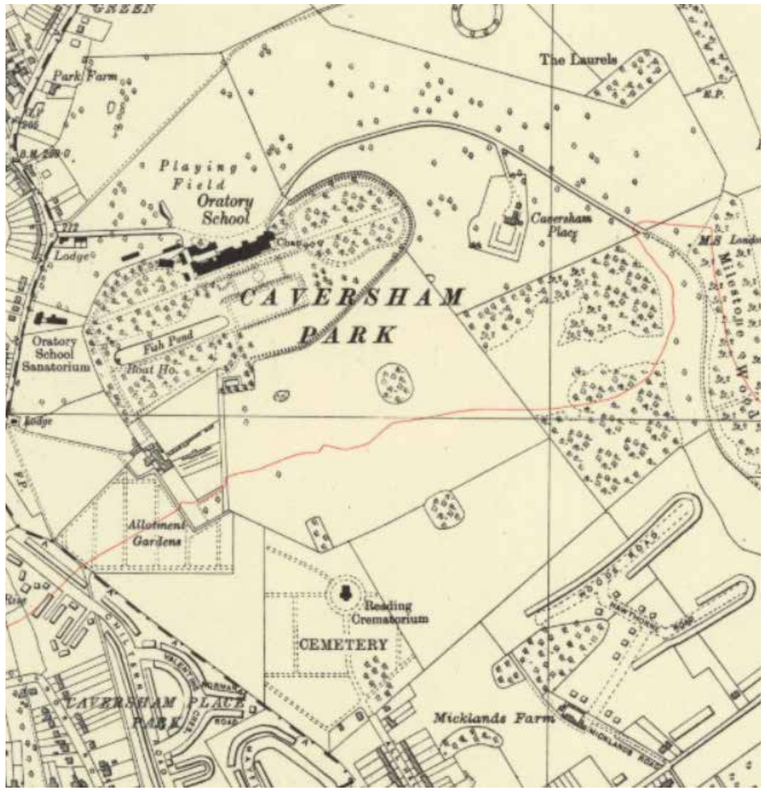


Figure 3.33 Ordnance Survey Map of 1945

Figure 3.34 Ordnance Survey Map c.1950 (Published 1951)

3.131 BBC Caversham closed in 2018 as a cost-cutting measure, and because of concerns that by accepting commissions from intelligence agencies it was exceeding the BBC's public services remit.[37]

Figure 3.35 An aerial photograph of Caversham Park of the 1960s

Figure 3.36 The house in the 1960s when in use by the BBC

37 BBC News, Caversham Park: Listening to the world, 1943 to 2018, no date (post 2018), https://www.bbc.com/historyofthebbc/buildings/caversham-park/

HISTORY OF THE LANDSCAPE

STEPHEN SWITZER AT CAVERSHAM[38]

3.132 Switzer's own claims, and those of his supporters, that he set aside the old formal style of landscape gardening for something more informal, is belied by his design for Caversham.

3.133 This was published in1725 in volume III of Colen Campbell's Vitruvius Britannicus.

3.134 Notwithstanding Switzer's scorn in his 1718 publication *Ichnographia Rustica* for '*the beauty of the largest and finest of Regular Gardens*', his contract with Cadogan specifies the outlines of just such, and Tom Willamson speculates that Cadogan may have made it clear that his wish was for the sort of grand formal garden he was familiar with[39].

3.135 Dated 20 April 1718, it agreed that between then and the end of July a workforce of up to 170 would be employed, with 80 men from September (after harvest) until the end of November. The cost was to be £1,392 4s. 9d., with a huge £836 7s. 11d. for contingencies[40].

3.136 As proposed (and we will return to whether this accords with what was actually carried out) the design was set out on a rigid cross-axis[41].

3.137 Against the house was a grand terrace 1,200 feet long, which two flights of Portland stone steps descended 50 feet to a parterre 'adorned with statuary, obelisks, urns and vases', and flanked by two 900-ft canals terminating at Doric temples. Flanking the main axial path through the garden was a scrollwork parterre with (according to the plan's key) statues, vases, and a fountain. Beyond, and extending east and west to the three evenly spaced avenues which ran south to the park edge, were wilderness compartments (or 'woodworks' as they were called in the contract) with central statues. Trees for the wildernesses were to be at least ten feet tall, an indication, as if one were needed that no expense was to be spared to create a garden with 'instant maturity'.

3.138 Many other compartments, some certainly further wildernesses, lay around the house, most to its east, either side of the main east-west axial path. Planting included pyramid yews, by then almost out of fashion.

3.139 What the published plan does not show is how the ground to the south of the house descended in a series of wide terraces. Below was an 81-a. 'great lawn'.

3.140 Colen Campbell's accompanying description mentions a Mr Acres (that is Thomas Ackres, nephew and executor of George London, the leading nurseryman and garden designer, d.1714), who may have been employed to construct the gardens,

3.141 Switzer's plan marks various features around the edge of the pleasure grounds. These include:

- An 'engine house' to the south-east (K on the plan), which stood on the spring marked on later maps and from where water will have been pumped perhaps both to the canals and to the house.
- To the south-west was the kitchen garden (H on the plan), set slightly off-axis, which was to be mucked and productive within the year. Running south from this was a triple line of trees, hiding the public highway.
- North of the house a broad avenue, 160 feet wide, extending to the park edge with a large area of formal planting – at least in part orchards – to its west, wrapping around and hiding the base court and service buildings.

3.142 The contract specified that Switzer was to supply '*five hundred Fruit Trees of the best kinds of Peach Apricock Plum Pear Cherry Vine & Apple*', all to be planted before their supporting walls and espaliers were erected. In the description accompanying the *Vitruvius Britannicus* plan, the park beyond was mentioned as being well-wooded, watered and stocked with deer, with reference to an excellent pheasantry and a menagerie; both are marked on the plan, as is a quail yard. So too is a chain of fishponds in the north-east quadrant of the park which had been refashioned to form formal pools, one a circular basin. Nearby was a farm, presumably the home farm.

3.143 To the east was a 240-acre deer park.

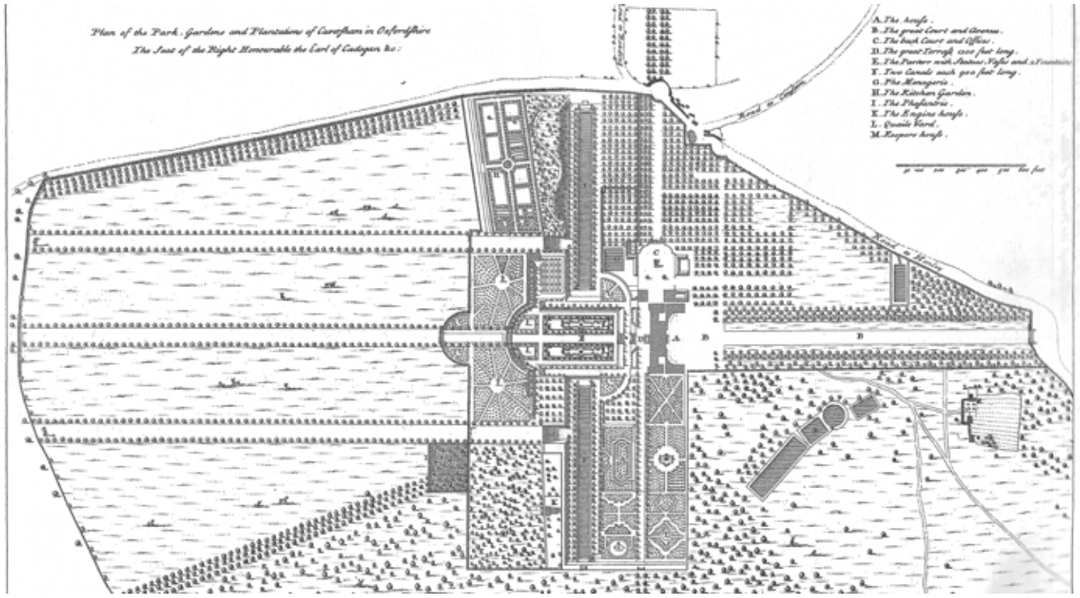


Figure 3.37 Switzer's plan of the grounds of Caversham published by Colen Campbell in Vitruvius Britannicus III (1725). This is titled (top left) 'Plan of the Park, Gardens, and Plantations of Caversham in Oxfordshire The Seat of the Right Honourable the Earl of Cardogan etc.' North is to the right. The key reads (the spelling and capitalization as there): (a) The house, (b) The great Court and Avenue, (c) The back Court and Offices, (d) The great Terrase 1200 feet long, (e) The parterr with Statues, Vases and a Fountain, (f) Two Canals each 900 feet long, (g) The Menagerie, (h) The Kitchen Garden, (i) The Phesantrie (j) the Engine house, (k) Quaile Yard, (l) Keepers house

38 For an overview of Switzer see **Appendix 5.0**.
39 T. Williamson, Polite Landscapes: Gardens and Society in Eighteenth-Century England (1995), 49.
40 For this and what follows see the VCH Oxfordshire sources noted above; T. Mowl, Gentlemen and Players: Gardeners of the English Landscape (2000), 84-6; Williamson, op. cit. 41. Switzer's contract is in the Berkshire Record Office D/ EX/ 258/9.
41 Switzer's landscape at Caversham is discussed in David Jacques's authoritative Gardens of Court and Country. English Design 1630-1730 (2017), 206, 236, 256-7, 259, 281, 292, 295, 317, 330.

3.144 The question raised above, as to whether the published plan was a proposal (which given the close correspondence of the date of Switzer's contract, and that of the plan's publication seems a possibility), or a record of the completed design, is, of course, relevant.

3.145 A key source when considering this question is the detailed county map of Berkshire by John Rocque published in 1761 – 30-odd years after Switzer's contract.

3.146 While the scale does not allow details to be examined, at least in broad outline there is a close correlation between this and Switzer's plan, although Rocque's plan shows Switzer's landscape had begun to be altered.

3.147 The axial east-west terrace walk had been extended to the west and was now terminated at the west end by a garden building, possibly the Doric temple there today.

3.148 The central avenue of trees had been largely removed, while a new radial avenue was laid out through woodland to the south-east.

Figure 3.38 John Rocque, Map of Berkshire (1761). Available at https://www.rct.uk/collection/700042/rocques-map-of-berkshire

3.149 Several of the parterres may have been removed and others simplified.

3.150 A third canal appears to have been added by this time, lying north of and adjacent to that lying south-west of the house. Rocque's map shows denser planting east of the main north-south axis, and a very clearly-defined east boundary to the park with an outward curve to its centre.

3.151 Given this would have been among England's most ambitious gardens in the earlier 18th century it is regrettable that so few contemporary accounts of it are known. One that is, is a diary entry by Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, who visited in 1727, just five years or so after the gardens were constructed. He was unimpressed. 'At this place I observed a vast expense but laid out without either taste of judgement.' The gardens were 'well enough laid out in some parts and the canals are pretty but the ornaments very bad. Amongst other things of this kind his Lordship at vast expense brought several large marble statues from Holland. There are several Goddesses but of such a clumsy make as one may see they were made in a country where women are valued by the pound of arse.'[42] In fact, the identification of the statues as being of 'marble' is doubtful; it is much more likely that they were of lead and from the London workshop of John (van) Nost (d.1729), but painted white to resemble marble. Nost was originally from the Low Countries, which may have been behind the Dutch attribution.[43]

'CAPABILITY' BROWN AT CAVERSHAM[44]

3.152 About 1764 Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-83) was employed to landscape the grounds by Charles, the second Baron Cadogan.

3.153 It appears that none of Brown's drawings for his Caversham commission survive, nor his account books for this period. The results of Brown's work were described by Thomas Whately in his *Observations on Modern Gardening* (1770).

3.154 On his visit, Whately approached from the north, past an entrance lodge, before a long and winding approach through trees and plantations of various sorts, described at considerable length.

3.155 Eventually the drive '*suddenly bursts out upon a rich, and extensive prospect, with the town and churches of Reading in full sight, and the hills of Windsor Forest on the horizon.*' Breaks in the slope are mentioned, but it is unclear if it is the retained terracing that is being referenced[45]. For Mrs Lybbe Powys this was '*one of the finest parks imaginable*.'[46]

3.156 Given the lack of documentation for Brown's work –which is not untypical – it is hard to offer more than an overview of what he did.

3.157 In summary it looks as if his principal contributions could be placed under the heading of '*additions*', notably much planting (and perhaps selective retention of avenue trees to give instant maturity to his landscape park), and the new scenic approach through this from the north.

3.158 Under '*removals*' might come the formal parterres and wildernesses, the avenues, and the easterly canal (as well as the smaller one to the west, if such existed). It may have been then that the main west canal was made slightly less formal with rounded ends.

3.159 It is notable that '*retentions*' included the formal terraces, which could easily have been graded away. Perhaps the client expressly ordered they be kept?

Figure 3.39 An undated later 18th-century view, looking north to the house after removal of the formal gardens.

42 John Fleming, Robert Adam and his Circle (1962), 25
43 Michael Symes is thanked for a discussion about the statuary.
44 For an overview of Brown see **Appendix 6.0**.
45 Thomas Whately, Observations on Modern Gardening (1770; 2016), 122-5 in modern edition.
46 Noted in G. Tyack et al, Buildings of England Berkshire (2010), 483.

Figure 3.40 Caversham in 1809. British Library OSD 126[47]

THE LATE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURIES

3.160 The transformation of the landscape in the half-century and more after Brown is unclear.

3.161 Marsac removed Brown's winding approach from the north[48], and by 1809 the main later approaches from the west and south-east (this drive linking with the London-Bath coach road via the new Sonning Bridge of 1773) were apparently in place. It was perhaps in this phase that the road which, until then, had skirted the park to the west was largely removed (cf. Figs. 2 and 4).

3.162 In 1786 Caversham was visited by Thomas Jefferson, then Ambassador to France and later the American president, as recorded in his *Memorandums Made on a Tour to Some of the Gardens in England* published in the same year.

3.163 He wrote: '*Caversham. Sold by Ld. Cadogan to Major Marsac. 25 acres of garden, 400 acres of park, 6 acres of kitchen garden. A large lawn, separated by a sunk fence from the garden, appears to be part of it. A straight broad gravel walk passes before the front and parallel to it, terminated on the right by a Doric temple, and opening at the other end on a fine prospect. This straight walk has an ill effect. The lawn in front, which is pasture, well disposed with clumps of trees.*'[49]

3.164 When Marsac died a wealthy man in 1820, the house and park were magnificent. But his son and heir Richard, a Grenadier Guards officer, was an inveterate gambler with substantial debts who moved to France to escape creditors.

3.165 The Marsacs made three attempts to sell Caversham Park in the 1820s and 1830s by when the property was a ruin: '*dilapidated within*' and with the gardens entirely overgrown, '*hot houses leaning in all directions*'.[50]

3.166 The leasehold was finally bought in 1838 (and the freehold in 1844, when the parish tithe map was drawn up) by the ironmaster William Crawshay (d.1867), whose family owned the Cyfarthfa works in south-west Wales, one of the world's largest. He obtained the mansion and 593 acres.

3.167 What the tithe map of 1844 emphasises most of all is the way the wooded planting – or shrubberies – east and west of the house had each been set out in a circle, each with a circular walk close to its perimeter. Are we to believe the hooked end to the canal? If it was so modified, it had been straightened again by 1877.

3.168 The house (now listed at Grade II) was rebuilt after a fire in 1850, and the gardens may have had elements – the stairs descending the lawn – added at the same time.

3.169 It is known the house had colourful flowerbeds – presumably including the ten, in two groups of five (quincunxes), on the main lawn south of the house shown on OS mapping of 1877 – and a fernery and a winter garden. Fifteen gardeners were employed here at that time.

3.170 The north entrance – with tall stone gate piers and a single-storey lodge (one of three) – is probably also of this mid-19th-century phase. So too may be the deep ditch encircling the pleasure grounds and the inner park wall, both discussed below.

3.171 The estate remained with the family until William's grandson died in 1918, and his widow in 1919.

Figure 3.41 An early 19th-century engraving looking west along the terrace to the Doric temple.

47 https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Ordnance_Survey_Drawings_-_Reading_%28OSD_126%29.jpg
48 J. Phibbs, Place-Making: the Art of Capability Brown (2017), 148.
49 https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-09-02-0328
50 This and remaining text based largely on B. Rotheray, A History of Caversham Park (n.d., c.2010).

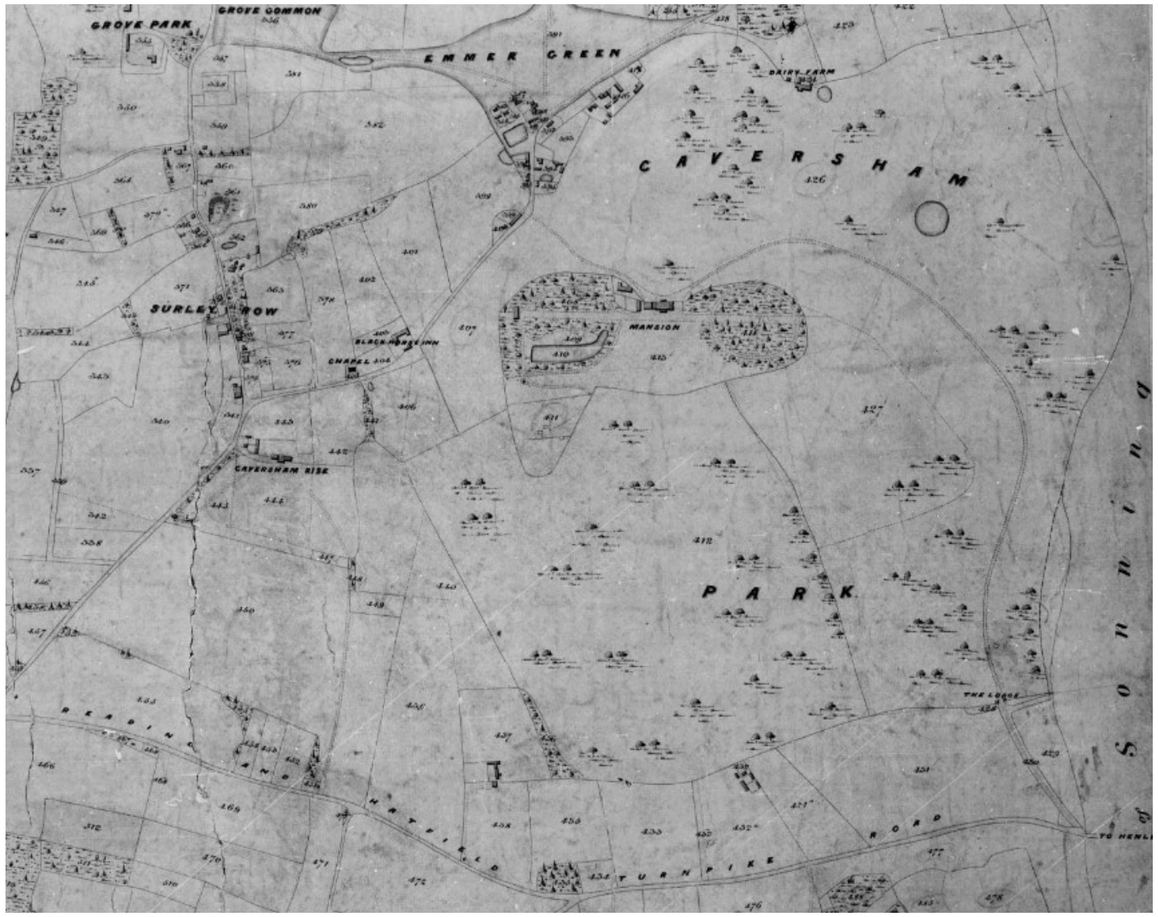


Figure 3.42 Caversham Park on the 1844 tithe map, the year it was purchased by William Crawshay.

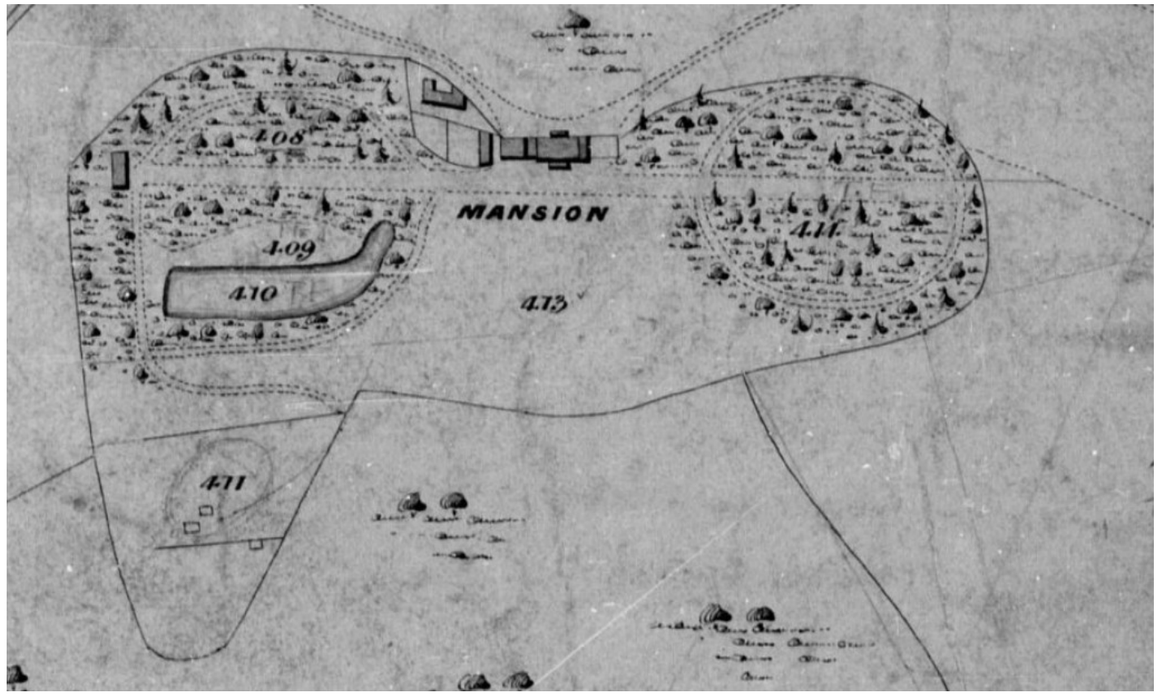


Figure 3.43 Detail of pleasure grounds on 1844.

Figure 3.44 Caversham in 1877. Source: OS 6 inch Oxon LVI (published 1882)

Figure 3.45 Caversham in 1877. Details of pleasure grounds. Source: OS 6 inch Oxon LVI (published 1882)

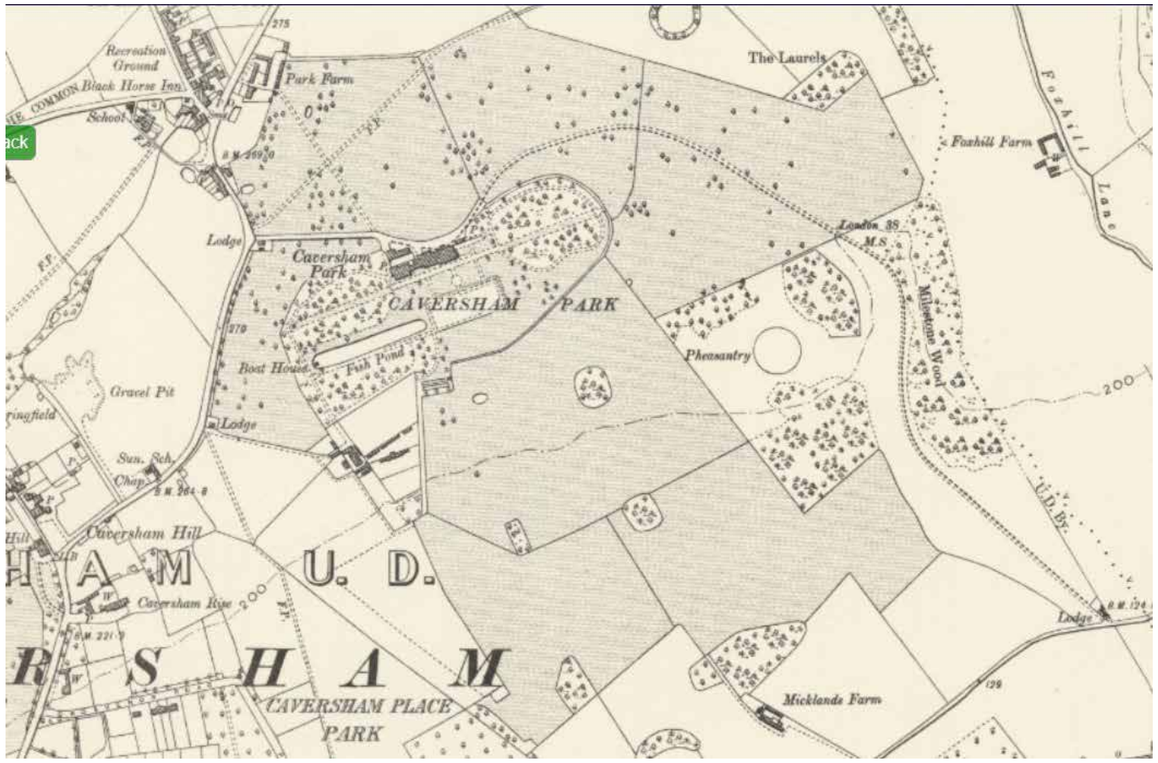


Figure 3.46 Caversham in 1897. Source: 6 inch Oxon LVI.SE (published) 1900

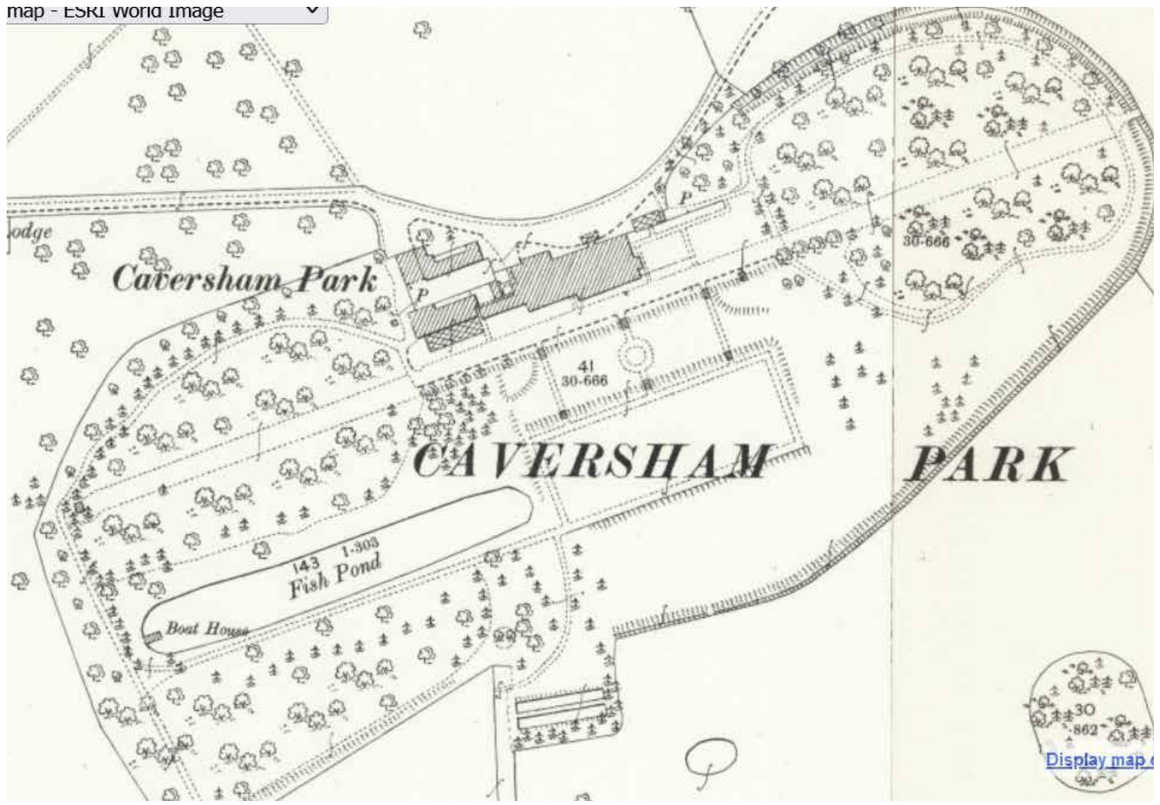


Figure 3.47 Caversham c.1900. Source: OS 25 inch map.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

3.172 The changes in the twentieth century were limited and relatively minor.

3.173 The school invested in new sports facilities, presumably including the pavilion north of the house which overlooked the school's playing fields.

3.174 The BBC installed satellite dishes from the 1960s east of the house. As noted above, the north section of the park was used for private recreational and sporting purposes by the school, as it was under the BBC.

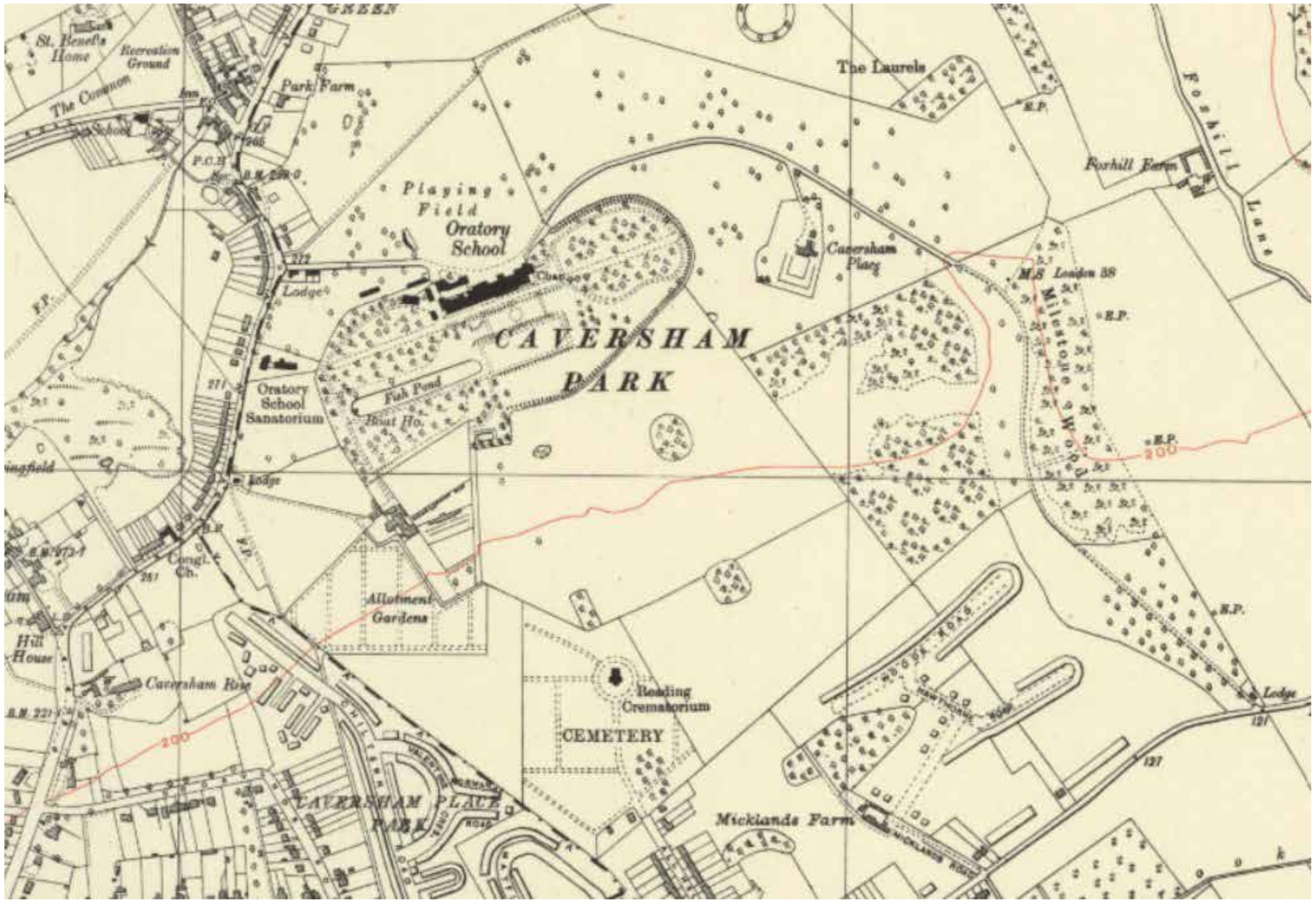


Figure 3.48 Caversham as a school in 1938. Source: 6 inch Berks XXIX.SE (published c.1945)

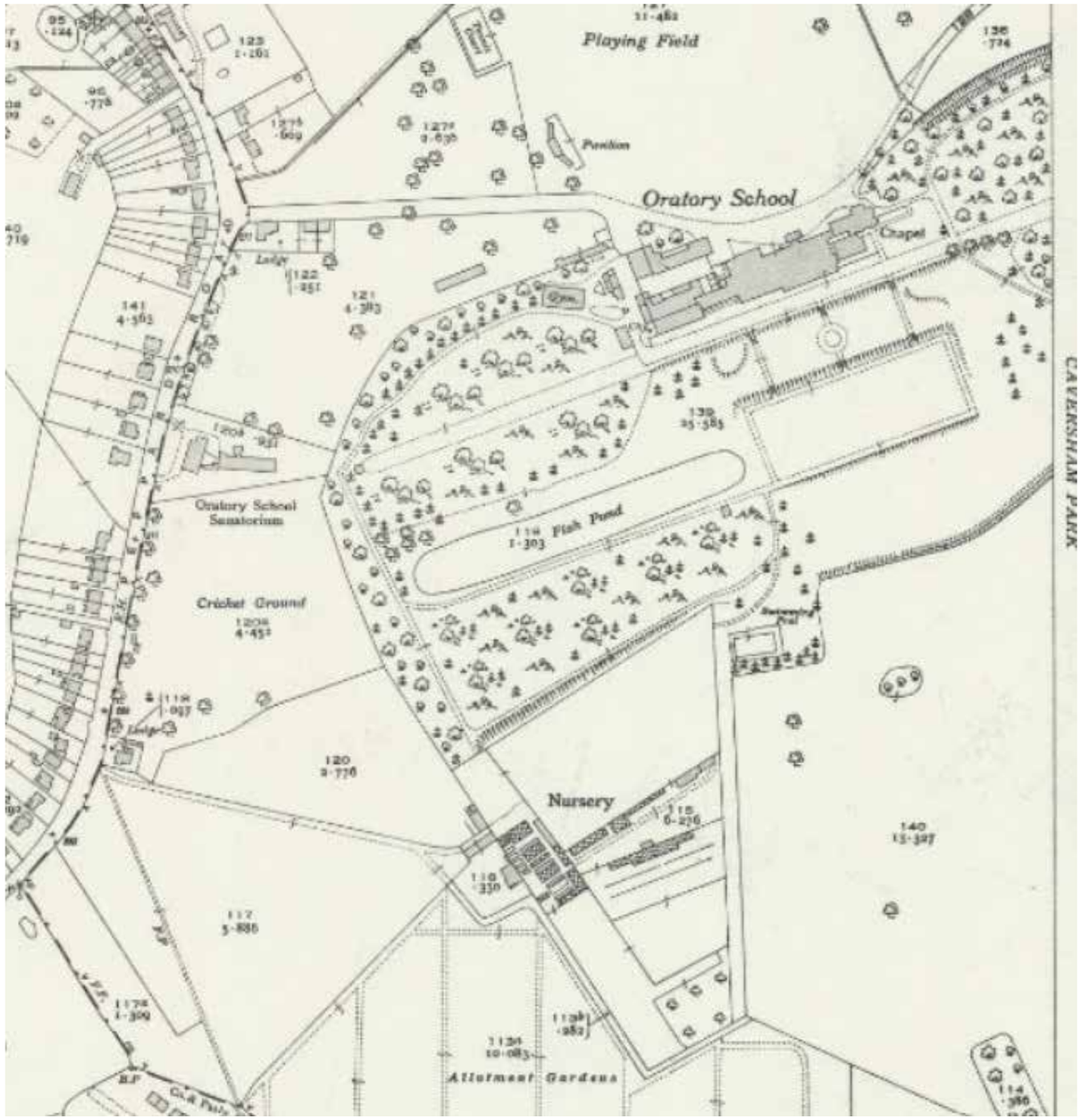


Figure 3.49 Caversham in 1936. Source: OS 25 inch Berks XXIX.11 (published 1938)

Figure 3.50 Caversham c.1950. Source: OS 1 to 25,000 sheet 41/77 (1951)

Figure 3.51 Caversham today.

4.0
ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
CAVERSHAM PARK

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 This section describes the significance of the heritage assets affected by the proposal in accordance with paragraph 194 of the NPPF and development plan policy.

4.2 The heritage assets are shown on the map at **Figure 4.1** and comprise:

- Caversham Park (BBC Records), Grade II listed building;
- Caversham Park, Grade II RPG
- Temple to West of Caversham Park, Grade II listed building;
- Entrance Gates and Gate Piers to Caversham Park, Grade II listed building;
- Inner Park Walls at Caversham Park, Grade II listed building;
- Walls at Former Kitchen Garden at Caversham Park, Grade II listed building; and
- Nos. 1 and 3 Caversham Drive, curtilage listed building.

4.3 The list entry descriptions are reproduced at **Appendix 5.0**.

CAVERSHAM PARK (BBC RECORDS) (THE MAIN HOUSE)

4.4 Caversham Park (BBC Records) was Grade II listed in December 1978.

4.5 We are broadly in agreement with the description of the significance of the house presented in the Heritage Statement by Savills (**Appendix 6.0**).

4.6 We have had regard to the 'Fabric significance assessment' plans at section 5.3 (page 30–31) of the Savills Heritage Statement, and we have prepared supplementary analysis of the phasing and significance of the building in plans which are included at **Appendix 9.0**. These plans have informed our advice to the Applicant.

4.7 In summary, the significance of the listed building is derived from:

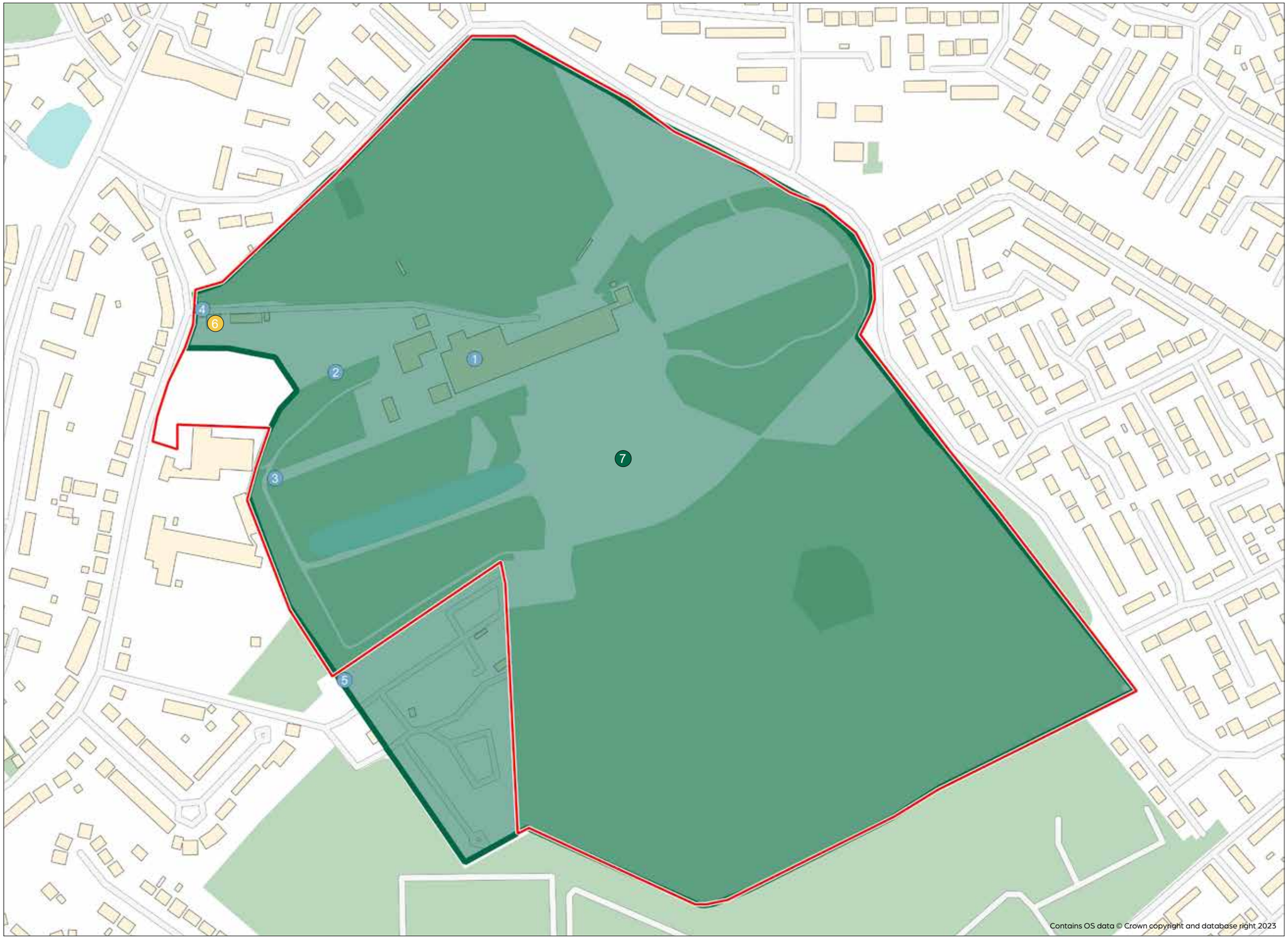
- The architectural interest of the 1850 house and chapel, including the colonnaded wings which are believed to have been a feature of the earlier Georgian property. The front and rear elevations retain the original classical articulation, details and proportions. The chapel reflects the school use and is consistent with the function of a country house. The decoration in the chapel, currently hidden by later alterations, adds to the architectural interest.
- The plan form survives relatively well throughout the main house. The principal rooms at ground floor retain decoration and the original layout. This is the most significant floor in the building because of the level of survival. It is noted that decoration has been lost and the original domestic character is diminished by the institutional fit out, including fire protection in the main hall atrium corridors, suspended ceilings and services.
- The plan form of the upper floors is also legible, however they were rebuilt or reconfigured after the 1920s fire and the fabric is considered to have less sensitivity as a result. The architectural decoration is also plainer.
- The architectural interest of the colonnaded wings has been somewhat compromised by the 20th century infill and alteration, and similarly the redevelopment of the former stable block has removed this original part of the building, and elements which remain on the north side are now fragmentary. That said, the walls which survive from the original stables are still cohesive with the main building because of historic plan sources and the architectural expression of the 20th century buildings which now contain them.
- The mid–late 20th century buildings, many of which are associated with the BBC, do not have architectural interest: they were not designed by an architect of note and they have an ordinary institutional character and quality. The later extensions also disrupted the original plan form and resulted in the removal of decorative features.
- The historical interest of the listed building is manifold.
- The built form is representative of the estate having a status and manor since at least the Late Medieval period.
- The important historical figures who have owned, lived in or visited the house makes a meaningful contribution to its significance. The associations with leading designers of the day are likewise important: Jones and Capability Brown in particular.
- The 20th century use by the Oratory School and BBC also adds to the historical interest of the building, particularly the BBC who based their specialist monitoring operations at Caversham during the Second World War and Cold War. As before, the fabric introduced by the BBC is not considered to form part of the architectural interest of the building and generally detracts from the significance of the building.

CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING TO SIGNIFICANCE

4.8 The setting of the listed building is defined by the attendant RPG. The features of the landscape which reflect the historic and important landscape design contribute positively to the appreciation of the listed building as a Victorian country house. This includes the Temple, which is contemporary to the house, and the views to and from the Temple are important.

4.9 The view towards Caversham Park from the A329(M), railway and surrounding streets is recognised as a 'significant view with heritage interest' in Local Plan Policy EN5. Locations where the south elevation is visible from the surrounding area therefore contributes to the significance of the listed building.

4.10 Otherwise, views of the listed building are very limited from the surrounding area. The building can be glimpsed from Lowerfield Road through mature/dense landscaping, but these views are not considered to make any meaningful contribution to significance.



HERITAGE ASSET PLAN

Application Site

Listed Buildings

Grade II

1. Caversham Park (BBC Records)
2. Inner Park Walls at Caversham Park
3. Temple to West of Caversham Park
4. Entrance Gates and Gate Piers to Caversham Park
5. Walls at Former Kitchen Garden at Caversham Park

Curtilage Listed

6. Nos 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive

Registered Park and Gardens

7. Caversham Park

LOCATION:
Caversham Park, Reading

DATE:
May 2023

SCALE:
1 to 3,500 @ A3

FIGURE 4.1 Map showing location of heritage assets.

▲ **NORTH**

MONTAGU EVANS
CHARTERED SURVEYORS
70 ST MARY AXE,
LONDON, EC3A 8BE
T: +44 (0)20 7493 4002
WWW.MONTAGU-EVANS.CO.UK

CAVERSHAM PARK (REGISTERED PARK AND GARDEN)

4.11 Caversham Park was designated as a Grade II RPG in September 1987. The entry received a minor enhancement in 2016.

4.12 We have had regard to the relevant criteria for landscape designation provided by the Historic England selection guide on 'Rural Landscapes' (2017).[51]

4.13 When first registered entries did not include a section explicitly defining the '*Reasons for Designation*' (which was introduced c.2010). However, the entry does have an introductory header which identifies where the greatest interest lies:

> *"A country house with the remains of an early C18 formal garden by Stephen Switzer flanking mid C19 formal terraces, surrounded by the remains of a landscape park laid out in the 1760s by Lancelot Brown.!*

4.14 Several of the structures within the park are individually listed, as noted above. As the example of the Doric Temple shows, these listings do not necessarily give an accurate guide to date or significance.

4.15 The designed landscape at Caversham and its individual structures and features can be assigned varying levels of significances.

4.16 In the summary below, we identify the aspects that are assessed to be those with the greatest heritage significance (the 'primary significance') as those features which are considered to have lower significance, but still some in the context of the site as a whole.

- Primary significance:
  - As a designed landscape by Stephen Switzer of c.1718, substantial elements of which (terraces, canal, general setting and views) survive.
- Secondary significance:
  - As a Brown landscape of 1764, poorly documented and with perhaps not much left (veteran trees) but the space and views – the spatial context are there. As are the terraces and the canal which he deliberately left alone, and the Temple which may well be part of his work, or contemporary with it.
  - The mid-18th-century temple which is very fine.
  - The 18th-century urn-eyecatcher at the west end of the canal.
  - As a multi-period designed landscape, with origins in the 13th century deer park and elements of many phases still to be seen, and with the house at its centre.
- Other, lower aspects of significance:
  - Switzer's design incorporated the earlier formal garden laid out by William Winde in the 1630s, alongside the house's rebuilding. Whether any elements of Winde's landscaping survive is currently unclear.
  - The kitchen garden walls, in part 18th-century
  - The 'deep ditch' and inner park wall, together defining the pleasure grounds and probably of c.1844.
  - The Victorian Garden elements, using the terraces (steps etc), and the wooden summerhouse
  - The north entrance, with gate piers etc and lodge, all of c.1850
  - The meadow beyond to the south of the grounds, the remaining part of the south park. Important as green space, and for expansive views to Reading and allegedly Windsor.
  - The north park, which while now largely featureless has been part of the park since the mid-18th century (and possibly long before) and is an important part of the setting of the house and its green space.
  - Arguably for the park's use by the BBC for wireless monitoring during the Second World War and Cold War surveillance activity.

FEATURES OF INTEREST

NORTH-WEST ENTRANCE

4.17 The gate piers, main and side gates, and reverse quadrant railings are listed Grade II (their significance is described below). The piers are of c.1850, and the list entry speculates, reasonably, that the ensemble is by J. T. Crews, who designed the rebuilt house at the same date. The lodge may well be contemporary; it does not appear on the 1844 Tithe Map.

THE NORTH PARK

4.18 The north park was made into a sports field after Caversham became a school in 1922. Today its central portion remains entirely open. A wide belt of trees fringes its north edge, with further, less dense settings of trees to the east and west.

THE PAVILION

4.19 Standing on the west side of the former sports field and looking across it, this was presumably erected soon after the school's arrival in 1922. A charming and solid structure, not listable but useful and an integral part of the RPG's history.

Figure 4.1 The north-west entrance lodge.

51 https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/drpgsg-rural-landscapes/

Figure 4.2 The north park from the second floor of the house. The pavilion if off to the left.

Figure 4.3 The Pavilion, looking out on to the former sports ground.

THE TERRACES

4.20 The terraces to the south of the house remain largely intact. Running along the front of the house is the uppermost, narrow, and largely occupied by a gravel walk, to the west terminated by the Doric temple (below). Next come two broad terraces, now lawn. To the west, adjoining the kitchen garden, is a fourth, lowest, terrace. While terracing may have originated in the 1660s under William Winde, they are principally part of Switzer's great garden of c.1718.

4.21 Any modification in the mid-19th century (or at any other time) is likely to have been limited. To both east and west the ends of the terraces lie in woodland, and an earthwork survey would be needed to gain a full picture of their extent and survival.

Figure 4.4 Satellite image 2021 clearly showing the wooded terraces extending east and west of the central lawn. Source: Google Earth.

Figure 4.5 View west along top terrace, carrying on the gravel walk, to the Doric temple.

TEMPLE AT WEST END OF UPPERMOST TERRACE

4.22 The Grade II listed temple, dated to the later 19th century in the list entry, is instead probably that seen by Thomas Jefferson in 1786, and dated by Pevsner to the mid-18th century[52]. Its significance is described below.

4.23 Professor Timothy Mowl suggests a date c.1770, and it may well be the building marked on Rocque's map of 1761. Of Portland stone to the front and Bath stone behind, it is substantial and very impressive (and was well restored by the BBC in 1982, as a plaque on its rear wall records). It has a pediment, and four Doric columns enriched by raised bands of rustication in a criss-cross pattern. In the metopes (the band across the front above the columns) is a series of military trophies and other devices.

THE CANAL

4.24 Switzer's c.1718 west canal survives, with alterations probably being limited to the rounding of its ends. His contract (seen via secondary sources cited above) gives the length.

Figure 4.8 Detail of rustication on columns.

Figure 4.6 View east along lowest terrace past kitchen garden (to right). Ramping to left and right can be seen.

Figure 4.7 The Doric Temple.

Figure 4.9 View east along canal.

52 G. Tyack et al, Buildings of England Berkshire (2010), 483.

THE URN

4.25 At the outer end of each long canal Switzer's plan shows what was perhaps a pavilion. These do not survive. What now stands at the west end of the remaining canal is a substantial urn on a pedestal, some 3m high overall, serving as an eyecatcher in the views along the canal. This is based on a design by William Kent (d.1748), the architect and garden designer, which is illustrated in John Vardy's Some Designs of Mr Inigo Jones and Mr Wm Kent (1744).' Various examples of urns to this design are known, of differing sizes and probably produced in more than one workshop. Dated examples seem to have been commissioned in the years around 1750. It would therefore seem likely that the urn was introduced to the garden his older brother had commissioned by Charles, 2nd Baron Cadogan (1684/5 – 24 September 1776).

Figure 4.10 The urn.

THE TERRACED LAWN

4.26 Probably as part of the works of c.1850 when the house was rebuilt, the broad second and third southern terraces were refashioned as a formal lawns, with access between them via paths descending via three flights steps, all of which survive. In the centre of the second terrace, on the line of the central path there was a circular bed, which survives. The OS mapping of 1877 (**Figures 7–8**) shows the third terrace to originally have had a quincunx (i.e. like the five on dice) to either side, perhaps formal plantings of golden or Irish yew. The quincunxes were not mapped in 1900; while this is not definitive evidence they had been removed by that date, it seems likely.

SUMMERHOUSE

4.27 In the south-east corner of the grounds is a wooden summerhouse, probably mid-19th century,[53] in a setting of mature yews. This is orientated to provide a view across the park, but that is now obscured by trees.

THE MEADOW SOUTH OF THE GROUNDS

4.28 South of the grounds around the house is a meadow, the remaining portion of the south park. A good part of the southern portion of this was lost to development in the 20th century (compare the maps for 1900 and 1938 above.

Figure 4.11 Looking north-east to the house across the third of the terraces.

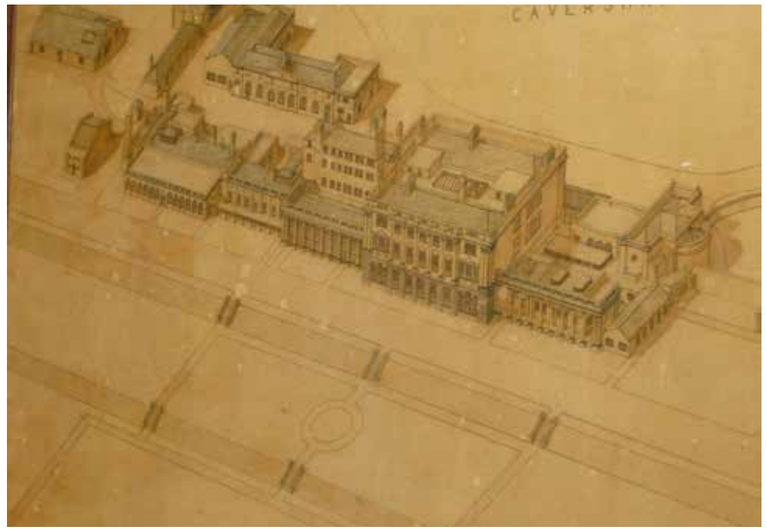


Figure 4.12 The arrangement of paths and steps, as shown on a view in the house. It is undated, but perhaps from around the time the BBC arrived, just before the Second World War.

53 G. Tyack et al, Buildings of England Berkshire (2010), 483.

Figure 4.13 The summerhouse

Figure 4.14 View south towards Reading from towards the edge of the grounds south-east of the house. What is here termed the meadow is the paler grass.

THE 'DEEP DITCH'

4.29 A substantial dry ditch – not a ha-ha – up to 5m deep, encircles the pleasure grounds, being at its most substantial around the eastern part of the grounds, but also appearing to the west, where its line is followed by what the list entry calls the Grade II-listed 'inner park wall'. Its significance is described below.

4.30 Mapping suggests it was probably present by 1844, and as it does not seem to be present in 1809 albeit with due caveats about the map's scale) it seems most likely it was fairly new in 1844 and was part of the improvements by the ironmaster William Crawshay who purchased the freehold in that year having previously leased it. Its scale and function are puzzling. Might it have been a sunk fence (i.e. it had a wooden fence along its base) to keep animals out of the pleasure ground?

THE INNER PARK WALL

4.31 The '*inner park wall*' loops around and defines the west side of the grounds, backing properties along Peppard Road. It is Grade II listed and its significance is described below.

4.32 The list entry mapping does not make clear its full extent, although on the ground the wall runs south to link with the north-west corner of the walled kitchen garden. The wall's line, and presumably the wall, looks to have been present by 1844, and so like the 'deep ditch' may have been part of ironmaster William Crawshay's improvements at about that time.

THE WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN

4.33 The walled garden, off the south-west corner of the pleasure grounds, was built over in the second half of the 20th century. It is not in the client's ownership. However, the garden's north and east walls, of 18th (to the east) and 19th century date, run along the property boundary line.

Figure 4.15 The 'deep ditch' south-east of the house, view south.

Figure 4.16 The inner face of the inner park wall, here topped with railings, north of the kitchen garden.

Figure 4.17 The east kitchen garden wall, mostly of 18th-century date but the top ten courses or so of 19th-century date. It is in fairly good repair.

Figure 4.18 The north kitchen garden wall, looking east. Probably of 19th-century date, and in fairly good repair.

STATUE: 'RAPE OF PROSPERINE'

4.34 A 'mutilated version' (presumably damaged, rather than debased) of this is noted: Pevsner speculates it may have been a survival from Switzer's gardens for Lord Cadogan[54]. This was not seen in 2022.

SCHOOLBOY GRAVES

4.35 The graves of three boys who died at the school, in 1925, 1927 and 1940 lie to the north-east side of the house. The Oratory School helps maintain these.

THE SATELLITE DISHES

4.36 These date to post-1960s. There is an array of small-medium dishes, and one larger one to the east.

CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING TO SIGNIFICANCE

4.37 The setting of the RPG is now characterised by suburban residential development, developed on land which was formerly part of the estate. This has reduced the size of the estate and makes no particular contribution to its significance. The surrounding residential development is visible from within the RPG and one is aware of the wider context.

4.38 The topography provides panoramic and distant views across to Reading town centre to the south. This vantage point on the high ground was recognised in the landscape design, and the views to the valley contribute positively to the significance of the RPG.

Figure 4.19 Satellite dishes south-east of house.

54 G. Tyack et al, Buildings of England Berkshire (2010), 483.

OTHER LISTED BUILDINGS IN THE RPG

TEMPLE TO WEST OF CAVERSHAM PARK

4.39 The Temple was Grade II listed in December 1978. It is described earlier in this section. Its significance is derived from its historic and architectural interest as a Georgian landscape folly which was part of a designed landscape for a grand estate. We believe it to be a feature of Switzer's designs, however this nor the architect is known. It survives well and has an impressive quality, having been restored in 2002.

4.40 The setting of the Temple remains predominantly landscape, and the approach along the grassed avenue. The views back to and across the south elevation of the house are important, and the distant axial view to the east end. Even though much of the contemporary landscape design has been eroded, this does not decontextualise the feature, and the setting makes a positive contribution to significance.

4.41 They have group value with the other listed buildings and form part of the historic fabric making up the RPG.

ENTRANCE GATES AND GATE PIERS TO CAVERSHAM PARK

4.42 The entrance gates and gate piers to Caversham Park were Grade II listed in December 1978. They are described earlier in this section. Their significance is derived from their historic and architectural interest as Victorian structures that have group value with the main house (i.e. the 1850 rebuild). It is likely that J. T. Crews was the architect, and if so, this adds to the historic interest and associations.

4.43 The setting of the listed building is defined by the road and public to private transition at Peppard Road. The lodges within the gates contribute positively to their significance as an ensemble of buildings at the entry point to a grand estate. The wider setting, including the 20th century development on Peppard Road, makes a neutral contribution to significance.

INNER PARK WALLS AT CAVERSHAM PARK

4.44 The inner park walls were Grade II listed in December 1978. They are described earlier in this section. They are believed to date to Crawshay's improvements to the estate in the mid-19th century and their significance is derived from their historic interest as features of the Victorian development of the landscape. They have group value with the other listed buildings and form part of the historic fabric making up the RPG.

4.45 The setting of the inner park walls has been changed by modern development. They are understood as a remnant feature of an earlier domestic landscape. The wider RPG makes a positive contribution to setting for this reason, however the immediate context is judged to make a more limited contribution.

WALLS AT FORMER KITCHEN GARDEN AT CAVERSHAM PARK

4.46 The walls at the former kitchen garden were Grade II listed in December 1978. They are described earlier in this section. Similarly to the inner park walls, the kitchen garden walls are understood to date to the 18th and 19th century, and their significance is derived from their historic interest as features of the earlier landscape designs. They have group value with the other listed buildings and form part of the historic fabric making up the RPG.

4.47 The setting of the kitchen garden walls has been changed by modern development, and there are no longer kitchen gardens. They are understood as a remnant feature of an earlier domestic landscape. The wider RPG makes a positive contribution to setting for this reason, however the immediate context is judged to make a more limited contribution.

CURTILAGE LISTED BUILDINGS IN THE RPG

NOS. 1 AND 3 CAVERSHAM PARK DRIVE

4.48 The previous Heritage Statement and ES identified Nos. 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive as curtilage listed buildings. For completeness, this report does the same.

4.49 Nos. 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive are the buildings located at the entrance to the RPG on Peppard Road. The date of construction and architect are not known, however they may be contemporary with the listed gate piers (and 1850 main house).

4.50 They comprise a single storey building nearest the gates and a two-storey semi-detached property to the east. They have a domestic appearance and they have rendered façades.

4.51 Their significance is derived from the historic association with the main house and entrance gates. They have group value and form part of the ensemble of a country house in a large estate.

4.52 Their setting is the boundary and entrance to the estate on Peppard Road. The gates contribute positively to understanding their location and previous use. The landscape beyond preserves the original setting and is likewise a positive feature. The wider setting, including the 20th century development on Peppard Road, makes a neutral contribution to significance.

5.0
ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS ON THE MAIN HOUSE

CAVERSHAM PARK

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS ON THE MAIN HOUSE

5.1 This section assesses the effect of the proposals on the main house. The main considerations are:

5.2 Whether the proposals would preserve the special interest of the listed building; and

5.3 Whether the proposals would preserve the contribution that setting makes to the special interest of the listed building.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

5.4 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.

5.5 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."*

5.6 In doing so, the proposals will secure a long-term viable use for the listed building which is consistent with its conservation. This is a heritage benefit because residential use is complementary to the listed building, which was originally domestic rather than institutional. It is noted that the subdivision of the building to create multiple units is accepted by officers, and so the proposed use is considered to be consistent with its conservation.

5.7 There would also be new and replacement development in the setting of the listed building. In this section, we consider the impact of the new development in terms of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the listed building[55] only. The effect of the new development on the significance of the attendant RPG is assessed separately.

5.8 A holistic judgement on the heritage impact (listed building and RPG) is brought together as part of the conclusions.

INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

5.9 The internal alterations can be broadly summarised as demolition and new partitions to provide the new residential use. The layouts have been carefully designed to work within the historic plan form and opportunities have been taken to reinstate original or important historic features.

5.10 It is noted that no original plans of the upper floors are known to exist and the analysis in these areas is based on site observations and later plans. They are less sensitive relative to the ground floor as a result of extensive rebuilding after a fire in 1926 and subdivision for the BBC.

5.11 The occupation by the school and the BBC in the 20th and 21st centuries has removed a considerable amount of the earlier decorative fabric which is captured by historic photographs. The internal decoration has a pared down and institutional character which is considered to make no particular contribution to the significance of the listed building. Original decorative features are retained where they survive, and will be reinstated where practically possible.

5.12 To assist the assessment, we divide the building into three parts which may be summarised as follows:

- The historic core;
- The east wing and chapel; and
- The modern west wing.

GROUND FLOOR

HISTORIC CORE

5.13 The proposals seek to use the ground floor in the historic core as communal space, seven residential units and stores/office.

5.14 The existing and original entrance halls will remain in this use. The modern dropped ceiling will be removed in the Outer Hall to reveal and reinstate the original domed ceiling. This is a heritage benefit because it would restore the original volume of the space.

5.15 The historic photograph of the Outer Hall is at **Figure 5.1**. Investigations have shown that the moulded ceiling does not survive – see **Figure 5.2** – and this level of detailing will not be reintroduced as a pastiche. A simple domed ceiling to reinstate the volume is considered more appropriate to express the fact it is modern fabric.

Figure 5.1 Historic photograph of the Outer Hall.

55 In accordance with statutory duties, the NPPF and guidance (GPA3).

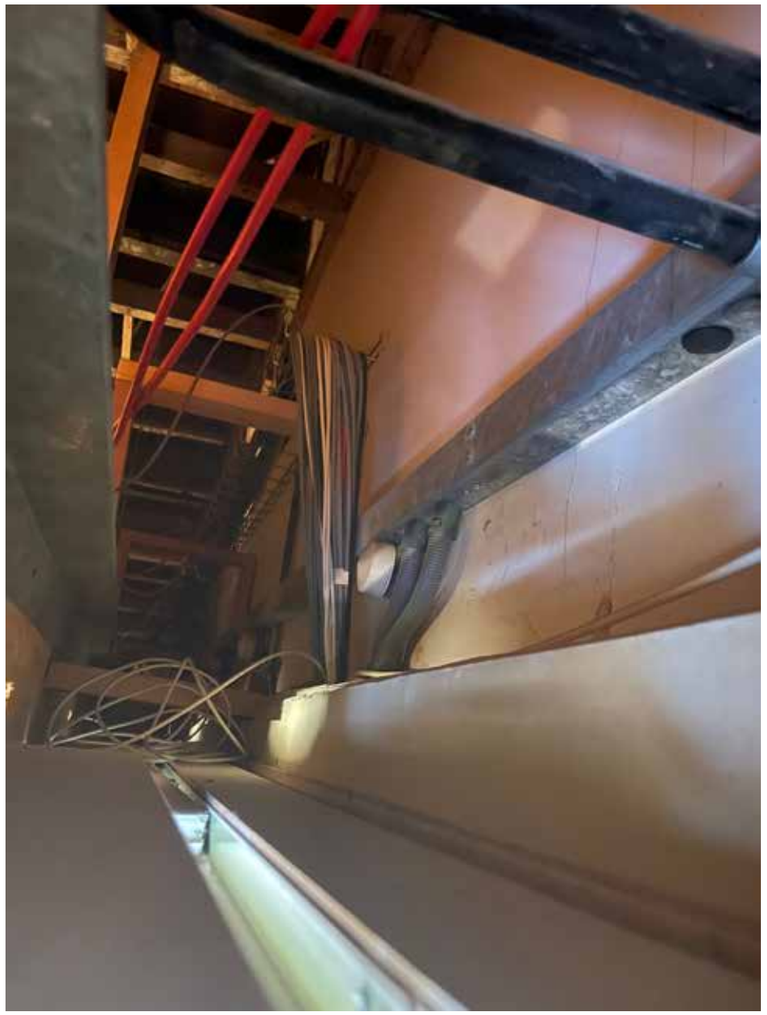


Figure 5.2 Photograph above the suspended ceiling in the Outer Hall, showing that the decorative ceiling does not survive.

5.16 The Hall and former Library will be communal areas which would conserve the character of their original uses and retain their plan form and historic features, i.e. columns and panelling. The demolition plans show where existing doors would be fixed shut to preserve the legibility of the earlier circulation.

5.17 The proposals are a demonstrable improvement on the originally submitted scheme which introduced a mezzanine pod to the Library to create a residential unit.

5.18 It is also an improvement because the proposals would conserve the Halls and former Library as a sequence of principal rooms in the listed building, and leading out to the gardens.

5.19 The proposals will include the addition of a glazed fire lobby adjacent to the main staircase. This addition is justified by the need to provide adequate fire protection for the development. The impact of this element has been minimised through the design by creating a compartment that is suitably scaled and glazed. The aesthetic will purposefully contrast with the solidity and ornamental details found elsewhere in the hall. We identify less than substantial harm as a result of the addition which is due to the addition of a new modern structure inserted into the hall. That harm is justified and would be less than substantial and limited.

5.20 Residential units would be created in the former Dining Room and Drawing Room to the west and east of the Library respectively. These are also principal rooms, however the original character has been eroded by the loss of the original decoration and features.

5.21 In particular, in the former Dining Room (Plot 23), the proposals will reinstate the bay window which has been blocked up. This will reveal the decorative ceiling in the bay which is known to survive (**Figure 5.3**).

Figure 5.3 Historic photograph of the former Dining Room.

5.22 The restored bay will include doors in the centre to lead into the bedroom, provided in the former Gallery space to the west. This arrangement avoids the need for a mezzanine pod that was proposed in the original submission. This is an improvement because the mezzanine pod would have disrupted the room volume and clashed with the pedimented architrave above the door to the Hall.

5.23 Plot 23 will make efficient use of the former serving space on the north side as utility room and bathroom.

5.24 A mezzanine pod is proposed in the former Drawing Room (Plot 21). The size and location of the pod has been refined to reduce the impact on the room, and a section is provided as part of the drawing set.

5.25 There would be some harm from the mezzanine pod, however this is derived only from the change to the spatial volume, which is considered to result in a medium level of less than substantial harm. We reach this finding on the basis that the original decorative scheme has been lost and the majority of the space, including the large windows on the south elevation and views across the gardens, is preserved. The pod would be legible as a modern feature, reversible and the impact has been mitigated by design.

5.26 The pod has been designed to sit comfortably with existing features in the room: the line of the proposed snug area (an existing inset) and doorway from the Hall. In doing so, it does not intrude into the space.

5.27 In terms of the decorative scheme, it is proposed to remove the beaded panels in the room. The historic photographs do show panelling of a similar type, however inspecting the moulding profile and inspection indicates that the fabric is a modern pastiche. In addition, the ornate ceiling has been lost, which demonstrates there has been considerable change to the character of the space. Therefore, no harm is identified from the removal of the beaded panels.

5.28 The rooms on the north side of the historic core are less sensitive than the principal rooms described above. They have already been subject to subdivision, particularly the former Morning Room which has no legibility in its current form, and the proposals seek to remove some of the later partitions.

5.29 Mezzanine pods are proposed in the kitchen of Plots 13 and 14. They are set on internal walls and would not cut across the windows. There would be a change to volume, but this is not considered to harm the special interest of the listed building in these spaces, considering their ancillary use and existing character.

5.30 The former Gallery to the west, with the colonnaded south elevation, has lost its original character and has a suspended ceiling. It retains original internal columns.

5.31 This space will be subdivided to create two units, a cinema room and bedroom for Plot 23 (see above).

5.32 In the original scheme the former Gallery was used as communal space, and the Library was a residential unit. These uses have been switched so that the principal historic space can be subject to less intervention and given a more complementary use. This was identified as an opportunity for improvement when Montagu Evans were asked to review the proposals, and we note that the Council's conservation officer made the same suggestion in their consultation response.

5.33 The internal columns will be incorporated in spine walls that create the units. Only one column will require removal. There would be very limited harm from the loss of historic fabric. The subdivision would cause a degree of harm, but that is considered to be a low level of less than substantial harm because of the extent of alteration in this space.

5.34 To the west of the Gallery is the former Billiard Room, Smoking Room and Gun Room. The Billiard Room retains a decorative interior scheme and inglenook. The Gun Room and Smoking Room have been created into single space and have no architectural features.

5.35 The proposals seek to create a single unit in these spaces (Plot 25). The former Billiard Room would remain open and the former Gun Room/ Smoking Room would be subdivided. The extent of alteration and lack of original features means that we identify no harm arising from the subdivision of the Gun Room/Smoking Room.

5.36 The decorative features in the Billiard Room would be preserved, however it is likely that part of the east internal wall would be enclosed to create a kitchen, in order to preserve the detailing behind. The details of this element could be secured by condition.

EAST WING AND CHAPEL

5.37 The east wing and chapel have been subject to change over time. The existing internal fabric reflects changes made by the BBC in the 20th century, including kitchens. The fabric and layout of this part of the building is not considered to contribute to its special interest as a Victorian country house at the heart of a historic estate.

5.38 The chapel, however, was built in the 1920s by the Oratory School. This is considered to be significant, for the architectural interest of the design detailing and use – which is complementary to the domestic, and later school, function of the listed building. The chapel has been heavily subdivided which limits the appreciation of the original space.

5.39 The proposals seek to remove all of the later partitions in the chapel and east wing. This would enable six residential units to be created.

5.40 In the chapel, new partitions are proposed to create two residential units. They have been designed to be more sympathetic to its historic character. In particular:

- The residential unit in Plot 17 would reinstate the double height of the space and reveal the decorative ceiling (see photo at **Figures 5.4 and 5.5**) which would be retained and refurbished. This is a demonstrable benefit; and
- Windows would be unobstructed by partitions and reinstated.

Figure 5.4 The decorative ceiling above the suspended ceiling in the chapel, photo 1.

Figure 5.5 The decorative ceiling above the suspended ceiling in the chapel, photo 2.

5.41 To the south, the fabric comprising the east wing is modern, except the columns in the colonnade which faces the gardens. The proposals would retain the columns and rework the building behind. This is not considered to affect the special interest of the listed building.

MODERN WEST WING

5.42 The modern west wing will be almost entirely demolished and replaced. The north range to the driveway and the colonnaded elevation to the south will be retained.

5.43 The part of the building that will be demolished dates to the late 20th century and does not have historical or architectural interest. The demolition is not, therefore, considered to cause harm to the listed building.

5.44 The north range contains remnant parts of the original fabric of the stables. This will be preserved. Similarly, the colonnaded elevation to the south maintains the character of the earlier conservatory and this will be preserved.

5.45 North of the Gallery, the former kitchen areas would be subject to limited demolition and entirely of modern fabric. There would be subdivision to create a residential unit (Plot 12). The proposed partitions do not cut across any windows and are not considered harmful to this former ancillary space, the appreciation of the original character of which has been lost.

FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR

HISTORIC CORE

5.46 The proposals at first floor in the historic core involve demolition of modern partitions. This would not harm the special interest of the listed building.

5.47 It is proposed to remove the secondary stair on the north side of the building from first floor and above. This is proposed in order to create an efficient layout for the units proposed at this level. We understand that options were tested to avoid removing the stair, but there are none which would properly optimise the layout.

5.48 The stair has architectural interest as it is part of the original plan form and shows the hierarchy of circulation with the main stair. It is unclear if the stair is the original fabric, however. It does not look mid-19th century on inspection, does not match other secondary stairs in the building and it continues in the same materials at each floor. This is important, because we know that the 1926 fire destroyed the first and second floors which were rebuilt. We assume, therefore, that the fire is later fabric.

5.49 Nevertheless, there would be harm from removing the stair. The stair would, however, be retained at ground floor which would maintain the legibility of its location. Given the likely later age and legibility, it would be a medium level of less than substantial harm because derived from the impact on plan form.

5.50 The proposals would introduce new partitions to create residential units. In many cases where partitions are proposed they would replace existing partitions. The subdivision would cause a degree of less than substantial harm.

5.51 The harm is considered to be a low level of less than substantial because the first floor is the result of rebuilding after the fire in 1926, and the fabric and plan form is less sensitive than the ground floor.

5.52 The main walls which define the earlier layout will be preserved and plan form legible. The partitions will, however, change original room volumes.

5.53 The same assessment applies to the historic core at second floor.

MODERN WEST AND EAST WING

5.54 As above, the proposals at the first floor of the modern west wing and east wing are not considered to harm the special interest of the listed building. These parts of the building do not have a second or third floor.

EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS

5.55 The external changes to the historic core of the listed building are limited. The proposals would repair and refurbish the façades where needed which would benefit its special interest by improving its appearance.

5.56 On the north elevation, the door in the middle bay to the right of the entrance would be converted to a window. This would reinstate the original appearance of the elevation: the existing door was created in the 20th century. The design of the proposed window would match the other examples in the elevation: white-painted timber sashes with glazing bars.

5.57 Similarly, the door in the link between the main house and the chapel extension would be replaced with a window: white-painted timber with glazing bars and an arched top to fit in the extant reveal. Other blocked window openings in the chapel would be re-glazed.

5.58 The historic fabric in the north range of the modern west wing will be preserved and the character of this part of the listed building will be improved. The proposals would introduce a more contextual historic architecture to this part of the listed building, as demonstrated by the existing and proposed elevations at **Figures 5.6 and 5.7**.

Figure 5.6 Existing north elevation of the west wing.

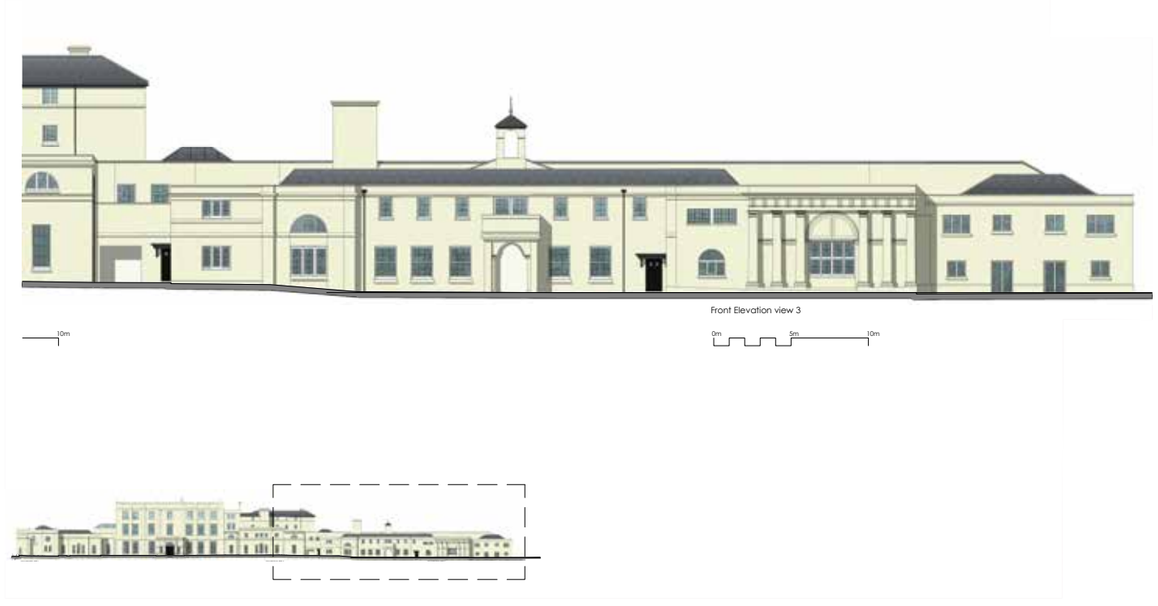


Figure 5.7 Proposed north elevation of the west wing.

OTHER BENEFITS

5.59 The proposals would remove modern fixtures and fittings throughout including suspended ceilings and services. This is a benefit to restore original room volumes and reinstate a domestic character to the building.

5.60 The proposals would also enable better interpretation of the history and interest of the building, which is likewise a benefit. It would improve public appreciation and awareness, particularly of the important work by the BBC. This could include the naming conventions that are used within and around the building.

NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE SETTING

5.61 The proposals involve changes to the setting of the listed building, which is defined by the RPG. The effect on the significance of the RPG is assessed at **Section 6.0**. Here we consider the effect on the significance of the main house as a result of the change to setting.

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE MAIN DRIVE

5.62 There would be an improvement to experience of the listed building as a result of the works to the main drive from Peppard Road, which would reduce the hardstanding and make parking areas more discrete and screened by landscaping. A domestic character to the drive would be reintroduced and views from the house and across the landscape to the north would be enhanced.

CARE HOME

5.63 The buildings on the site of the proposed care home are utilitarian modern structures within a large area of hardstanding. This detracts from the setting and original character of the listed building. The proposed care home would transform this part of the Site with a low-rise building that has a domestic use and architectural appearance. It would be set back from the drive and the avenue from the Temple which would mean that it remains subservient to the main house.

5.64 In particular, the roof profile has been designed to ensure that it is a simple and unintrusive building seen in the views of the house from the west. We have had regard to a non-verified view from the Temple produced by the architects and contained in the DAS which demonstrate the way the care home would be seen in the context of the house in this key view from the Temple.

WEST PARCEL

5.65 The West Parcel is not within the RPG designation and the land therefore makes a more limited contribution to the setting of the house. That said, it does form part of the boundary of the historic estate and lies near to the drive. The proposals for the West Parcel would not be seen together with the house, and views towards the West Parcel would include interposing landscaping and the care home.

5.66 The West Parcel is associated with the residential development on Peppard Road and the archives buildings and school immediately to the south, and this part of the proposals are considered to have a neutral impact on the significance of the listed building because of the existing context and limited intervisibility.

EAST PARCEL

5.67 The historic landscape structure has been eroded, including the area proposed for the development of the East Parcel. The area to the east of the house contains satellite dishes. The dishes will be removed, with one preserved to help represent the BBC history on the Site, and new residential buildings will be developed.

5.68 There would be a degree of harm to the listed building because of this change to its setting: this part of the Site is still appreciated as green landscape area in views from the house and when moving around the Site.

5.69 Montagu Evans have been working with the Applicant and the architects to mitigate the harm and reduce it as far as possible through design. This has been achieved by delivering the residential use in buildings which evoke the vernacular of estate buildings. The East Parcel would be enclosed and screened by trees and landscaping and have minimal hardstanding, which would likewise lessen the impact.

5.70 To the north of the drive in the East Parcel, further development is proposed. This is a less sensitive part of the landscape, however design has again mitigated the impact by having flat roofs which are green roofs, to help the development blend into the landscape as far as possible in the setting of the house.

LANDSCAPING AND TRAILS

5.71 The proposed landscaping and the public trails within the landscape would enhance the significance of the listed building by improving the quality of the landscape and public appreciation of the link between the house and the grounds. The Site has not been publicly accessible before, and this is a benefit of the scheme.

VIEWS

5.72 We have had regard to development plan Policy EN5 which identifies the view of the house from the railway line to the south as an important heritage view. The south elevation of the listed building is the main feature in this view, and the colour of the façade makes the building stand out.

5.73 We have also had regard to the Landscape & Visual Appraisal prepared by Savills that identifies other longer-distant views of the listed building.

5.74 Our analysis and the Landscape & Visual Appraisal work demonstrate that the proposals would cause no change to the appearance of the listed building in these views, and its significance is preserved.

SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

5.75 The table set out at the end of this section identifies the harm and benefit to the significance of the listed building which arises from the proposals based on our professional judgement.

5.76 Overall, the revised proposals would preserve the significance of the listed building through a sensitive refurbishment for a use which is consistent with the original domestic character of the property.

5.77 The most significant part of the building, the ground floor in the main house, would be conserved and enhanced by the reversal of later alterations and reinstatement of original features.

5.78 In particular, the sequence which will be created from the Entrance Hall, Outer Hall, Main Hall, Library and out to the south terrace is an important benefit, because it will restore the status, function and interconnectivity of these spaces.

5.79 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.

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

5.81 The redevelopment of the later 20th century east and west wings of the listed building would have a neutral impact on its significance: they have no intrinsic architectural interest and the historical interest would be preserved through interpretation and the incorporation of the building's 20th century history in naming conventions, for example.

5.82 We identify no harm from the changes to the later 20th century extensions. However, in the event that the Council were to disagree, a scheme of Historic Building Recording could be undertaken to create a formal record of the listed building and its occupation by the BBC. The Historic Building Record would be stored in the local Historic Environment Record and/or archive. If necessary, this could be secured by condition.

5.83 At **Table 5.1** we provide further detail on the proposals and clearly itemise the heritage benefit and harm which would arise. It is on this basis that we reach a judgement on the internal heritage balance and acceptability of the proposals.

CONCLUSIONS

5.84 It is our conclusion that there would be a demonstrable net benefit to the listed building and paragraph 202 of the NPPF is not engaged.

5.85 If the Council were to conclude differently, then the harm to the listed building is considered to be outweighed by the heritage benefits alone, before taking into account any wider public benefits, in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF.

5.86 The *Mordue*[56] judgement confirmed that if the policies of the NPPF are met then the decision-maker would be able to discharge the statutory duties set out in the 1990 Act.

5.87 Therefore, and irrespective of the approach to harm, the proposals would preserve the special interest of the listed building (indeed, in our judgement it would be enhanced) and the Council could determine the application favourably with no conflict to the legislation or policy which is relevant to listed buildings:

- Section 16(1) and Section 66(1) of the 1990 Act;
- Chapter 16 of the NPPF;
- Reading Borough Local Plan:
  - Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment);
  - Policy EN5 (Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest);
  - Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context); and
  - Policy CA2 (Caversham Park).

56 Jones v Mordue [2015] EWCA Civ 1243; [2016] 1 WLR 2682

Table 5.1 Analysis of heritage benefits and heritage harm in relation to Caversham Park (listed building)

BENEFIT		HARM	
PROPOSAL	**LEVEL OF BENEFIT**	**PROPOSAL**	**LEVEL OF HARM**
The proposals will secure a long-term viable use for the listed building which is consistent with its conservation.	High – Residential use is complementary to the listed building, which was originally domestic rather than institutional. It is noted that the subdivision of the building to create multiple units is accepted by officers, and so the proposed use is considered to be consistent with its conservation.	The mezzanine in the original Drawing Room (proposed Plot 21).	Medium, less than substantial – the design of the mezzanine has been adjusted as far as possible to respect the proportions and features of the space. The experience of the mezzanine pod would be limited to the north end of the room, and the volume of the former Drawing Room would be preserved in the open space to the south, including views out across the south lawn. The mezzanine would not be a noticeable feature in the windows into the room from the south. The original character of this room has been reduced as a result of the loss of the decorative plasterwork.
Interpretation to enhance public appreciation of the historical and architectural interest of the building. This could include the naming conventions that are used within and around the building.	Low – the site has been in private use for decades and there has been no public access or appreciation. The access to the site would enhance the appreciation of the building alongside better understanding of its history and importance through the interpretation proposed.	The removal of the Back Stairs from first floor and above.	Medium, less than substantial – these are secondary stairs in the original location, therefore there would be harm. This is judged to be Medium because the fabric is considered to be later, most likely having been installed after the fire in 1926. This is because of the impact of the fire at the upper floors and design of the stair, which doesn't match other examples of secondary stairs in the building, or what you would expect from a building of the 1850s. The stairs would remain legible as the ground floor flight would remain and the walls containing the stairwell. The stairs are being removed in order to create residential layouts at the upper floors, which avoids the need for more harmful subdivision or alterations.
Remove modern fixtures and fittings throughout including suspended ceilings and services.	Medium – this would remove unsympathetic and unsightly features from historic rooms and reveal original room volumes.	The subdivision of the original Gallery/Conservatory space (bedroom/en suite for proposed Plot 23, proposed Cinema Room and Plots 22 and 24).	Medium, less than substantial – there would be a change to the appreciation of the volume and character of this space, which is maintained by the narrow spaces and columns. The original decoration and use on historic plans and photos has been lost, and the sensitivity of the space is reduced as a result. The harm is therefore considered Medium. The proposals have been designed to ensure that the columns are retained as part of internal walls.
Reinstate the original volume of the original Outer Hall. This would potentially reveal the original plasterwork decoration above.	High – reinstating an original feature.	The mezzanines in the original Morning Room and Housekeeper room (proposed Plot 14 and 13 respectively).	Low, less than substantial – these rooms have been subject to later subdivision and their original character/any original decoration has already been removed. The proposals will reinstate part of the original volumes, so the harm is considered low.
Reinstatement and faithful restoration of the bay window in the original Dining Room (proposed Plot 23).	High – reinstating an original feature.	Subdivision of rooms at first floor to create proposed Plots 41–45 and 49–51.	Low, less than substantial – the first floor is the result of rebuilding after the fire in 1926. The fabric and plan form is less sensitive than the ground floor. The main walls which define the earlier layout will be preserved and plan form legible. The partitions will, however, change original room volumes. Therefore, there is a low level of harm.
Remove modern partitions throughout the listed building, in particular the original Morning Room (proposed Plot 14).	High – reinstating original plan form.	Subdivision of rooms at second floor to create proposed Plots 60–65.	Low, less than substantial – as above for the first floor.

BENEFIT		HARM	
PROPOSAL	**LEVEL OF BENEFIT**	**PROPOSAL**	**LEVEL OF HARM**
The use of the original Library as communal space.	High – reintroducing a use which is consistent and complementary with the original use. Creating greater access through the communal use, and reinstating the sequence of primary rooms from the outer hall to the south lawn.	New development in the East Parcel (setting impact)	Low, less than substantial – the new buildings in land that was part of the historic landscape design east of the house would result in a low level of harm to the setting and significance of the house.
Remove suspended ceilings in the former Chapel to reveal the decorative ceiling and restore double-height in the dining/drawing room in proposed Plot 17.	High – reinstate appreciation of the original volume of the chapel and reveal and repair the original decorative ceiling.	Insertion of a glazed fire lobby within the main hall.	Limited, less than substantial – the glazed fire lobby is required to provide adequate protection. The lobby has been designed to be minimal, transparent in order to minimise the impact on the ability to appreciate the volume of this part of the building.
Repair and refurbish the façades.	Medium – improve the appearance and condition of the listed building.		
Improving the architectural appearance and cohesion of the east and west wing façades through the new build elements.	Low – improve the appearance and interaction between the main part of the listed building alongside later additions.		
Remove plant and later accretions at roof level.	Medium – this would remove unsympathetic and unsightly features from the views from historic rooms.		
Improvement to the driveway from Peppard Road (setting impact)	Low – improving the approach experience to complement the status and character of the original country house. Replacing the urban character with a more domestic/landscape character.		
Removal of buildings on the site of the proposed care home (setting impact)	Medium – improving the views to/from the Temple.		
Landscaping including the circular trail (setting impact)	Medium – improving the quality of the landscape and the context and quality of the area that the house is experienced. The circular trail would enhance access and appreciation as described above.		

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6.0
ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS ON THE RPG
CAVERSHAM PARK

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS ON THE RPG

6.1 This section assesses the impact of the proposals on the significance of the Caversham Park RPG.

OVERALL COMMENTARY

6.2 It is clear from our research that the RPG has heritage significance derived from the palimpsest of significant landscape phases by Stephen Switzer and Capability Brown.

6.3 The survival of the Brownian landscape, in comparison, is much less clear and our research and site visits suggest that very few vestiges of that period survive.

6.4 Further significance is derived from specific features which we have noted in **Section 3.0** of this report – and which relate to particular aspects and have varying degrees of interaction with the proposals submitted as part of the current application.

6.5 The starting point for considering the acceptability of the proposed scheme is the development plan.

6.6 The site-specific Policy CA2 within the Council's Local Plan (2019) identifies the Site for new development, albeit focuses on the conversion of the listed house from office to residential and/or community or heritage use, or other suitable use compatible with its heritage. The figure of 40-45 dwellings is specifically referenced as well as a statement that *"this policy does not allocate the site for additional development over and above conversion of the house"* albeit *"There may be scope for some limited development on previously developed land within the site, which will need to be justified at application stage."*

6.7 The criteria that the development must comply with includes *"no development [that] will negatively affect the significance of heritage assets and their setting"*.

6.8 Our reading of the policy is that additional development beyond the conversion of the house could be acceptable when the development is considered as a whole.

6.9 Moreover, a scheme that does not 'negatively' affect the development would, in our, judgement be one that 'nets out' both benefits and enhancements (i.e. draw upon an internal heritage balance to the RPG) resulting in a residual enhancement to the RPG and other designated heritage assets (i.e. the listed buildings).

6.10 We have had the benefit of reviewing the consultation responses made by the Council's officers and those of Historic England on the original submission.

6.11 To be clear, we consider that the originally submitted proposals did harm the significance of the RPG, and setting of the main house in the following ways:

1. The East Parcel is located in an area that was historically the wilderness, though later re-laid as a Brownian 'butterfly' wing and later again, thinned with historic planting removed for satellite dishes. Development in this area would result in the loss of the remnants of that part of the historic landscape, intrusion on the east-west axis/avenue, while the form and layout would introduce a new, urbanised form of development that would be inconsistent with that usually found in RPGs.
2. The development of the Care Home whose scale, location (building line), and architectural approach challenges the primacy of the principal listed building, while also impacted on the landscape components including the east-west axis.
3. The crescent to the northeast of the house introduced a new urban form that would be inconsistent with that usually found within an RPG of this age and character. We concluded that this impact would attract low to moderate weight.

6.12 Together, we do not consider that the harm alleged to the RPG would be substantial (as otherwise identified by the Council's Planning Officer (dated 11 May 2022) but would be 'less than substantial harm'.

6.13 We form that basis because the submitted scheme would not vitiate or very much drain away the significance of the RPG (the definition set out in the High Court judgement known as *Bedford*). The intrinsic interest of the RPG would remain (e.g. south terrace and other remains of the Switzer landscape, together with the open north park).

6.14 In response to the consultation comments and our detailed analysis, Montagu Evans has worked with the design team to revisit the form of development, layout and design to minimise the potential impact on the RPG. Furthermore, these changes have been presented to and advanced in concert with the Council's officers. To summarise, the following changes have been made:

- The development in the East Parcel has been redesigned to be redolent of the service yards associated with country houses of the period appropriate with Caversham Park. The courtyard arrangement and polite estate vocabulary give the new buildings a historical precedence.
- The courtyard building has been moved northwards away from the principal east/west axis to ensure that the principal views are not affected.
- The formerly proposed crescent to the north-east of the house has been replaced with five blocks designed to be lower in form, built in natural materials with green roofs, and located in an area of the landscape that is less sensitive.
- The car parking has been spread along the drive and broken up to smaller parcels in order to minimise the extent of hardstanding. Crucially, an area in front of the main house will be clear of car parking which gives an uninterrupted vista of the north lawn.
- The new tennis court that was proposed in the north lawn has been removed.
- The proposed care home has been reduced in floor plan, scale and in plan. It has been moved northwards away from the east/west axis south of the house. The plan has been minimised and the height reduced in order to preserve the primacy of the main house and its later extensions.
- The approach road/drive will be minimised in width with footpaths spread through the landscape in order to reduce the urbanising character of the existing road and reinstate an appearance that is more often associated with carriage drives to historic buildings of this sort.

- Finally, the form and layout of the buildings adjacent to Peppard Road (outside of the RPG) has been changed to better reflect the surrounding area and setting of the RPG.

6.15 At a high level, the revised scheme expresses and manifests the hierarchy of the status across the site, with the listed house as the primary building.

6.16 The parcels and developments respond to that status to ensure that the house maintains its primacy while appearing in context to an RPG. This latter point – introducing a sensitive and complementary response to the site – is a principal design approach response.

6.17 Below we consider with each principal element of scheme in turn.

EAST PARCEL

6.18 The parcel is located in the area currently occupied by satellite dishes with open green space and tree planting which has been thinned in recent years.

6.19 This area formerly comprised Switzer's designed landscape and wilderness. Later, Brown's 'butterfly' form was introduced and remains legible (first shown on the 1846 Tithe map).

6.20 The proposed East Parcel has been amended to comprise a courtyard building similar in form to country house estate workshops which would, historically, have been associated with the main house.

6.21 Historically, such buildings were two storeys, potentially long-elevations and simply detailed in the Neo-Classical manner.

6.22 The revised design is redolent of that approach.

6.23 Consideration has also been applied to the road network and lighting. These aspects will introduce an urbanised form and character to this part of the site, albeit in an area where car parking is currently located. To help mitigate the visual impact, mature planting has been considered to reinforce the historic form of the historic landscape features (particularly the northern arch of the butterfly layout) while also helping to maintain the "wilderness" character of this part of the development.

THE MAIN DRIVE NORTH-EAST OF THE HOUSE

6.24 The approach road was newly laid out c.1800 and later became an open carriage drive running through the parkland.

6.25 The character of that drive has changed markedly, particularly in the 20th century, when it has become an urban form, more closely recognised as a road with associated parking (as well as lighting etc.). That change has significantly eroded the historic setting of the house and the character of the landscape in this part of the RPG.

6.26 In views from the upper storeys of the main house there is an openness towards the north park and appreciation of the panorama which includes visibility of the road to the north-east. The historic character in that view has been eroded by the modern approach road and existing car parking.

6.27 The originally submitted proposals comprised 12 houses in a terrace (or crescent) together with a semi-detached unit, and a short terrace of four units in the northeast.

6.28 Our detailed analysis of the landscape identified that the land and planting to the north of the existing car park is less sensitive having been laid out in the 20th century and is located to the east of the main vista from the north front of the house.

6.29 In response, the amended proposals include two storey buildings designed to have green roofs and constructed in natural materials. While not in an "estate" vocabulary, these buildings are nestled into the landscape to be understood as new additions of modest proportions and demonstrably less impactful than the previous crescent which would have been appreciable from the access road approaching the main house, and from the house itself due to its position and increased scale.

CARE HOME WEST OF HOUSE

6.30 The care home to the west of the house is located in previously developed land which is currently very poor in appearance with later, ad-hoc buildings.

6.31 The consultation responses raised concerns relating to the scale of the submitted scheme and the potential to disrupt the hierarchy of the historic house and its associated ancillary buildings.

6.32 In terms of direct impact on the designed landscape (this area was a service yard in the 18th century, and later probably orchard followed by woodland and shrubbery), this part of the proposals is less sensitive, given the extent of 20th-century development across the site.

6.33 However, consultees raised sound points about the impact there would be on the setting of the house, the terraced landscape, and the Doric Temple, currently listed at Grade II.

6.34 In consequence, the care home has been redesigned to have a simple architectural language, with a limited palette of materials and with modest proportions.

6.35 First, the plan form has been reduced to give greater separation from the western extension of the main house while also reducing the overall massing of the building.

6.36 Second, the height has been reduced partially by introducing a flat roof.

6.37 Finally, and notably, the building has been located further north to ensure that it is set back from the main east/west vista south of the house to ensure that the building does not draw attention away from the focussed view to and from the Temple.

6.38 We note also that the intent of the architectural approach will have a plain, contemporary appearance in a limited palette of materials to ensure that the overall language does not compete or draw the eye from the Classical detailing and form of the principal house.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTH LAWN

6.39 The new tennis court that was proposed for the north lawn in the original submission has been removed. This is a beneficial change because it maintains the landscape quality of the views across the north lawn from the house and elsewhere on the Site.

6.40 To the west of the north lawn is a sports pavilion and car parking. This area was lightly planted with trees from the later 19th century to the mid-20th century. During the BBC's tenure, the north side of the drive was planted with additional ornamental trees, and the car parking was introduced to support the sports facilities. This part of the landscape has always been experienced as separate from the north lawn, and it has become less sensitive due to the changes in the second half of the 20th century. It is therefore considered to make a low contribution to the significance of the RPG as a whole.

6.41 The proposals seek to introduce a new building adjacent to the existing pavilion that would be used as an interpretation centre and café. The interpretation centre would provide an opportunity to present and appreciate the history and significance of Caversham Park.

6.42 In the location proposed for the new building, there has been additional planting of ornamental trees in recent decades, and this could be further enhanced as screening for the new building and parking.

6.43 In our judgement, the weight to be afforded to the benefit of the new interpretation centre would be medium because:

- There is currently no meaningful interpretation that allows visitors to understand the history and significance of Caversham Park.
- It provides the opportunity to communicate parts of the history of the Site that are not as well understood by the public, including times of national importance and the more recent history of the BBC at Caversham.
- The interpretation centre has the potential to draw new visitors to the historic landscape, who may not otherwise have considered visiting this property.

6.44 The new building is proposed as a single storey structure with a flat roof. It would have a link to the existing pavilion on the west side. The new building would be lower than the ridge of the pitched roof of the existing pavilion, and this means that would not be visible above the roofline of the existing building in the views from the north lawn. It would be well-screened but trees and planting which would maintain the prevailing landscape character of this part of the Site.

6.45 The design of the new pavilion building has had regard to landscape features, and its orientation would allow the retention of trees.

6.46 The existing car parking associated with the pavilion would be extended to the north towards the tennis court. In our judgement, the change to the character of the land would result in some limited harm to the significance of the RPG as a whole. We arrive at this judgement on the basis that this part of the RPG is altered.

6.47 The new parking area would have soft boundaries to maintain the landscape character of this part of the Site, and we understand that street lighting or column lighting would not be required. There would be low-level lighting but this would not introduce new, standing features into the experience or appearance of the landscape.

WEST PARCEL

6.48 The consultation responses raised concerns with this aspect of the development owing to the density and layout of development. The following changes have been made:

- The layout has now been amended to ensure the houses are aligned to Peppard Road and set back, and so reinforcing the existing character;
- The number of units has been reduced; and
- The storey heights are limited to two storeys and those fronting Peppard Road have a low eaves height.

6.49 From a heritage perspective, the principal consideration is the way that the parcel links to the main drive.

6.50 The landscape masterplan proposals for the new driveway to the West Parcel has been amended so that the route into the site reads more as a traditional drive or approach to a country house, rather than an urban road.

6.51 The junction to the parcel has been softened, and the width reduced by removing the footpaths either side and having a pedestrian route that meanders to the parcel, and in so doing, mitigating the impact of the link road particularly in the dynamic experience of travelling to and from the house from the western entrance.

LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS

6.52 In its letter of 6 May 2022 Historic England has a section titled 'missed opportunities for enhancements'. It includes a statement that a 'comprehensive landscaping scheme' for enhancement of the parkland' would be expected to accompany given the scale of redevelopment proposed.

6.53 Overall, and having reviewed the landscape in detail, we conclude there are opportunities for reinstatement of historic features and delivery of public benefits which comprise:

- A clear benefit would be to rationalise the car parking in front of the house and across the site.
- Delivery of a new interpretation centre in a new building adjacent to the existing pavilion which will demonstrably improve the ability to appreciate the history and significance of Caversham Park.
- Re-surface the approach/road into and through the site to ensure that it responds to the character of the RPG and historic use.
- Careful opening up the terracing east and west of the main central lawns by the removal of secondary woodland (not mature – rather modern sycamore). This would form part of a scheme designed to give a better appreciation of, and access to, Switzer's grand landscape design.
- A commitment to prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the landscape which will include a maintenance plan for a period of 10 years.
- Opening new routes/paths in the grounds of Caversham Park.
- Digital and physical interpretation – use of QR Codes as well as physical interpretation boards can help visitors better appreciate the history of the site as a trail.
- A commitment to landscape sculpture/art referring to the different phases/ages of the site from the Georgian period to the more recent BBC.
- An educational 'tree trail' identifying trees surviving from Brown's landscaping (if such are identified). Note that as we do not know the details of Brown's planting, an authentic restoration scheme would not be possible.

CONCLUSIONS

6.54 At **Table 7.1** we have summarised the impact of the development and provided analysis.

6.55 Overall, it is our conclusion that there would be a net harm to the RPG and paragraph 202 of the NPPF is engaged.

Table 6.1 Analysis of public benefits and heritage harm in relation to Caversham Park (RPG)

BENEFIT		HARM	
PROPOSAL	**LEVEL OF BENEFIT**	**PROPOSAL**	**LEVEL OF HARM**
The proposals will secure a long-term viable use for the RPG which is consistent with its conservation.	High – the landscape has been in private a use that has been significantly underused for a considerable period of time, and will instead be brought into full active use including being made available to the public. Furthermore, the residential and Care Home use is complementary to the listed building and will ensure there is a management plan to conserve the long term future of the asset.	Development in the East Parcel	Medium, less than substantial – the introduction of development within the East Parcel would lead to the loss of historic form. While the impact itself is of a high degree we use judgement to calibrate the impact due to the fact that the impact is focussed on one part of the asset as a whole, and the design approach takes an architectural form that has resonance and precedence in country house estate architecture, and thereby helps to mitigate the impact from higher one.
Introduction of public access for the first time in the site's history, and thus improve the ability to appreciate the significance of the landscape	Medium – 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.	Development north east of the house	Medium, less than substantial – although the new development north east of the house is in a less sensitive location, the addition of new development would lead to a change and urbanising character. Again, the impact has been mitigated by the approach to the new design of the buildings which are two storey with green roofs. A contemporary architectural approach has also been taken with the use of natural materials to help anchor this part of the development into the landscape.
Rationalising car parking to the north of the house and creating a clear vista across the north lawn	Low – we ascribe low weight because the creation of an uninterrupted view from the house is clearly beneficial, there is a balance with the introduction of parking to the east and west of view cone albeit designed to be broken up and "greened".	Introduction of car parking to the north of the house	Low, less than substantial – the introduction of parking along the northern side of the principal drive would lead to an urbanising character. We judge this harm to be low because it must be balanced with the existing road which is wide and includes parking spaces directly in front of the house entrance. In contrast the proposals remove parking from directly in front of the house.
Re-surface the approach/road into and through the site to ensure that it responds to the character of the RPG and historic use.	Low – reinstating the historic character of the approach road.	Extending car parking west of the pavilion to the north	Limited, less than substantial – the extended parking area between the pavilion and tennis court would change the character of the landscape in this part of the Site, however this area has low sensitivity because of alterations in the 20th century and does not contribute meaningfully to the significance of the RPG as a whole. The design has mitigated the impact, having soft boundaries and no lighting.
Careful opening up the terracing east and west of the main central lawns by the removal of secondary woodland (not mature – rather modern sycamore). This would form part of a scheme designed to give a better appreciation of, and access to, Switzer's grand landscape design.	Medium – reinstating an original feature.		
A commitment to prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the landscape which will include a maintenance plan for a period of 10 years.	Medium – will secure future management and delivery of the landscape proposals over 10 years.		
Opening new routes/paths, through the landscape for residents and the local community.	Low – improves the ability to appreciate the significance of the landscape		
Digital and physical interpretation – use of QR as well as physical interpretation boards can help visitors better appreciate the history of the site as a trail.	Low – improves the ability to appreciate the significance of the landscape		
A commitment to landscape sculpture/art referring to the different phases/ages of the site from the Georgian period to the more recent BBC.	Low – improves the ability to appreciate the significance of the landscape and site more generally		
An educational 'tree trail' identifying trees surviving from Brown's landscaping (if such are identified).	Medium – This will help to provide education about the survival of the Brownian landscape.		
Delivery of an interpretation centre in the pavilion which will improve the ability to appreciate the history and significance of the RPG.	Medium – This will demonstrably improve the ability to appreciate the significance of the RPG.		

7.0
ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS ON OTHER LISTED BUILDINGS

CAVERSHAM PARK

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS ON OTHER LISTED BUILDINGS

7.1 This section assesses the effect of the proposals on the other listed buildings on the Site.

7.2 The main consideration is whether the proposals would preserve the significance of the assets, and/or the contribution that setting makes to their significance.

TEMPLE TO WEST OF CAVERSHAM PARK, GRADE II

7.3 The proposals do not involve works to the Temple and its significance would be preserved. The proposals would change the setting of the listed building, and most notably by replacing the utilitarian buildings and fencing which interposes between the listed building and the main house in the long axial view. As described in earlier sections, this is an improvement and would benefit the appreciation of the listed building and its relationship to the house.

7.4 The proposed care home and development in the East Parcel have been set back from the axial view from the Temple to preserve the landscape character of the view. The design of the care home in particular has been amended to ensure that it is inobtrusive and subservient to the main house.

7.5 The public access and interpretation of the RPG would increase appreciation of the asset and better reveal its significance.

ENTRANCE GATES AND GATE PIERS TO CAVERSHAM PARK, GRADE II

CONSTRUCTION

7.6 We understand that there is a single access point to the Site for vehicles which would include construction traffic. In order for construction vehicle access, we understand that it is necessary to dismantle one of the gate piers to provide a wide enough entry. This would result in harm to the listed building as a result of the impact on fabric, integrity and use of the structure.

7.7 It is anticipated that a condition would secure the method statement to ensure that the pier was dismantled carefully, using hand tools and recorded such that the pier could be reconstructed faithfully once the development was complete. It is further anticipated that there would be a condition or obligation for the Applicant to reconstruct the pier as soon as practically possible at the relevant phase. A condition would also secure the details of reconstruction, i.e. materials such as the mortar used and any replacement bricks or masonry, if required.

7.8 The harm to the listed building would be temporary and removed in its entirety once the development was complete, and the pier reconstructed using the original and appropriate materials. Therefore, we conclude that the special interest of the listed building would be preserved.

7.9 We understand that officers have been made aware of the proposed dismantling and have not raised any concerns to the principle.

THE COMPLETED DEVELOPMENT

7.10 The proposals do not involve works to the entrance gates and gate piers and their significance would be preserved. The proposals would change the setting of the listed buildings by converting the lodges nearest to the gates for new residential use, however their appearance would be unchanged.

7.11 There would be no new buildings seen together with the gates and the landscape setting within the RPG would be maintained. The new public access and interpretation of the RPG introduced by the proposals would increase appreciation of the asset and better reveal its significance. Overall, therefore, there is a benefit.

INNER PARK WALLS AT CAVERSHAM PARK, GRADE II

7.12 The inner park walls are located in the part of the Site which is proposed for the new care home. The wall would be preserved as a feature within the landscape of the care home and form a boundary between the care home and the car park. The car parking is set back from the wall by between 3.2m and 4.3m.

7.13 A small section of the listed wall, 5m, is identified for demolition. We understand this is necessary in order to address site levels and form part of the approach to the care home. This would result in the loss of historic fabric and therefore a degree of less than substantial harm. It is recognised that the wall is a remnant feature of an earlier landscape design which has already been somewhat eroded by the hardstanding and modern buildings in this area. The majority of the wall would be retained, and the proposals provide an opportunity to interpret the wall and give a better understanding of its significance in the estate.

7.14 For this reason, the harm is considered to be a very limited level of less than substantial harm which is outweighed by the benefits of improving the overall setting and opportunity to appreciate the wall.

7.15 Furthermore, the bricks which are removed could be re-used as part of the landscape design or construction of the care home. This could be conditions or secured as part of a planning obligation.

WALLS AT FORMER KITCHEN GARDEN AT CAVERSHAM PARK, GRADE II

7.16 The walls of the former kitchen garden are located at the southern boundary of the Site. The proposals do not involve works to the walls or development that would be appreciated in their setting. They would be preserved. There may be a small benefit to the listed building derived from the greater understanding of the estate as a result of the proposed public access and interpretation.

NOS. 1 AND 3 CAVERSHAM PARK DRIVE, CURTILAGE LISTED

7.17 Nos. 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive will be retained and converted for residential use. This would involve changes to the internal layouts to optimise the residential units and minor external alterations.

7.18 The significance of the buildings is derived from their character and location at the entrance to the estate, and group value with the listed entrance gates and main house. The interior layouts are not important to this special interest, and it is considered that the significance would be preserved.

7.19 There may be a small benefit to the buildings derived from the greater understanding of the estate as a result of the proposed public access and interpretation.

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8.0
CONCLUSION AND POLICY COMPLIANCE
CAVERSHAM PARK

CONCLUSION AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

8.1 This application turns on the balance between any harm to the significance of Caversham Park as a listed building and RPG and the public benefits that would be delivered by the proposals.

8.2 Under paragraphs 199–200 of the NPPF, great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets even where the harm would be less that substantial, and any harm should require a clear and convincing justification.

8.3 From the Courts' interpretation of Section 16(2) and Section 66(1) of the 1990 Act, considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving the special interest of listed buildings in any balancing exercise with material considerations which do not have this status.

8.4 The considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preservation should tip the scales to produce an unequal balance in its favour. However, the decision-maker should still take account of the scale of change, and so the extent of impact, as well as the relevance to its significance, and the importance of the asset. The overall weight to be given to any harm should be a product of these factors.

8.5 There are two principal designated heritage assets in this case: the main house and the RPG. Both assets must be assessed individually to inform and calibrate the extent of countervailing public benefits that may be required to outweigh any harm.

8.6 In assessing the impact on the listed building, we have concluded there would be a net enhancement to the significance of the asset for reasons set out at **Section 5.0**.

8.7 This approach is based on an 'internal heritage balance' which the decision-maker is entitled to take (see *Bramshill* judgment).

8.8 That net enhancement is a weighty benefit in the planning balance (with reference to the 'great weight' provision attached to the conservation of a designated heritage asset in paragraph 199 of the NPPF).

8.9 Having carefully considered the overall effect on the RPG, we consider the proposals would lead to net harm to the significance of the asset. We note that although RPGs are not protected by law (unlike listed buildings and conservation areas); their conservation is given great weight as set out in paragraph 199 of the NPPF.

8.10 In this case, we consider that the harm would be less than substantial and in the middle of the spectrum. The harm would not be substantial because the works would not lead to substantial or serious harm such that it would seriously affect a key element of the significance of the asset (the test set out in the PPG).

8.11 The impact results principally from the introduction of built form within the East Parcel, which is previously development land, but retains a landscape character associated with the butterfly layout.

8.12 Given our finding of less than substantial harm, paragraph 201 of the NPPF allows for it to be weighed against the public benefits delivered by the scheme. The delivery of the benefits forms the justification for that harm. Those benefits include the enhancements to the RPG and to the principal listed building which, as stated above, is a weighty benefit that attracts considerable weight in the planning balance.

8.13 The balancing test set out in paragraph 201 of the NPPF also allows for other public benefits to be weighed against the identified harm. Those benefits are set out in Savills' Planning Statement.

8.14 With that rationale at play, the decision maker can draw a conclusion as to whether these weighty public benefits outweigh the identified harm to the RPG.

POLICY COMPLIANCE

8.15 Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the development plan forms the starting point for determination of this application.

8.16 On account of finding less than substantial harm and undertaking the heritage balancing exercise, we do not find conflict with Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) and Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) of the Council's Local Plan. Consequently, we consider the development would comply with the heritage policies within the development plan.

8.17 On that basis, and if the benefits are found to outweigh the harm, then the decision maker would be able to discharge their legal duties under Section 16(2) and Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

9.0 SOURCES

CAVERSHAM PARK

SOURCES

9.1 This report has been informed by the following primary and secondary sources:

- Archival material held in the collections of the Berkshire Record Office
- Photographs held in the collections at the Museum of English Rural Life
- Photographs held in the collection of the National Museum of Wales
- Photographs from the archive held by the Oratory School, Oxfordshire
- Photographs from the Caversham and District Residents' Association
- Photographs from the DiCamillo Companion collection
- Ordnance Survey maps from the National Library of Scotland
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- J. Rocque, Map of Berkshire, 1761
- Archival material held by the BBC Written Archives Service
- Planning record files held by Reading Borough Council
- The National Heritage List for England, listing descriptions of Caversham Park and mansion created by Historic England
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- BBC News, Caversham Park: End of an era for BBC listening station, 7 July 2016, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-36712152
- BBC News, Caversham Park: Listening to the world, 1943 to 2018, no date (post 2018), https://www.bbc.com/historyofthebbc/buildings/caversham-park/

APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC IMAGES AND PHOTOGRAPHS

CAVERSHAM PARK

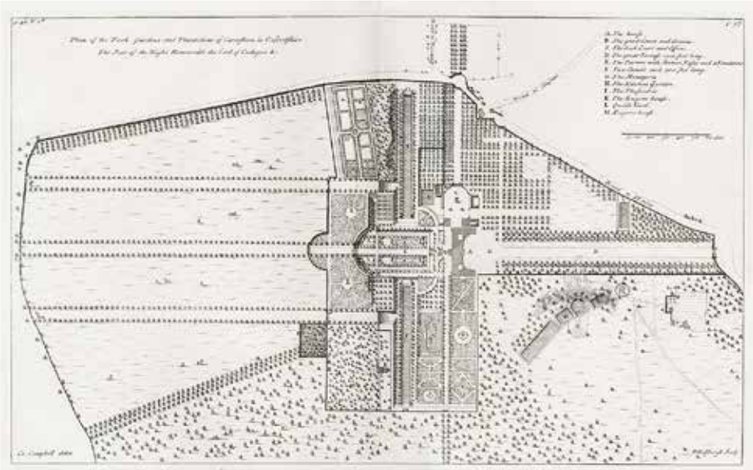


Figure A1.1 1715 Colen Campbell Vitruvius Britannicus, or The British Architect, Volume I

Figure A1.2 1761 Roque

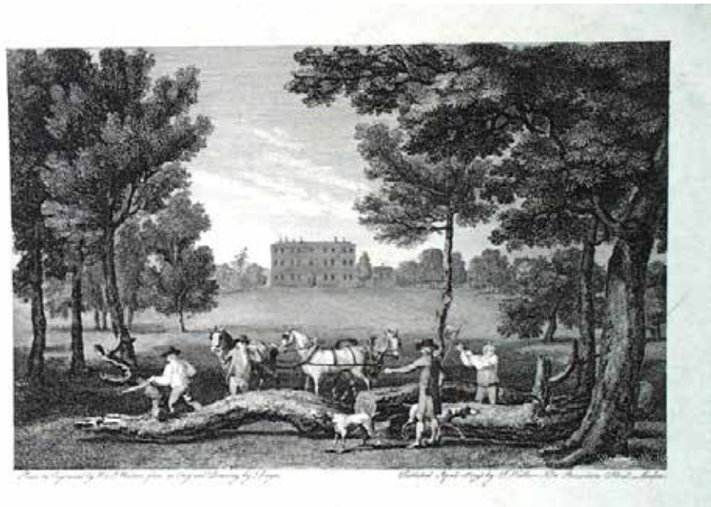


Figure A1.3 1787–93 Caversham Park, Reading, print on paper, artist Edward Dayes, engraver W. and J. Walker, 1793, Museum no 1974_116_1

Figure A1.4 1809 OS map

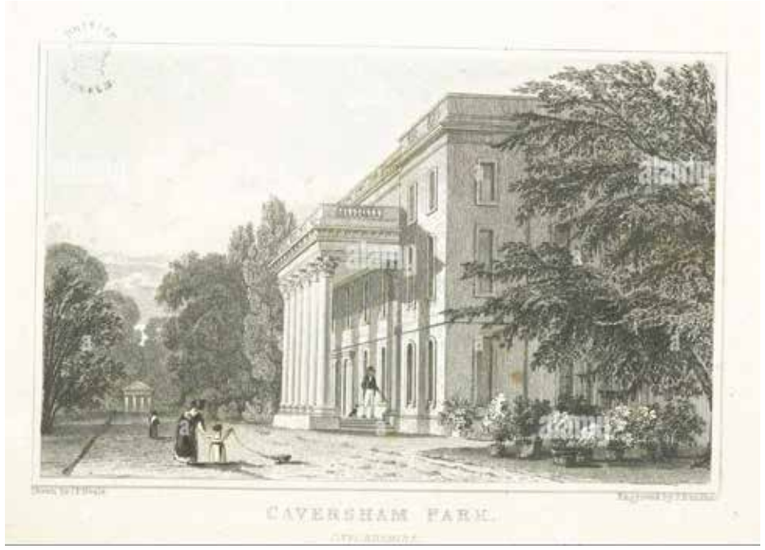


Figure A1.5 1824 Neale engraving

Figure A1.6 1844 Tithe Map

Figure A1.7 1850 Illustrated London News Destruction of House by Fire

Figure A1.8 1870 OS map

Figure A1.9 1870s Robert Thompson photographer National Museum of Wales

Figure A1.10 1892 – Library – Historic England archive Bedford Lemere

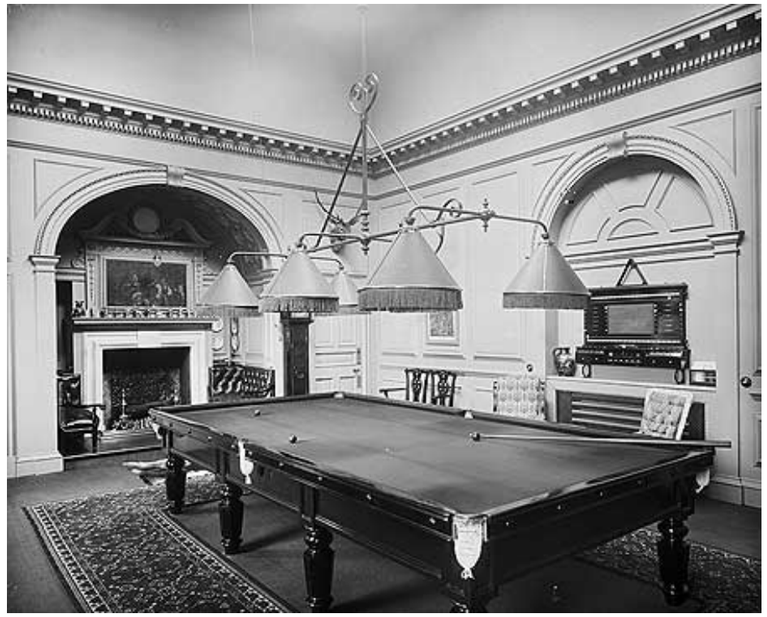


Figure A1.11 1892 Billiard Room – Historic England archive Bedford Lemere – later blue room

Figure A1.12 1892 Boudoir – Historic England archive

Figure A1.13 1892 Dining Room – Historic England archive Bedford Lemere – now conference room

Figure A1.14 1892 Dining Room – Historic England archive Bedford Lemere

Figure A1.15 1892 Doors in Dining Room – Historic England archive

Figure A1.16 1892 Drawing Room – Historic England archive Bedford Lemere – now doors thru to canteen

Figure A1.17 1892 Gallery – Historic England archive Bedford Lemere – later orangery

Figure A1.19 1892 Library – Historic England archive

Figure A1.18 1892 Garden Front – Historic England archive

Figure A1.20 1892 Porte cochere – Historic England archive

Figure A1.21 1892

Figure A1.22 1892_saloon from first floor_HE archive_BedfordLemere

Figure A1.23 1892_saloon with organ_HE archive_BedfordLemere_now organ where the TV is

Figure A1.24 1892_vestibule_HE archive_BedfordLemere_now reception

Figure A1.25 1905-[mid-1930s]_MERL_Phillip Osborne Collier_P DX323 PH1E4532_exterior of Caversham Park

Figure A1.27 1905-[mid-1930s]_MERL_Phillip Osborne Collier_P DX323_PH1_E45_34_exterior of Caversham Park

Figure A1.29 1905-[mid-1930s]_MERL_Phillip Osborne Collier_P DX323_PH1_E45_38_exterior of Caversham Park

Figure A1.26 1905-[mid-1930s]_MERL_Phillip Osborne Collier_P DX323_PH1_E45_33_exterior of Caversham Park

Figure A1.28 1905-[mid-1930s]_MERL_Phillip Osborne Collier_P DX323_PH1_E45_35_exterior of Caversham Park

Figure 10.30 1910 circa Caversham and District Residents' Association

Figure A1.31 1910 DiCamillo Companion collection

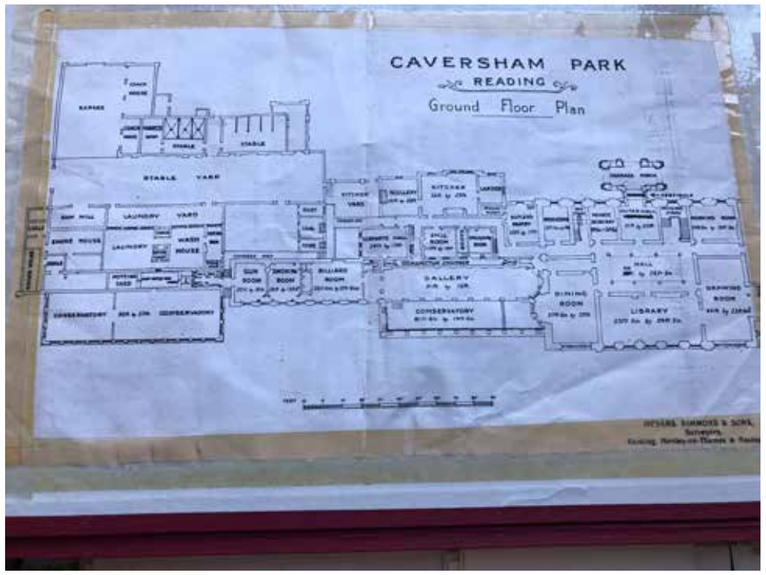


Figure A1.32 1910_caversham house plan_BBC archive

Figure A1.33 1910s Convalescent home Berkshire Record Office DEX965101

Figure A1.34 1910s early 20th century photograph

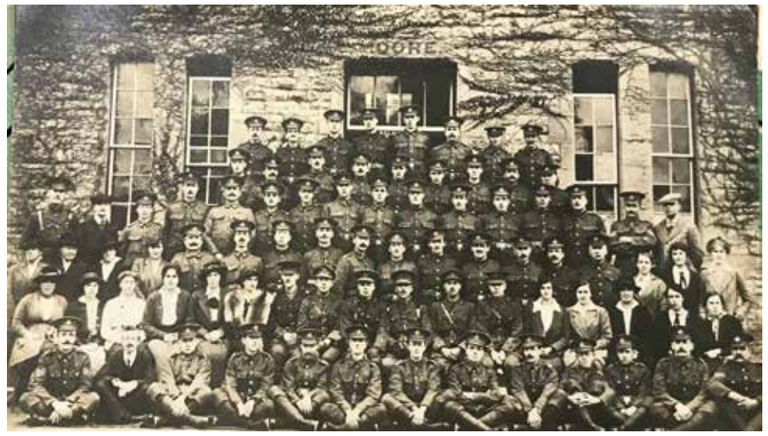


Figure A1.35 1910s local soldiers Berkshire Record Office DEX965101

Figure A1.36 1920 A large cedar in the grounds Berkshire Record Office_Could this have been taken in the 189

Figure A1.37 1920 Berkshire Record Office The Terrace_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

Figure A1.38 1920 c Berkshire Record Office DEX965291-9_could this be earlier perhaps

Figure A1.39 1920 Caversham Bridge Bershire Record Office_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

Figure A1.40 1920 Caversham Park berkshire Record Office_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

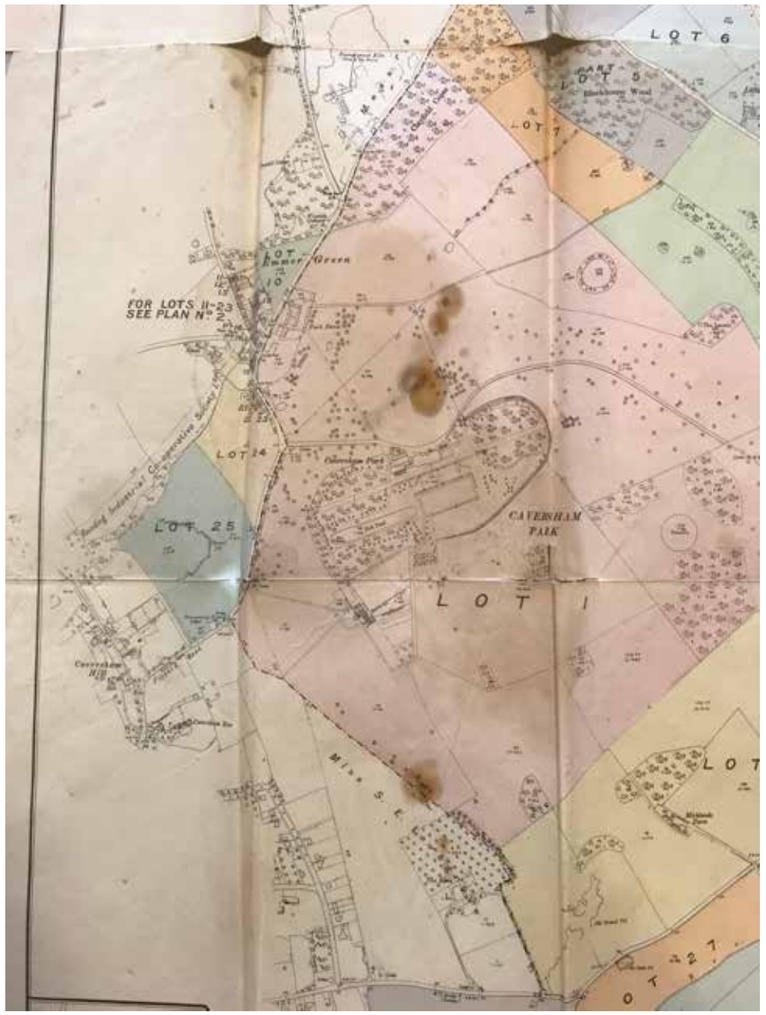


Figure A1.41 1920 map detail Berkshire Record Office DEX175051-2

Figure A1.42 1920 sales catalgue The Dining Room_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

Figure A1.43 1920 sales catalgue The Drawing Room_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

Figure A1.44 1920 sales catalgue The Hall_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

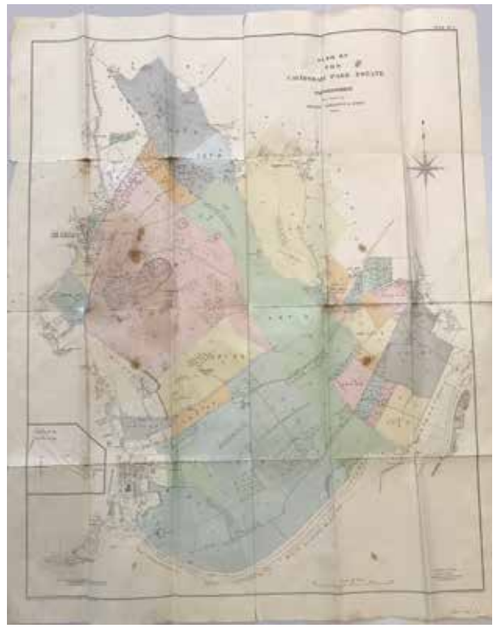
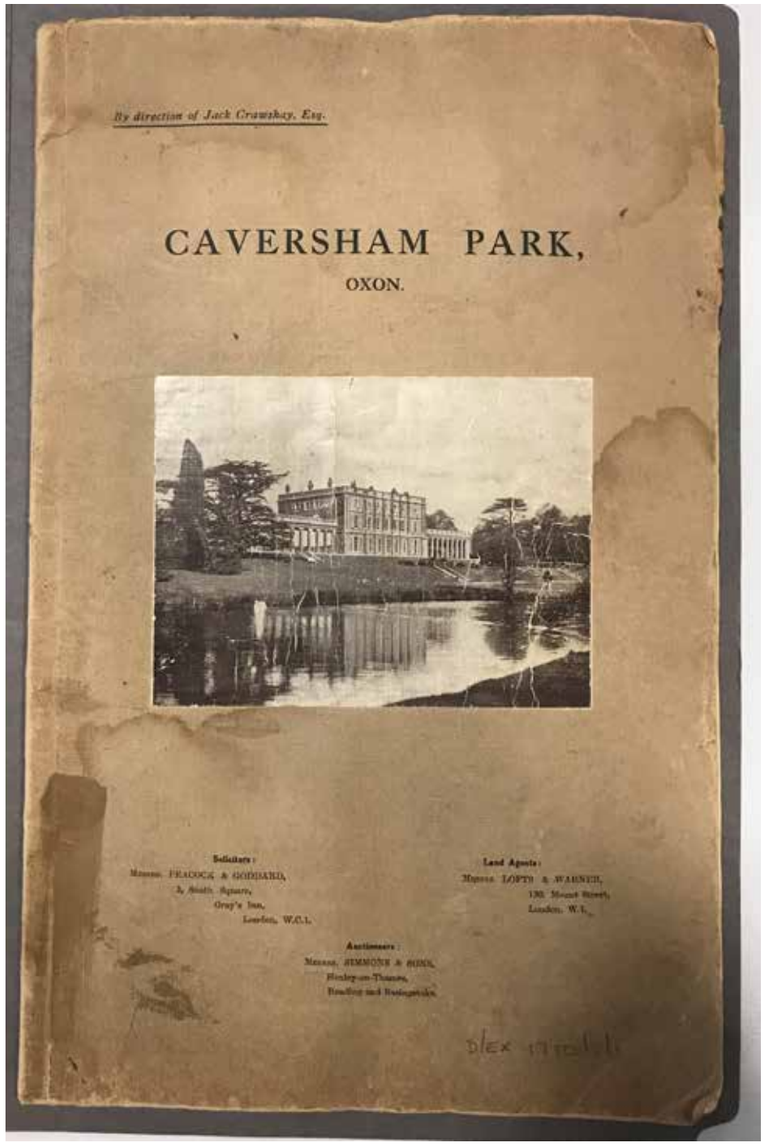


Figure A1.45 1920 sales catalogue map Berkshire Record Office DEX175051-2



By direction of Jack Crawshay, Esq.

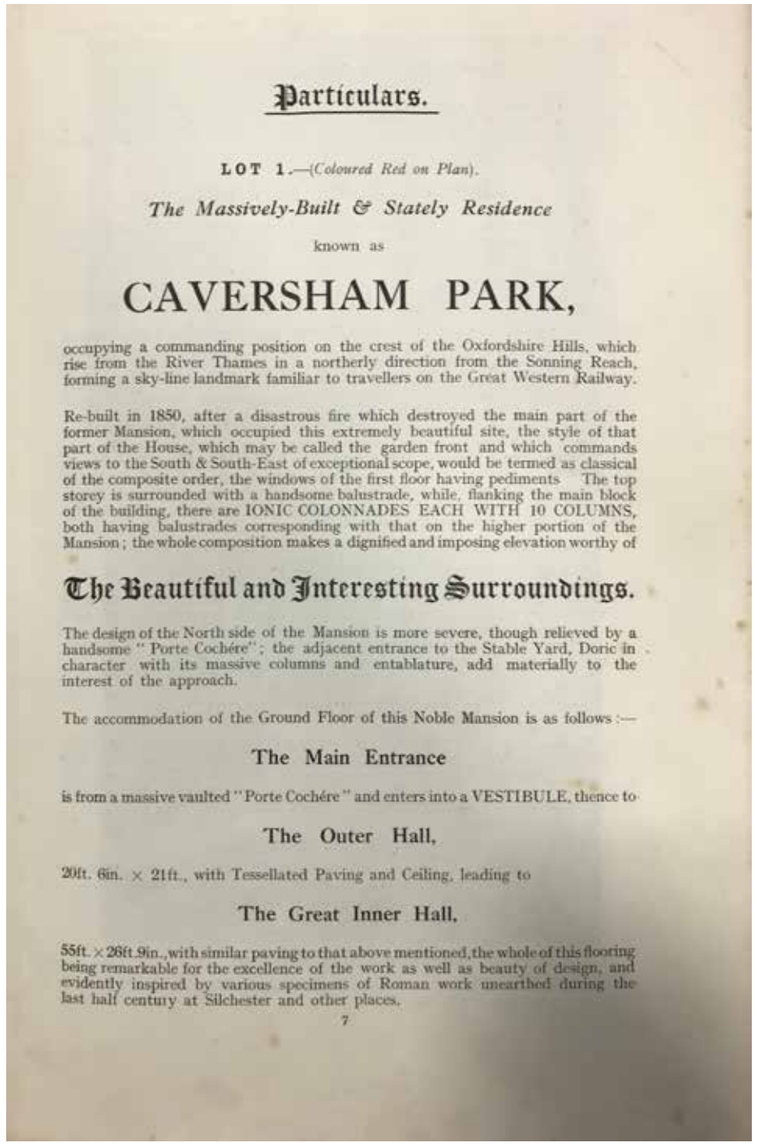
CAVERSHAM PARK,

OXON.

Solicitors:
Messrs. PEACOCK & GODDARD,
5, South Square,
Gray's Inn,
London, W.C.1.

Land Agents:
Messrs. LOFTS & WARNER,
130 Mount Street,
London, W.1.

Auctioneers:
Messrs. SIMMONS & SONS,
Henley-on-Thames,
Reading and Basingstoke.



Particulars.

LOT 1.—*(Coloured Red on Plan).*

The Massively-Built & Stately Residence

known as

CAVERSHAM PARK,

occupying a commanding position on the crest of the Oxfordshire Hills, which rise from the River Thames in a northerly direction from the Sonning Reach, forming a sky-line landmark familiar to travellers on the Great Western Railway.

Re-built in 1850, after a disastrous fire which destroyed the main part of the former Mansion, which occupied this extremely beautiful site, the style of that part of the House, which may be called the garden front and which commands views to the South & South-East of exceptional scope, would be termed as classical of the composite order, the windows of the first floor having pediments The top storey is surrounded with a handsome balustrade, while, flanking the main block of the building, there are IONIC COLONNADES EACH WITH 10 COLUMNS, both having balustrades corresponding with that on the higher portion of the Mansion; the whole composition makes a dignified and imposing elevation worthy of

The Beautiful and Interesting Surroundings.

The design of the North side of the Mansion is more severe, though relieved by a handsome "Porte Cochère"; the adjacent entrance to the Stable Yard, Doric in character with its massive columns and entablature, add materially to the interest of the approach.

The accommodation of the Ground Floor of this Noble Mansion is as follows:—

The Main Entrance

is from a massive vaulted "Porte Cochère" and enters into a VESTIBULE, thence to

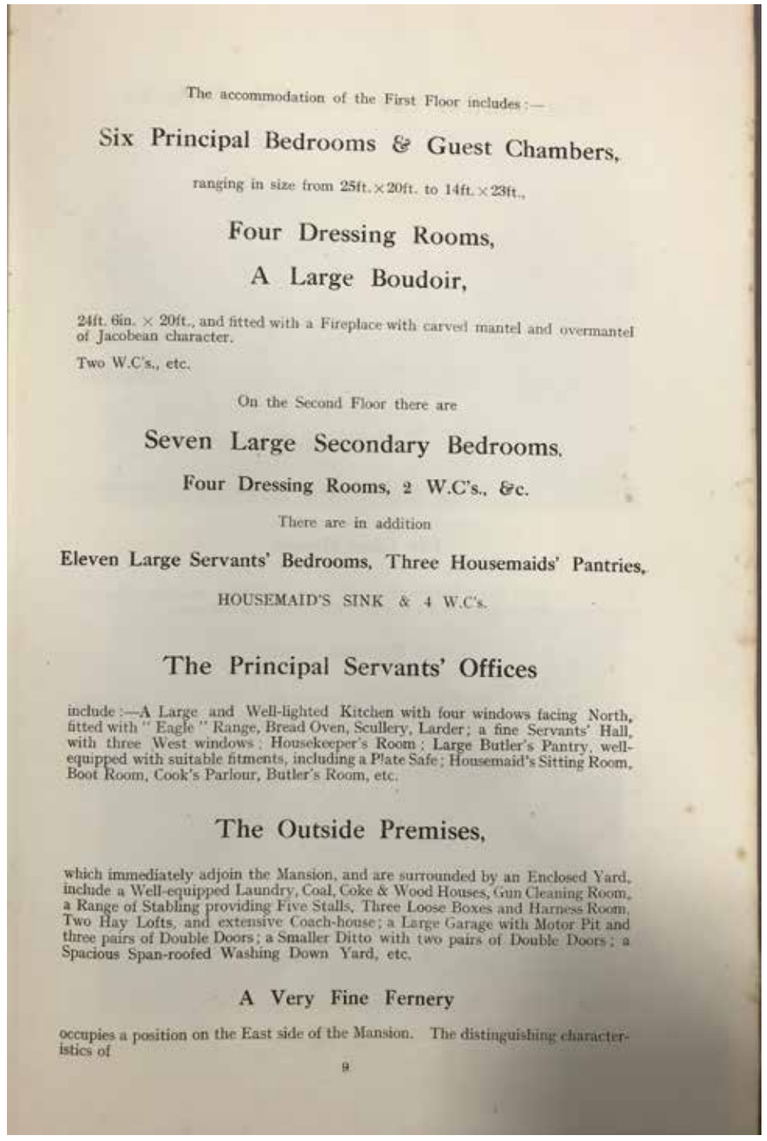
The Outer Hall,

20ft. 6in. × 21ft., with Tessellated Paving and Ceiling, leading to

The Great Inner Hall,

55ft. × 26ft. 9in., with similar paving to that above mentioned, the whole of this flooring being remarkable for the excellence of the work as well as beauty of design, and evidently inspired by various specimens of Roman work unearthed during the last half century at Silchester and other places.

7



The accommodation of the First Floor includes:—

Six Principal Bedrooms & Guest Chambers,

ranging in size from 25ft. × 20ft. to 14ft. × 23ft.,

Four Dressing Rooms,

A Large Boudoir,

24ft. 6in. × 20ft., and fitted with a Fireplace with carved mantel and overmantel of Jacobean character.

Two W.C's., etc.

On the Second Floor there are

Seven Large Secondary Bedrooms,

Four Dressing Rooms, 2 W.C's., &c.

There are in addition

Eleven Large Servants' Bedrooms, Three Housemaids' Pantries,

HOUSEMAID'S SINK & 4 W.C's.

The Principal Servants' Offices

include:—A Large and Well-lighted Kitchen with four windows facing North, fitted with "Eagle" Range, Bread Oven, Scullery, Larder; a fine Servants' Hall, with three West windows; Housekeeper's Room; Large Butler's Pantry, well-equipped with suitable fitments, including a Plate Safe; Housemaid's Sitting Room, Boot Room, Cook's Parlour, Butler's Room, etc.

The Outside Premises,

which immediately adjoin the Mansion, and are surrounded by an Enclosed Yard, include a Well-equipped Laundry, Coal, Coke & Wood Houses, Gun Cleaning Room, a Range of Stabling providing Five Stalls, Three Loose Boxes and Harness Room. Two Hay Lofts, and extensive Coach-house; a Large Garage with Motor Pit and three pairs of Double Doors; a Smaller Ditto with two pairs of Double Doors; a Spacious Span-roofed Washing Down Yard, etc.

A Very Fine Fernery

occupies a position on the East side of the Mansion. The distinguishing characteristics of

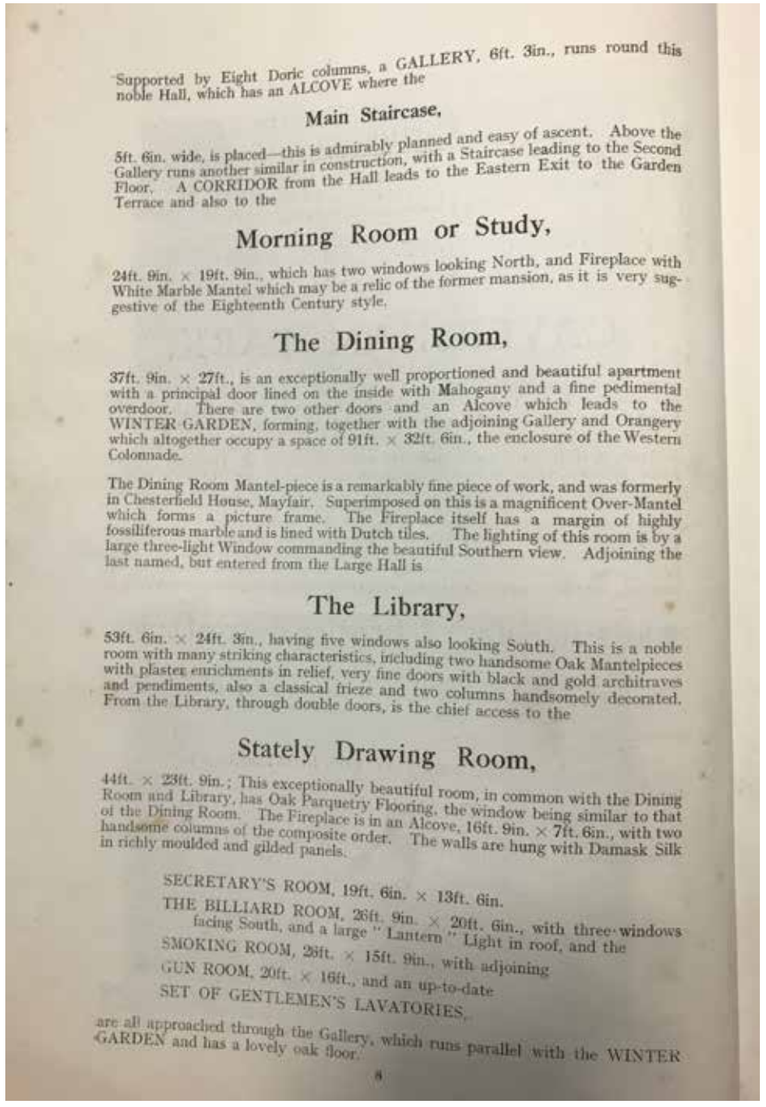
9

Figure A1.46 1920 sales catalogue page 1 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051–2

Figure A1.47 1920 sales catalogue page 2 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051–2

Figure A1.48 1920 sales catalogue page 3 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051–2

Figure A1.49 1920 sales catalogue page 4 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051–2



Supported by Eight Doric columns, a GALLERY, 6ft. 3in., runs round this noble Hall, which has an ALCOVE where the

Main Staircase,

5ft. 6in. wide, is placed—this is admirably planned and easy of ascent. Above the Gallery runs another similar in construction, with a Staircase leading to the Second Floor. A CORRIDOR from the Hall leads to the Eastern Exit to the Garden Terrace and also to the

Morning Room or Study,

24ft. 9in. × 19ft. 9in., which has two windows looking North, and Fireplace with White Marble Mantel which may be a relic of the former mansion, as it is very suggestive of the Eighteenth Century style.

The Dining Room,

37ft. 9in. × 27ft., is an exceptionally well proportioned and beautiful apartment with a principal door lined on the inside with Mahogany and a fine pedimental overdoor. There are two other doors and an Alcove which leads to the WINTER GARDEN, forming, together with the adjoining Gallery and Orangery which altogether occupy a space of 91ft. × 32ft. 6in., the enclosure of the Western Colonnade.

The Dining Room Mantel-piece is a remarkably fine piece of work, and was formerly in Chesterfield House, Mayfair. Superimposed on this is a magnificent Over-Mantel which forms a picture frame. The Fireplace itself has a margin of highly fossiliferous marble and is lined with Dutch tiles. The lighting of this room is by a large three-light Window commanding the beautiful Southern view. Adjoining the last named, but entered from the Large Hall is

The Library,

53ft. 6in. × 24ft. 3in., having five windows also looking South. This is a noble room with many striking characteristics, including two handsome Oak Mantelpieces with plaster enrichments in relief, very fine doors with black and gold architraves and pendiments, also a classical frieze and two columns handsomely decorated. From the Library, through double doors, is the chief access to the

Stately Drawing Room,

44ft. × 23ft. 9in.; This exceptionally beautiful room, in common with the Dining Room and Library, has Oak Parquetry Flooring, the window being similar to that of the Dining Room. The Fireplace is in an Alcove, 16ft. 9in. × 7ft. 6in., with two handsome columns of the composite order. The walls are hung with Damask Silk in richly moulded and gilded panels.

SECRETARY'S ROOM, 19ft. 6in. × 13ft. 6in.

THE BILLIARD ROOM, 26ft. 9in. × 20ft. 6in., with three windows facing South, and a large "Lantern" Light in roof, and the

SMOKING ROOM, 26ft. × 15ft. 9in., with adjoining

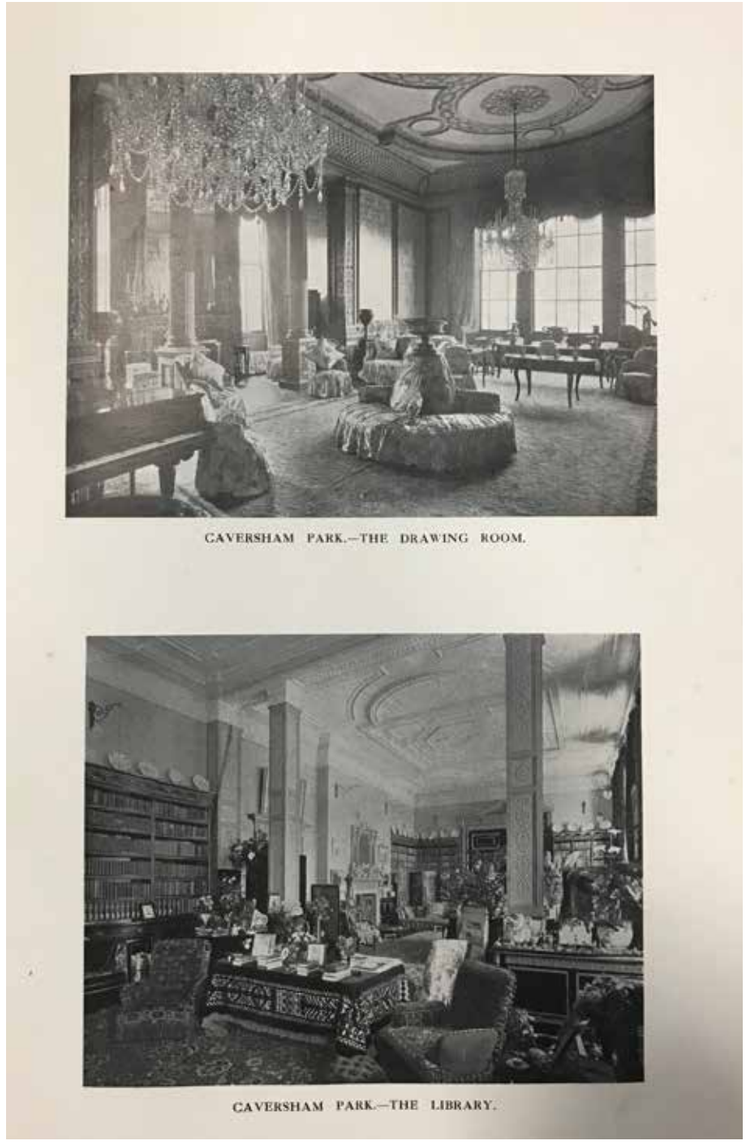
GUN ROOM, 20ft. × 16ft., and an up-to-date

SET OF GENTLEMEN'S LAVATORIES,

are all approached through the Gallery, which runs parallel with the WINTER GARDEN and has a lovely oak floor.

8

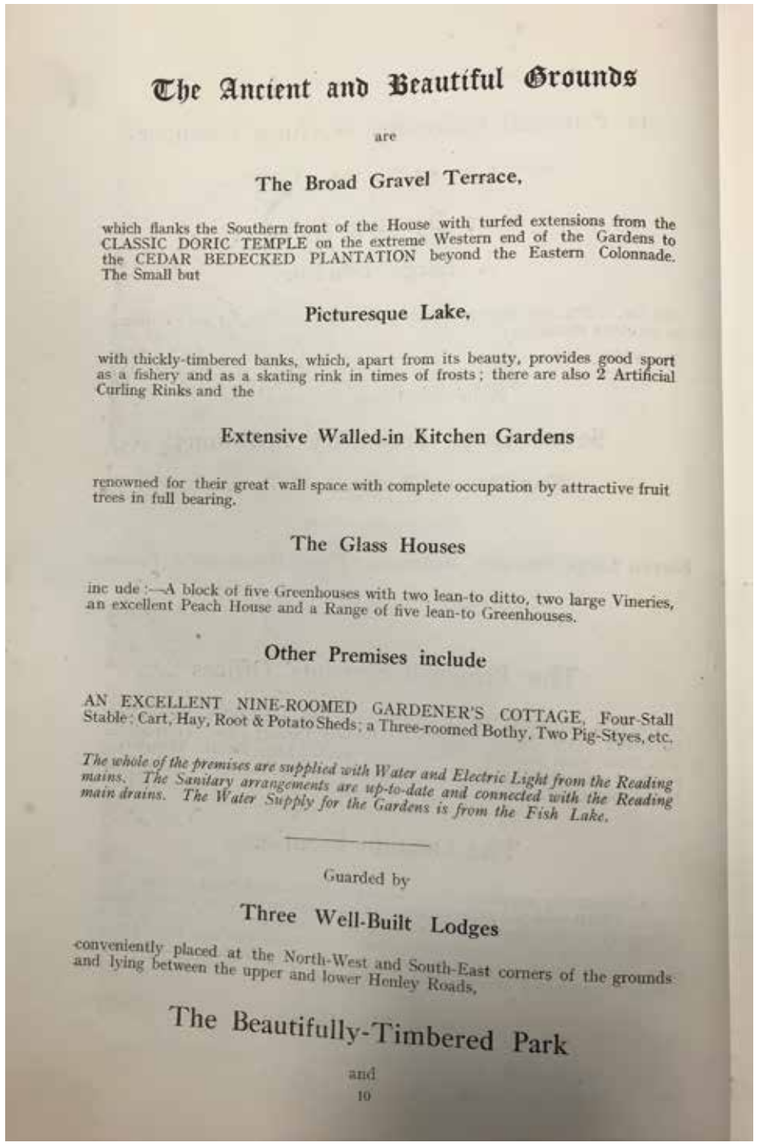
Figure A1.50 1920 sales catalogue page 5 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051-2_Could this have been taken in



CAVERSHAM PARK.—THE DRAWING ROOM.

CAVERSHAM PARK.—THE LIBRARY.

Figure A1.51 1920 sales catalogue page 7 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051-2



The Ancient and Beautiful Grounds

are

The Broad Gravel Terrace,

which flanks the Southern front of the House with turfed extensions from the CLASSIC DORIC TEMPLE on the extreme Western end of the Gardens to the CEDAR BEDECKED PLANTATION beyond the Eastern Colonnade. The Small but

Picturesque Lake,

with thickly-timbered banks, which, apart from its beauty, provides good sport as a fishery and as a skating rink in times of frosts; there are also 2 Artificial Curling Rinks and the

Extensive Walled-in Kitchen Gardens

renowned for their great wall space with complete occupation by attractive fruit trees in full bearing.

The Glass Houses

inc ude :—A block of five Greenhouses with two lean-to ditto, two large Vineries, an excellent Peach House and a Range of five lean-to Greenhouses.

Other Premises include

AN EXCELLENT NINE-ROOMED GARDENER'S COTTAGE, Four-Stall Stable; Cart, Hay, Root & Potato Sheds; a Three-roomed Bothy, Two Pig-Styes, etc.

The whole of the premises are supplied with Water and Electric Light from the Reading mains. The Sanitary arrangements are up-to-date and connected with the Reading main drains. The Water Supply for the Gardens is from the Fish Lake.

Guarded by

Three Well-Built Lodges

conveniently placed at the North-West and South-East corners of the grounds and lying between the upper and lower Henley Roads,

The Beautifully-Timbered Park

and

10

Figure A1.52 1920 sales catalogue page 8 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051-2_Could this have been taken in t

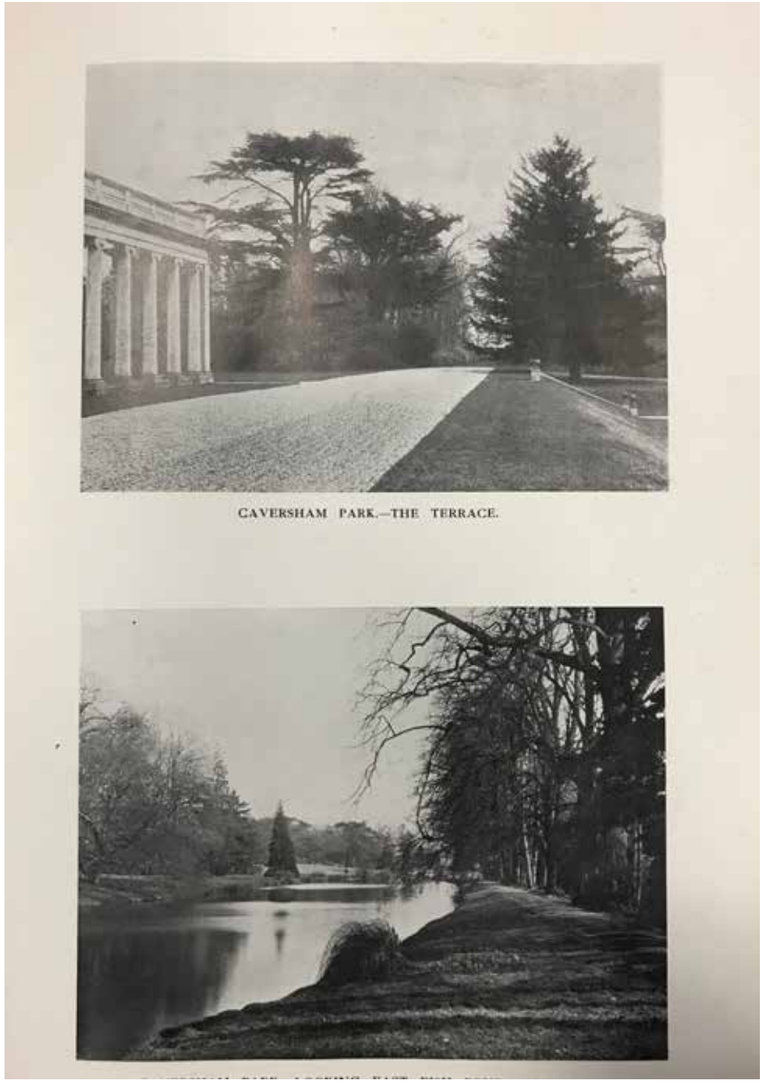


Figure A1.53 1920 sales catalogue page 9 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051-2_Could this have been taken in

Figure A1.54 1920 sales catalogue page 11 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051-2

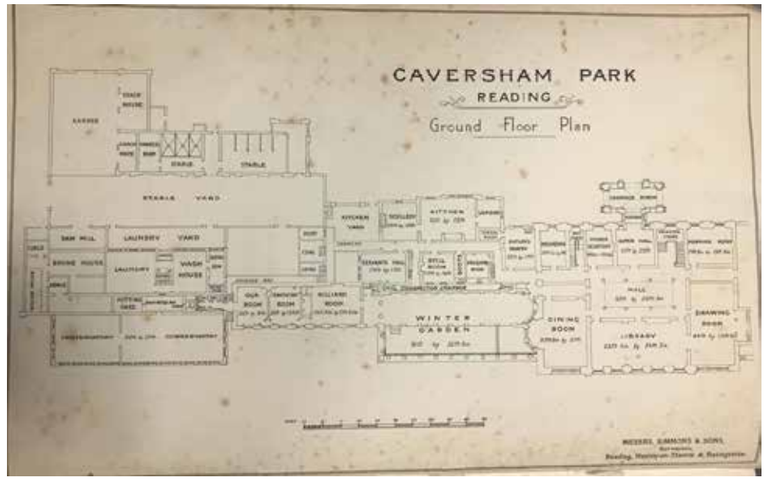
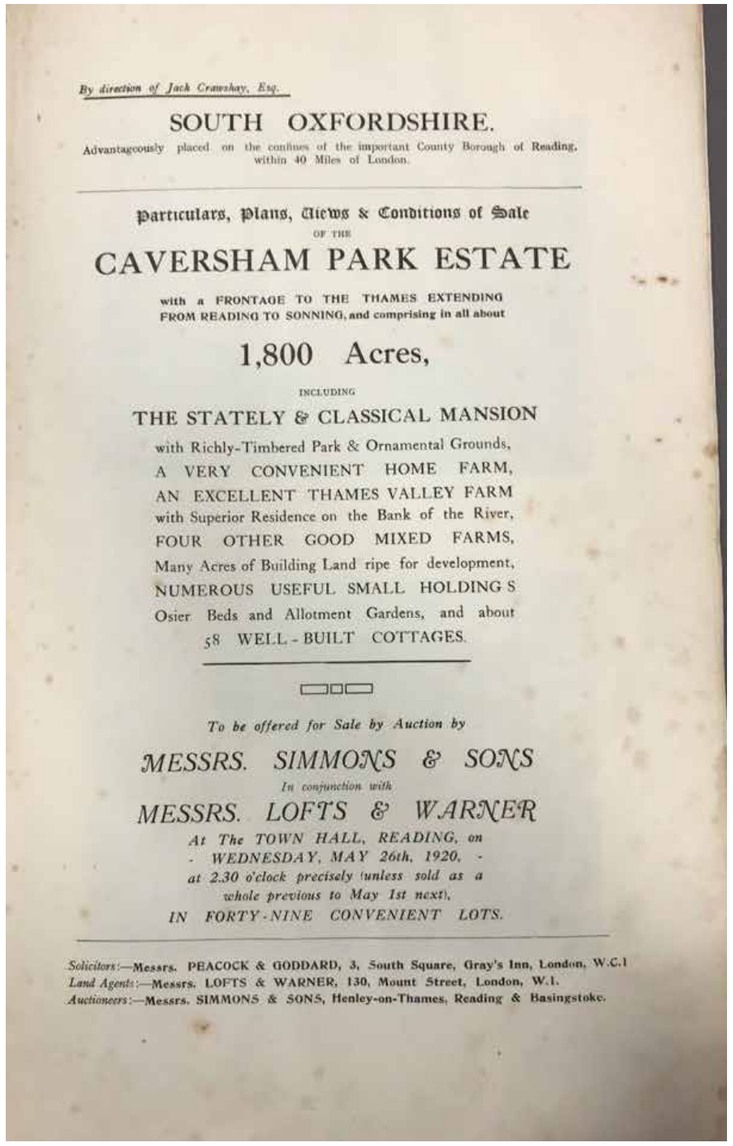


Figure A1.55 1920 sales catalogue page 111 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051-2



By direction of Jack Crawshay, Esq.

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE.

Advantageously placed on the confines of the important County Borough of Reading, within 40 Miles of London.

Particulars, Plans, Views & Conditions of Sale

OF THE

CAVERSHAM PARK ESTATE

with a FRONTAGE TO THE THAMES EXTENDING FROM READING TO SONNING, and comprising in all about

1,800 Acres,

INCLUDING

THE STATELY & CLASSICAL MANSION

with Richly-Timbered Park & Ornamental Grounds,
A VERY CONVENIENT HOME FARM,
AN EXCELLENT THAMES VALLEY FARM
with Superior Residence on the Bank of the River,
FOUR OTHER GOOD MIXED FARMS,
Many Acres of Building Land ripe for development,
NUMEROUS USEFUL SMALL HOLDINGS
Osier Beds and Allotment Gardens, and about
58 WELL-BUILT COTTAGES.

To be offered for Sale by Auction by

MESSRS. SIMMONS & SONS

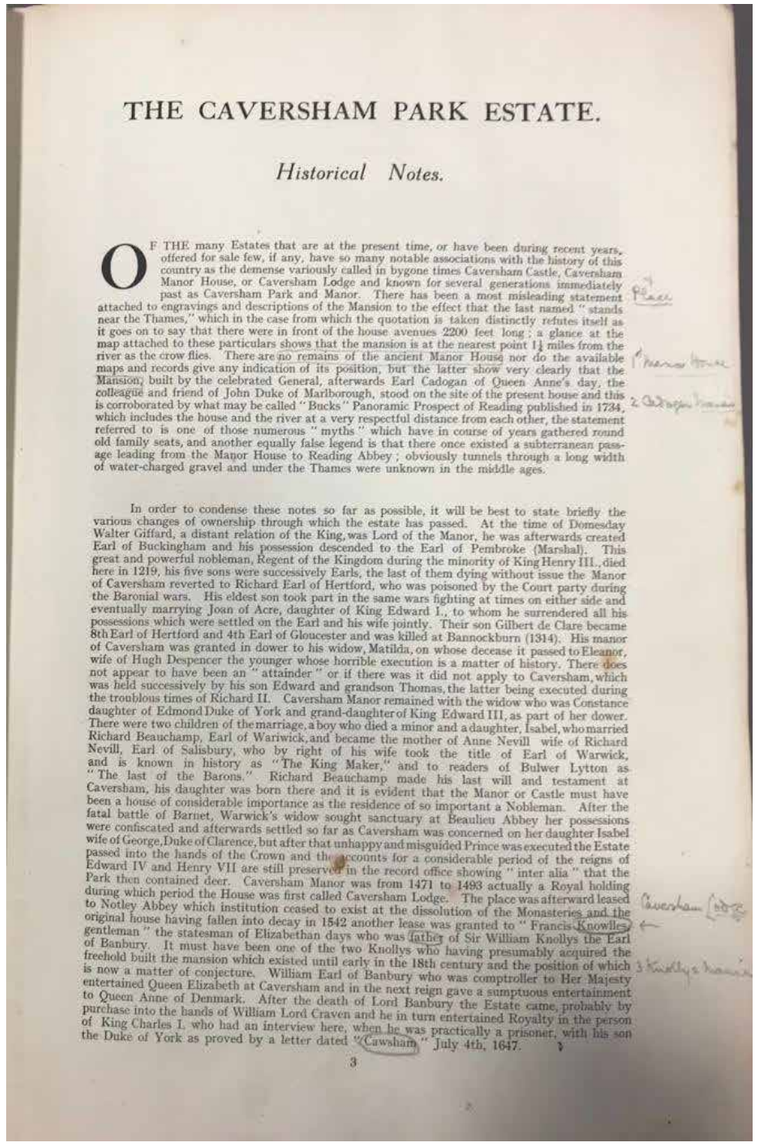
In conjunction with

MESSRS. LOFTS & WARNER

At The TOWN HALL, READING, on
WEDNESDAY, MAY 26th, 1920,
at 2.30 o'clock precisely (unless sold as a whole previous to May 1st next),
IN FORTY-NINE CONVENIENT LOTS.

Solicitors:—Messrs. PEACOCK & GODDARD, 3, South Square, Gray's Inn, London, W.C.1
Land Agents:—Messrs. LOFTS & WARNER, 130, Mount Street, London, W.1.
Auctioneers:—Messrs. SIMMONS & SONS, Henley-on-Thames, Reading & Basingstoke.

Figure A1.56 1920 sales catalogue page 1111 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051–2



THE CAVERSHAM PARK ESTATE.

Historical Notes.

OF THE many Estates that are at the present time, or have been during recent years, offered for sale few, if any, have so many notable associations with the history of this country as the demense variously called in bygone times Caversham Castle, Caversham Manor House, or Caversham Lodge and known for several generations immediately past as Caversham Park and Manor. There has been a most misleading statement attached to engravings and descriptions of the Mansion to the effect that the last named "stands near the Thames," which in the case from which the quotation is taken distinctly refutes itself as it goes on to say that there were in front of the house avenues 2200 feet long; a glance at the map attached to these particulars shows that the mansion is at the nearest point 1¼ miles from the river as the crow flies. There are no remains of the ancient Manor House nor do the available maps and records give any indication of its position, but the latter show very clearly that the Mansion, built by the celebrated General, afterwards Earl Cadogan of Queen Anne's day, the colleague and friend of John Duke of Marlborough, stood on the site of the present house and this is corroborated by what may be called "Bucks" Panoramic Prospect of Reading published in 1734, which includes the house and the river at a very respectful distance from each other, the statement referred to is one of those numerous "myths" which have in course of years gathered round old family seats, and another equally false legend is that there once existed a subterranean passage leading from the Manor House to Reading Abbey; obviously tunnels through a long width of water-charged gravel and under the Thames were unknown in the middle ages.

In order to condense these notes so far as possible, it will be best to state briefly the various changes of ownership through which the estate has passed. At the time of Domesday Walter Giffard, a distant relation of the King, was Lord of the Manor, he was afterwards created Earl of Buckingham and his possession descended to the Earl of Pembroke (Marshal). This great and powerful nobleman, Regent of the Kingdom during the minority of King Henry III., died here in 1219, his five sons were successively Earls, the last of them dying without issue the Manor of Caversham reverted to Richard Earl of Hertford, who was poisoned by the Court party during the Baronial wars. His eldest son took part in the same wars fighting at times on either side and eventually marrying Joan of Acre, daughter of King Edward I., to whom he surrendered all his possessions which were settled on the Earl and his wife jointly. Their son Gilbert de Clare became 8th Earl of Hertford and 4th Earl of Gloucester and was killed at Bannockburn (1314). His manor of Caversham was granted in dower to his widow, Matilda, on whose decease it passed to Eleanor, wife of Hugh Despencer the younger whose horrible execution is a matter of history. There does not appear to have been an "attainder" or if there was it did not apply to Caversham, which was held successively by his son Edward and grandson Thomas, the latter being executed during the troublous times of Richard II. Caversham Manor remained with the widow who was Constance daughter of Edmond Duke of York and grand-daughter of King Edward III, as part of her dower. There were two children of the marriage, a boy who died a minor and a daughter, Isabel, who married Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Wariwick, and became the mother of Anne Nevill wife of Richard Nevill, Earl of Salisbury, who by right of his wife took the title of Earl of Warwick, and is known in history as "The King Maker," and to readers of Bulwer Lytton as "The last of the Barons." Richard Beauchamp made his last will and testament at Caversham, his daughter was born there and it is evident that the Manor or Castle must have been a house of considerable importance as the residence of so important a Nobleman. After the fatal battle of Barnet, Warwick's widow sought sanctuary at Beaulieu Abbey her possessions were confiscated and afterwards settled so far as Caversham was concerned on her daughter Isabel wife of George, Duke of Clarence, but after that unhappy and misguided Prince was executed the Estate passed into the hands of the Crown and there accounts for a considerable period of the reigns of Edward IV and Henry VII are still preserved in the record office showing "inter alia" that the Park then contained deer. Caversham Manor was from 1471 to 1493 actually a Royal holding during which period the House was first called Caversham Lodge. The place was afterward leased to Notley Abbey which institution ceased to exist at the dissolution of the Monasteries and the original house having fallen into decay in 1542 another lease was granted to "Francis Knowlles gentleman" the statesman of Elizabethan days who was father of Sir William Knollys the Earl of Banbury. It must have been one of the two Knollys who having presumably acquired the freehold built the mansion which existed until early in the 18th century and the position of which is now a matter of conjecture. William Earl of Banbury who was comptroller to Her Majesty entertained Queen Elizabeth at Caversham and in the next reign gave a sumptuous entertainment to Queen Anne of Denmark. After the death of Lord Banbury the Estate came, probably by purchase into the hands of William Lord Craven and he in turn entertained Royalty in the person of King Charles I, who had an interview here, when he was practically a prisoner, with his son the Duke of York as proved by a letter dated "Cawsham" July 4th, 1647.

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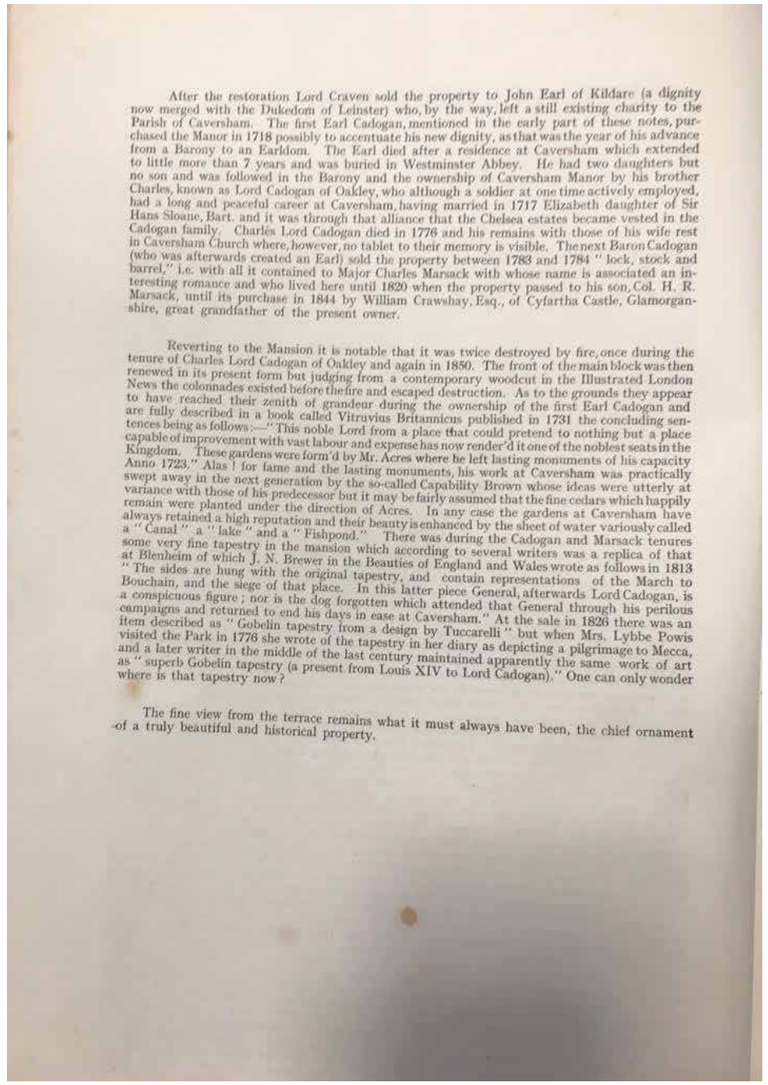
Figure A1.57 1920 sales catalogue page 11111 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051–2

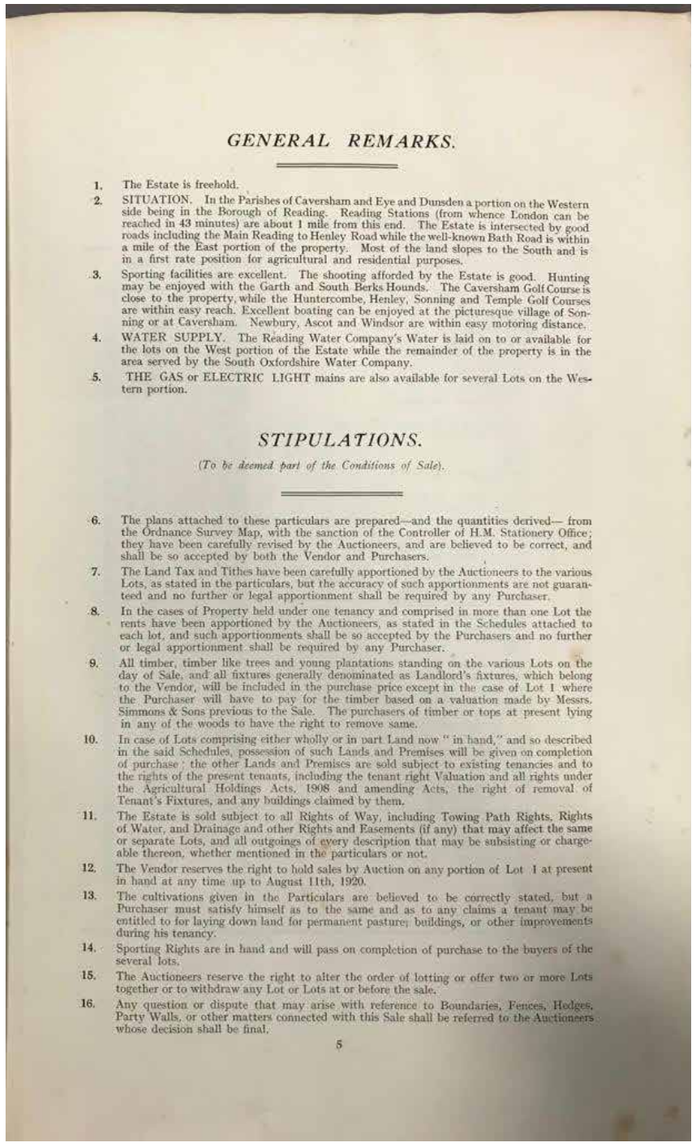


After the restoration Lord Craven sold the property to John Earl of Kildare (a dignity now merged with the Dukedom of Leinster) who, by the way, left a still existing charity to the Parish of Caversham. The first Earl Cadogan, mentioned in the early part of these notes, purchased the Manor in 1718 possibly to accentuate his new dignity, as that was the year of his advance from a Barony to an Earldom. The Earl died after a residence at Caversham which extended to little more than 7 years and was buried in Westminster Abbey. He had two daughters but no son and was followed in the Barony and the ownership of Caversham Manor by his brother Charles, known as Lord Cadogan of Oakley, who although a soldier at one time actively employed, had a long and peaceful career at Caversham, having married in 1717 Elizabeth daughter of Sir Hans Sloane, Bart. and it was through that alliance that the Chelsea estates became vested in the Cadogan family. Charles Lord Cadogan died in 1776 and his remains with those of his wife rest in Caversham Church where, however, no tablet to their memory is visible. The next Baron Cadogan (who was afterwards created an Earl) sold the property between 1783 and 1784 "lock, stock and barrel," i.e. with all it contained to Major Charles Marsack with whose name is associated an interesting romance and who lived here until 1820 when the property passed to his son, Col. H. R. Marsack, until its purchase in 1844 by William Crawshay, Esq., of Cyfartha Castle, Glamorganshire, great grandfather of the present owner.

Reverting to the Mansion it is notable that it was twice destroyed by fire, once during the tenure of Charles Lord Cadogan of Oakley and again in 1850. The front of the main block was then renewed in its present form but judging from a contemporary woodcut in the Illustrated London News the colonnades existed before the fire and escaped destruction. As to the grounds they appear to have reached their zenith of grandeur during the ownership of the first Earl Cadogan and are fully described in a book called Vitruvius Britannicus published in 1731 the concluding sentences being as follows:—"This noble Lord from a place that could pretend to nothing but a place capable of improvement with vast labour and expense has now render'd it one of the noblest seats in the Kingdom. These gardens were form'd by Mr. Acres where he left lasting monuments of his capacity Anno 1723." Alas! for fame and the lasting monuments, his work at Caversham was practically swept away in the next generation by the so-called Capability Brown whose ideas were utterly at variance with those of his predecessor but it may be fairly assumed that the fine cedars which happily remain were planted under the direction of Acres. In any case the gardens at Caversham have always retained a high reputation and their beauty is enhanced by the sheet of water variously called a "Canal" a "lake" and a "Fishpond." There was during the Cadogan and Marsack tenures some very fine tapestry in the mansion which according to several writers was a replica of that at Blenheim of which J. N. Brewer in the Beauties of England and Wales wrote as follows in 1813 "The sides are hung with the original tapestry, and contain representations of the March to Bouchain, and the siege of that place. In this latter piece General, afterwards Lord Cadogan, is a conspicuous figure; nor is the dog forgotten which attended that General through his perilous campaigns and returned to end his days in ease at Caversham." At the sale in 1826 there was an item described as "Gobelin tapestry from a design by Tuccarelli" but when Mrs. Lybbe Powis visited the Park in 1776 she wrote of the tapestry in her diary as depicting a pilgrimage to Mecca, and a later writer in the middle of the last century maintained apparently the same work of art as "superb Gobelin tapestry (a present from Louis XIV to Lord Cadogan)." One can only wonder where is that tapestry now?

The fine view from the terrace remains what it must always have been, the chief ornament of a truly beautiful and historical property.

Figure A1.58 1920 sales catalogue page 111111 Berkshire Record Office DEX175051–2



GENERAL REMARKS.

1. The Estate is freehold.
2. SITUATION. In the Parishes of Caversham and Eye and Dunsden a portion on the Western side being in the Borough of Reading. Reading Stations (from whence London can be reached in 43 minutes) are about 1 mile from this end. The Estate is intersected by good roads including the Main Reading to Henley Road while the well-known Bath Road is within a mile of the East portion of the property. Most of the land slopes to the South and is in a first rate position for agricultural and residential purposes.
3. Sporting facilities are excellent. The shooting afforded by the Estate is good. Hunting may be enjoyed with the Garth and South Berks Hounds. The Caversham Golf Course is close to the property, while the Huntercombe, Henley, Sonning and Temple Golf Courses are within easy reach. Excellent boating can be enjoyed at the picturesque village of Sonning or at Caversham. Newbury, Ascot and Windsor are within easy motoring distance.
4. WATER SUPPLY. The Reading Water Company's Water is laid on to or available for the lots on the West portion of the Estate while the remainder of the property is in the area served by the South Oxfordshire Water Company.
5. THE GAS or ELECTRIC LIGHT mains are also available for several Lots on the Western portion.

STIPULATIONS.

(To be deemed part of the Conditions of Sale).

6. The plans attached to these particulars are prepared—and the quantities derived— from the Ordnance Survey Map, with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office; they have been carefully revised by the Auctioneers, and are believed to be correct, and shall be so accepted by both the Vendor and Purchasers.
7. The Land Tax and Tithes have been carefully apportioned by the Auctioneers to the various Lots, as stated in the particulars, but the accuracy of such apportionments are not guaranteed and no further or legal apportionment shall be required by any Purchaser.
8. In the cases of Property held under one tenancy and comprised in more than one Lot the rents have been apportioned by the Auctioneers, as stated in the Schedules attached to each lot, and such apportionments shall be so accepted by the Purchasers and no further or legal apportionment shall be required by any Purchaser.
9. All timber, timber like trees and young plantations standing on the various Lots on the day of Sale, and all fixtures generally denominated as Landlord's fixtures, which belong to the Vendor, will be included in the purchase price except in the case of Lot 1 where the Purchaser will have to pay for the timber based on a valuation made by Messrs. Simmons & Sons previous to the Sale. The purchasers of timber or tops at present lying in any of the woods to have the right to remove same.
10. In case of Lots comprising either wholly or in part Land now "in hand," and so described in the said Schedules, possession of such Lands and Premises will be given on completion of purchase; the other Lands and Premises are sold subject to existing tenancies and to the rights of the present tenants, including the tenant right Valuation and all rights under the Agricultural Holdings Acts, 1908 and amending Acts, the right of removal of Tenant's Fixtures, and any buildings claimed by them.
11. The Estate is sold subject to all Rights of Way, including Towing Path Rights, Rights of Water, and Drainage and other Rights and Easements (if any) that may affect the same or separate Lots, and all outgoings of every description that may be subsisting or chargeable thereon, whether mentioned in the particulars or not.
12. The Vendor reserves the right to hold sales by Auction on any portion of Lot 1 at present in hand at any time up to August 11th, 1920.
13. The cultivations given in the Particulars are believed to be correctly stated, but a Purchaser must satisfy himself as to the same and as to any claims a tenant may be entitled to for laying down land for permanent pasture; buildings, or other improvements during his tenancy.
14. Sporting Rights are in hand and will pass on completion of purchase to the buyers of the several lots.
15. The Auctioneers reserve the right to alter the order of lotting or offer two or more Lots together or to withdraw any Lot or Lots at or before the sale.
16. Any question or dispute that may arise with reference to Boundaries, Fences, Hedges, Party Walls, or other matters connected with this Sale shall be referred to the Auctioneers whose decision shall be final.

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Figure A1.59 1920 sales catalogue The Entrance Front_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

Figure A1.60 1920 sales catalogue The Library_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

Figure A1.61 1920 the main lodge in Old Peppard Road Berkshire Record Office_Could this have been taken in t

Figure A1.62 1920s fire at Oratory School Berkshire Record Office DEX96530

Figure A1.63 1920s ground floor colonnade

Figure A1.64 1920s Orangery bay window

Figure A1.65 1920s Orangery

Figure A1.66 1920s reception room

Figure A1.67 1920s sales catalogue The Terrace Walk_Could this have been taken in the 1890s perhaps

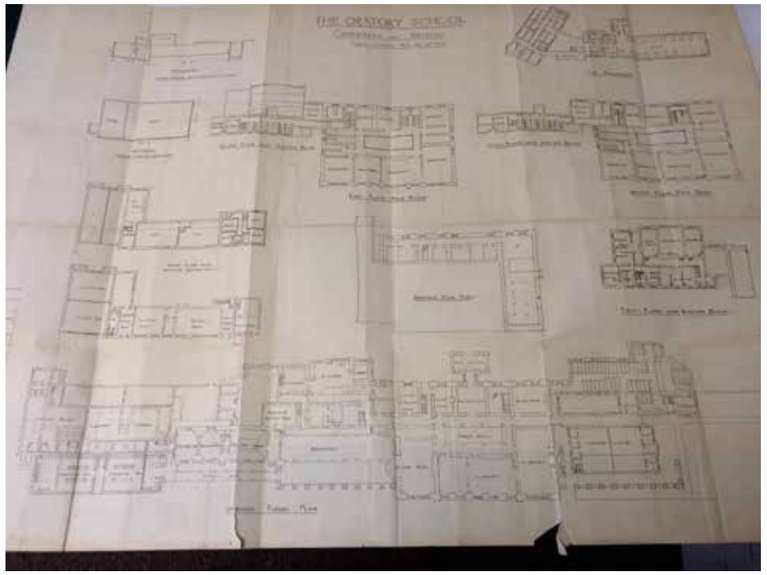

Figure A1.68 1920s to 1940s ground floor plan from BBC archive

Figure A1.69 1923 Oratory school archive off to camp

Figure A1.70 1929 The Oratory School Website

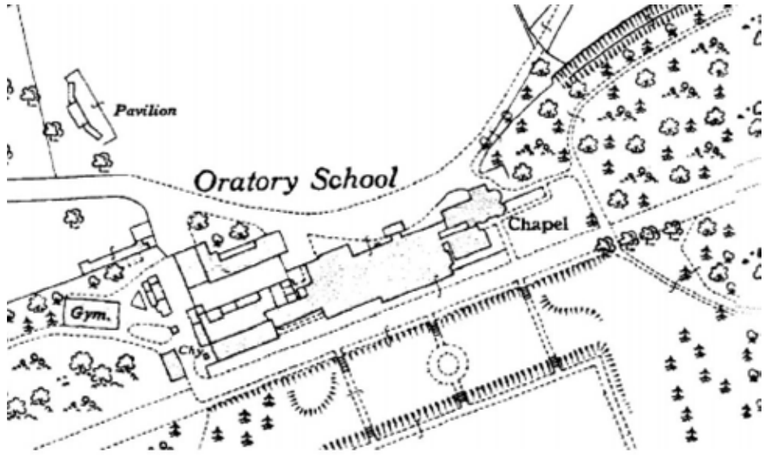

Figure A1.71 1930 OS map

Figure A1.72 1930s Oratory School archive billiard room

Figure A1.73 1930s Oratory School archive chapel

Figure A1.74 1930s Oratory School archive clibrary

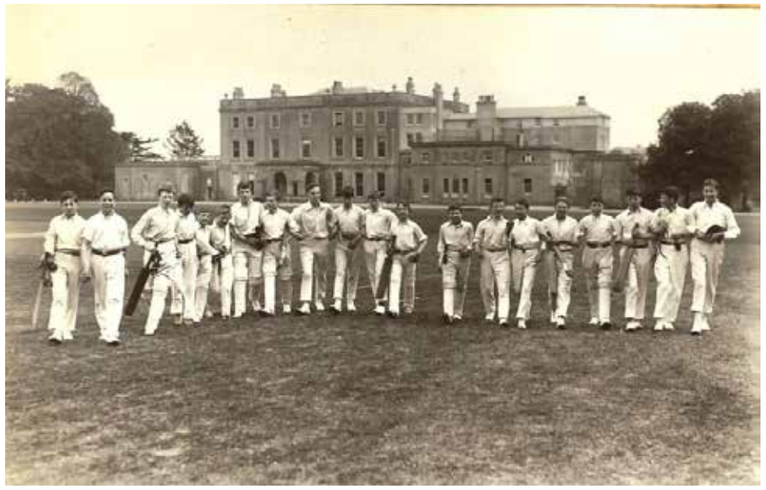

Figure A1.75 1930s Oratory School archive cricket

Figure A1.76 1930s Oratory School archive dining hall

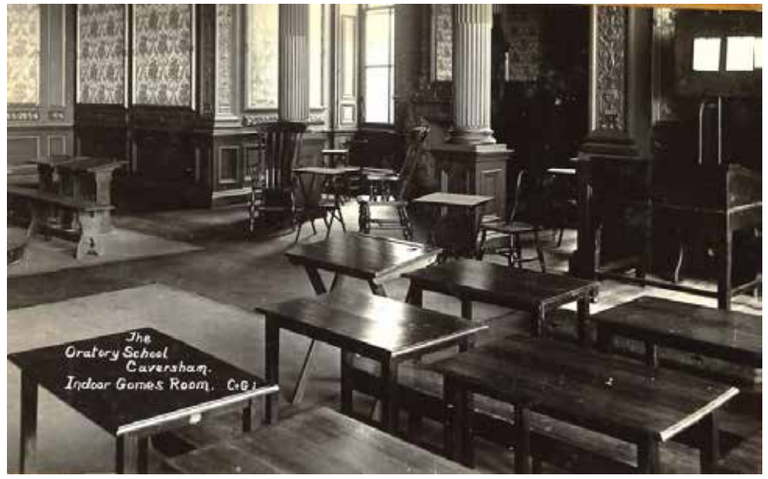

Figure A1.77 1930s Oratory School archive indoor games room 1

Figure A1.78 1930s Oratory School archive indoor games room 2