



Caversham Park | Caversham

Design and Access Statement

Beechcroft
DESIGNED WITH RETIREMENT IN MIND



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



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1 INTRODUCTION

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OVERVIEW

1.1 This statement has been prepared by BHP Harwood Architects LLP in support of a Planning and Listed Building Application submitted on behalf of Beechcroft Developments Ltd. The application is for the redevelopment of Caversham Park to provide Assisted Living and over 55's Downsizers housing through a mix of refurbishment and new build, Affordable Homes and a Care Home.

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

1.2 The aim of the statement is to ensure the process of design is integral to the creation of new developments, generating attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places with sustainability being a key intention of development at all times. This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Circular 01/2006 which requires applications to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. It also takes account of the advice set out in the CABE publication, "Design & Access Statements - how to write, read and use them". Reference to the National Design Guide and 10 requirements of good design.

DOCUMENT CONTENT

- 1.3 In particular this statement will address the following design issues;
- Use – What the land and buildings will be used for and how the existing heritage assets will be retained and converted.
 - Amount – How much development can the site accommodate?
 - Layout – How buildings, public and private spaces will be positioned to form the best holistic design solution in relation to both the heritage assets on site on the wider context.
 - Scale – How large the buildings and spaces will be and how the buildings and spaces will respond to the heritage assets on site
 - Landscaping – How the open space will be treated to enhance the overall built environment
 - Appearance – What the building and spaces will look like.
- 1.4 The document will also seek to consider the following access issues;
- Vehicular & Transport Links – The proposed access points and routes onto the site and how these respond to the existing highway network.
 - Inclusive Access – Equal ability to move within the site regardless of age or disability.

INVOLVEMENT

- 1.5
- The statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings and the following documents:
- Planning Statement prepared by Savills
 - Heritage Statement prepared by Savills
 - Transport Assessment prepared by Glanville Consultants
 - Drainage Assessment prepared by Glanville Consultants
 - Utilities Assessment prepared by Glanville Consultants
 - Arboricultural Survey and Report prepared by Aspect Arboriculture
 - Ecology Report prepared by Aspect Ecology
 - Landscape detail prepared by Savills
 - Energy Statement prepared by Resi Resolve Ltd
 - Housing Needs Assessment prepared by Three Dragons
 - Lighting Assessment prepared by DFL

DESIGN STATEMENT

- 1.6
- At BHP HARWOOD Architects we pride ourselves on adopting a unique and individual approach to each commission awarded to us. We have great experience in designing schemes in sensitive locations, often requiring particular skills in dealing with Listed Buildings or buildings within a Conservation Area and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1.7
- Our experience covers a broad range of projects in both scale and nature: from the redevelopment of brownfield urban sites to sensitive schemes in rural fringes and from strategic development sites to one-off houses. Our philosophy of 'contextual design' means that our architectural style will be derived from the specific site location and so will vary from the traditional to the contemporary as appropriate.

Context & Character

- 1.8
- This statement sets outs the results of the research undertaken into the context and character of the locality of the site and the wider area of Caversham and how this has influenced the design proposals.

Landscape

- 1.9
- This statement will set out the landscape context of the site and its surrounds and then show how the development has been set out to work with and enhance the landscaping.

Access

- 1.10
- This statement sets out access strategy and how this works with the existing highways network.

Sustainability

- 1.11
- This statement will set out vision for producing an energy efficient and socially and economically sustainable development.

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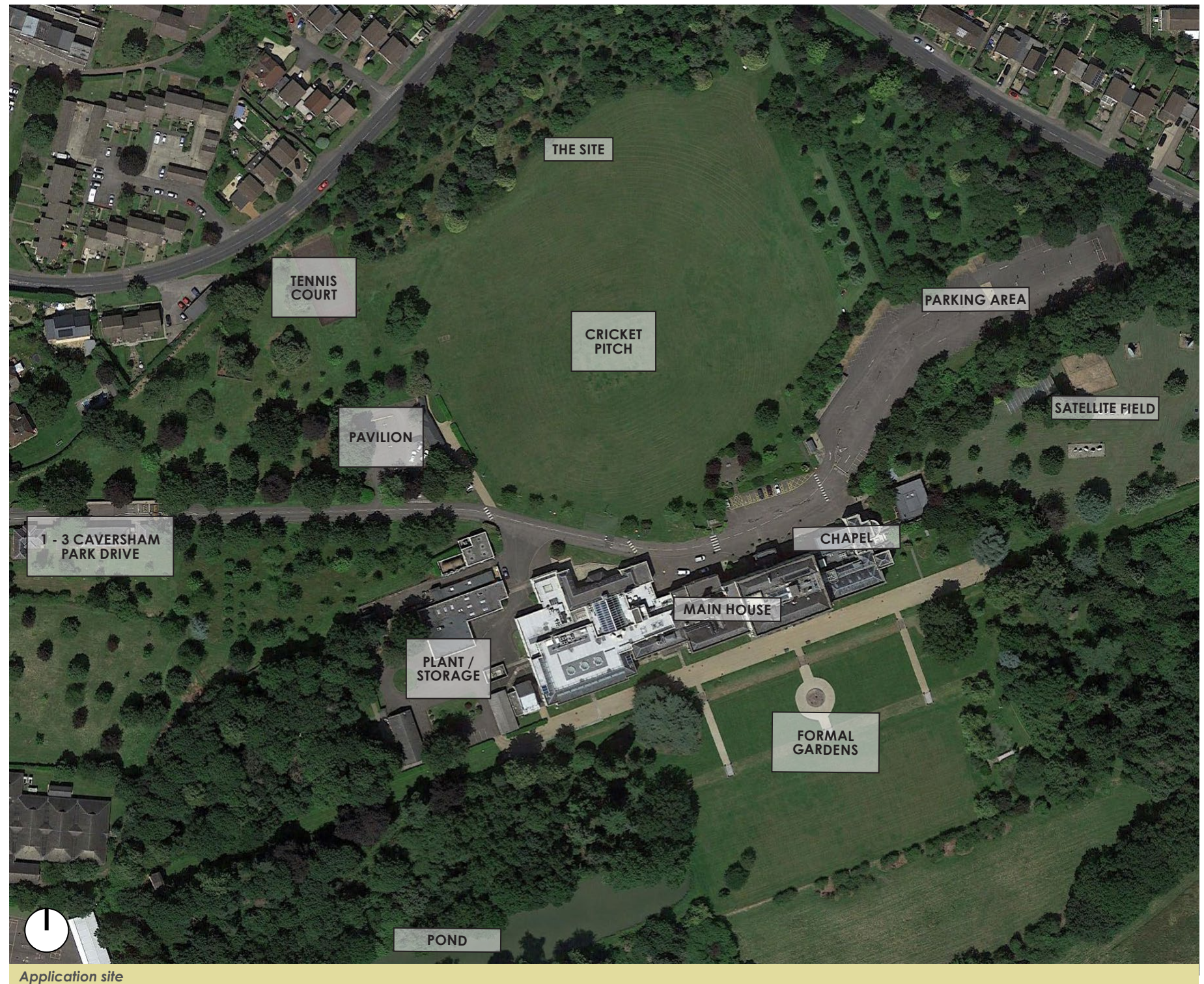
THE PROPOSAL

- 1.12
- The quantum of development consists of
- The retention and conversion of the main house to assisted living apartments (Class C2) and associated works.
- The construction of a care home (Class C2) immediately to the west of the main house;
- Construction of a row of townhouses (C3) in place of the existing car park to the north east of the main house;
- Construction of a group of houses and flats (C3) within the clearing currently occupied by satellite dishes to the east of the main house;
- Construction of a group of houses (C3) in the enclosed field to the north of the BBC Records Centre, fronting Peppard Road and to the south of Caversham Park Drive; and
- Change of use of numbers 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive from their existing ancillary residential use to C3 dwellings and associated works.
- 1.13
- The last use of Caversham Park was an office use.



THE SITE

- 1.14 Caversham is located in the county of Berkshire, South East England, one mile north of the major town of Reading, and 37 miles west of London. Caversham lies just south-east of the Oxfordshire border, and was historically in the county of Oxfordshire. Caversham falls within the unitary authority of Reading.
- 1.15 Both Caversham and Emmer Green have a good range of facilities, including shops, supermarket, restaurants, a number of pubs, schools, library, GP Surgery and other community facilities. There are a number of sports and community clubs, including a social club, football club and tennis club.
- 1.16 Caversham Park is set within and is surrounded by the suburb of Caversham which lies on the northern side of the River Thames to the north of Reading. The site covers circa 40 hectares (ha) of land which is predominantly bounded (west, north and east) by mid to late twentieth century, low-rise/low density residential development. To the immediate south, the site is bounded by Reading Cemetery and Crematorium.
- 1.17 The house and landscaped garden on the site lie on a plateau at the top of a south-east facing sloping hill. Panoramic views extend southwards from the house and garden terraces at the top of the slope with views across Caversham and Reading, overlooking the River Thames which runs through lower land to the south.
- 1.18 The principal access into the site is via a private road named Caversham Park Drive at the north-west corner of the site which connects with Peppard Road.



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Caversham Park, Site Photos





Caversham Park, Site Photos





PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

1.19 A Planning Statement has been prepared by Savills to accompany this application which sets out the planning advantages of the proposed development.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.20 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised July 2021, has built upon many of the principles which were set out in the preceding framework. It provides the overarching planning policy framework against which all local plans and neighbourhood plans should be prepared and against which all planning applications are determined.
- 1.21 The NPPF identifies that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. The NPPF confirms that to ensure “sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11)”.
- 1.22 The NPPF sets out that in order to support “the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes”, importance should be place on ensuring that a “sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed”.
- 1.23 The Government also attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, which is illustrated in Section 12 of the NPPF which seeks to ensure good design.

Development Plan

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

- 1.24 A new Reading Borough Local Plan was adopted on 4th November 2019. This document sets out planning policies for development in Reading up to 2036, and is the main consideration in deciding planning applications.
- 1.25 The Local Plan replaces our previous development plans – the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Sites and Detailed Policies Document.
- 1.26 The Local Plan seeks to ensure that all development within the Borough is of a high quality design and builds on local character and patterns of development.

Local Plan Policy CA2 (Caversham Park)

- 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.
- 1.27 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.

