

Open Space, Parkland & Cemeteries

Low Density Residential

Medium Density Residential

Deciduous Woodland

Henley Road Allotment

Schools

Local shops

Filling Station

Golf Course

Figure 10: Townscape Context:



Caversham Park Village to the north and east of Caversham Park

Townscape Character to the North and East

To the north and east of Caversham Park, the 1960s/1970s suburb of Caversham Park Village wraps around the historic park. This area is characterised by two storey terraces and semi detached residential properties with driveway parking and small gardens, occupying an area with undulating topography.

Streets are curved, and include a high proportion of cul-de-sacs. The townscape also includes a number of *ad hoc* public green spaces. The character of this area is very representative of development across the UK at this time and does not specifically relate to the adjacent parkland or wider Berkshire vernacular. The estate does however, incorporate some mature trees and road alignments around its boundaries that reflect original tree planting and paths associated with the original Caversham Park.

5.4 Landscape and Townscape - Baseline Sensitivity

Site Landscape Features and Character Sensitivity: Western Development Parcel

The review of the site shows that the area proposed for the affordable housing development in the western part of the site is not covered by the Registered Park and Garden designation. The landscape here is typified by semi-improved grassland and relatively young trees that contribute little to the historic character of the wider park. Using the definitions set out in Appendix A: Table A, the overall value of the landscape character here is judged to be '**medium'.**

With regards to specific features, the hedgerow along its western boundary, on Peppard Road, provides an attractive frontage to the road, as well as a visual screen. This hedgerow is therefore judged to be of '**medium'** value.

Existing trees and hedgerows to the north and south of this development parcel are also of 'medium' value, giving visual enclosure to this area, especially when viewed from the existing parkland and lodges to the north and east.
Other trees and grassland within this part of the site are judged to be of '**medium-low'** value.

With regards to 'susceptibility to change', the enclosure that the boundary hedgerows and woodland provide to this area of the site means that its overall character will be partially tolerant to the proposed housing development and of 'medium' susceptibility to change (see Appendix A: Table B.) When considered with the 'medium' value of the landscape character, the overall landscape sensitivity of this area is therefore judged to be **'medium'** (see Appendix A: Table C).

Landscape Features and Character Sensitivity: Care Home Development Parcel

The proposed care home site is covered by the Caversham Park Registered Park and Garden designation and close to the Caversham Park House listed building. Overall, this area therefore has a **'high**' landscape value, according to the definitions set out in Appendix A: Table A.

This development area is predominantly occupied by late twentieth century buildings and yard areas and benefits from integrating with the wider area by mature tree planting to the north and west in particular. It does not contribute significantly to the wider parkland landscape character and is therefore considered in landscape terms to be tolerant of the type of proposed development. The presence of some large woodlands scale trees around the area would be susceptible to change if removed however, meaning that overall this area has a **'medium'** susceptibility to change (Appendix A: Table B). Overall, the sensitivity of this proposed development area in terms of its existing landscape character and features is therefore judged to be '**medium'**.

Landscape Features and Character Sensitivity: Northern Parkland & Development Parcel to the North-East of Caversham House

The Caversham Park Registered Park and Garden designation and listed buildings within its grounds, gives the parkland to the north of the listed house a **'high**' landscape value, according to the definitions set out in Appendix A: Table A.

This area includes a number of mature veteran trees as well as an area of younger woodland planting that wraps around the northern boundary of the park, planted at the time of the adjacent Caversham Park Village housing development. The former cricket pitch and associated pavilion and parking is also a 20th century addition, as is the *ad hoc* ornamental planting and extensive areas of car parking close to the main house. The overall character of the parkland has therefore evolved significantly over the past century and is judged to have a **'medium'** susceptibility to change (see Appendix A: Table B) based on its partial degradation and the presence of existing vegetation that can provide screening.

The development provides an opportunity for landscape enhancements to this part of the parkland (see Section 6), including habitat creation, tree planting, recreation and access opportunities.

Overall, the landscape sensitivity of the area of the parkland to the north of the house is therefore judged to be **'Medium'** (based on the definitions in Appendix A: Table C).

Landscape Features and Character Sensitivity: Development Parcel in Eastern Parkland

The proposed development area to the east of the listed house is also covered by the Caversham Park Registered Park and Garden designation and is therefore judged to have a **'high'** landscape value, according to the definitions set out in Appendix A: Table A.

This area includes a significant number of mature trees on all sides, giving it a visually enclosed, relatively remote character, despite its proximity to the listed building and housing in the Lowfield Road area. The character of this area predominantly reflects its twentieth century use by the BBC, with semi-improved grassland occupied by satellite dishes occupying the central area.

The overall character of much of this part of the park has therefore evolved significantly over the past century and any development here need not result in the loss of the important mature trees. This central part of the area is therefore is judged to have a **'medium'** susceptibility to change (see Appendix A: Table B.)

The southern part of this proposed eastern development parcel has a stronger character, begin located closer to the historic vista/terrace that runs along the southern elevation of the house towards the listed temple to the west. The susceptibility to change of this area is therefore considered to be 'high'.

Overall, the landscape sensitivity of the area of the proposed development parcel to the east of the house is therefore judged to range from **'medium'** to **'high'** (see Appendix A: Table C).

Landscape Features and Character Sensitivity: Southern Parkland

No development is proposed in the area of parkland to the south of Caversham House other than associated enhancements to the parkland, including the provision of a new footpath. As with the rest of the rest of the Caversham Park Registered Park and Garden this part of the site is judged to have a '**high'** landscape value (see Appendix A Table A.)

Given the presence of mature woodland to the south-west and south-east of the house, the proposed development will generally be screened form the wider parkland with only glimpses of the care home and proposed housing to the east of the house from the terraced lawns to the south of the house. This degree of screening and lack of development means that the terraced lawns to the south of the house will have 'medium' susceptibility to change, based on the definitions set out in Appendix A Table B, while further to the south, away from the proposed built development the susceptibility to change will diminish to **'low'.**

Overall, this gives the southern parkland a '**Medium'** to **'Medium-Low**' sensitivity, depending on the distance from the proposed development.

Townscape Character Sensitivity: West of Caversham Park
To the west of the site, the townscape of Peppard Road is judged to be of **'medium'** value (see Appendix A, Table A). Whilst it is not a designated townscape, it benefits from a leafy character with views towards the entrance to Caversham Park with its listed gates and curtilage listed buildings along Caversham Park Drive.

Whilst there would be the potential for views of the new housing within the western development parcel, the existing hedgerow along the Peppard Road frontage and built form of the lodges to the north and BBC archives to the south would help screen views from the wider area. Overall this would give this townscape a **'medium'** susceptibility to change (Appendix A, Table B) and overall, a 'medium' townscape sensitivity (Appendix A, Table C).

Townscape Character Sensitivity: South of Caversham Park

To the south of Caversham Park, the urban fringe character of the townscape including the allotments and cemetery is judged to be of '**medium-low'** value (see Appendix A, Table A).

The screening elements of Caversham House and its adjacent woodland mean that is unlikely that any proposed development would be visible from this area, giving this townscape a **'low'** susceptibility to change (Appendix A, Table B) and overall **'low'** townscape sensitivity (Appendix A, Table C).

Townscape Character Sensitivity: North and East of Caversham Park

To the north and east of Caversham Park, the 1960s/1970s estate of Caversham Park Village is not designated for its townscape character and has few distinct landscape features. It is therefore judged to be of **'medium-low**' value (see Appendix A, Table A).

The screening elements of the existing trees around the northern and eastern boundaries of the parkland mean that is unlikely that any proposed development would be visible from this area, giving this townscape a '**low'** susceptibility to change (Appendix A, Table B) and overall '**low'** townscape sensitivity (Appendix A, Table C).



Vista towards the listed temple at the western end of terrace.

5.5 Potential Landscape Effects

Western Development Parcel: Landscape and Townscape Appraisal

The proposed housing to the west of Caversham House is centred on an area that does not have a strong historic character, comprising an area of semi-improved grassland and trees adjacent to an area of late twentieth century to the west of the site on Peppard Road. It has no direct visual connectivity with Caversham House. A hedge running along the northern boundary of the proposed housing area provides a degree of visual and physical separation between this area and the existing houses at the western end of Caversham Park Drive.

As described in Section 5.4, this area is considered to have a 'medium' landscape sensitivity.

A total of 30 trees will be removed to accommodate the new housing in the western development parcel, however other than one tree, a non native Eucalyptus (T144), these are all Category C (low) or Unclassified trees, comprising young and semi-mature, non-native and/or short-lived species trees of average physiological condition. These are shown in the accompanying *Arboricultural Impact Assessment* (Aspect Arboricultural) and comprise two birch (T90, T12), four cherries (T110, T111, T113, T156), eight Norway maples (T92, T145, T150, T151, T154, T155, T157, T162), two narrow-leaved ash (T148, T160), five horse chestnuts (T143, T147, T152, T153, T167), two lime (T149, T158), a cherry plum (T159), a beech (T141), a red oak (T163), a field maple (T164), a sweet chestnut (T165) and an oak (T142).

The removal of this *ad hoc* collection of low value tree specimens will be more than compensated for by the provision of 32 new trees within this western development parcel, plus numerous additional trees within the wider parkland to the north of Caversham Park House. In addition, the existing orchard area to the north-east will be restored and enlarged, with appropriate pruning, and the planting of new trees to the south of the lodge houses. Whilst a detailed design has not been prepared for the area, the illustrative landscape strategy drawings are showing that approximately 44 new orchard trees will be provided.

No boundary hedgerows will be removed other than approximately 4m to accommodate two new pedestrian paths to provide links to Peppard Road.

Whilst the character of this area will change from an area of open grassland to a new residential area, the buildings and associated public open space will be sensitively designed to complement both Peppard Road and the adjacent parkland. New buildings will be similar in massing to existing properties to the west and will be set back a similar distance from Peppard Road, behind a generous corridor of communal green space, fronted by the existing hedgerow. The new homes will be clustered around a central leafy courtyard which will accommodate parking areas that form an integral part of the townscape. Generous areas of verge and grassed space provide space for the incorporation of new street tree planting within the central space as well as along the Peppard Road frontage. New shrub planting around parking areas and within the open spaces will also further soften the area and integrate the new buildings with the surrounding landscape.

Based on the definitions set out in Appendix A, Table D, the proposals would result in an effect of 'low adverse' magnitude and 'minor' significance (see Appendix A, Tables D and E) on the landscape character of this part of the parkland, but wider associated enhancements to the wider parkland, such as the restoration of the adjacent traditional orchard would provide further compensation for this (see Section 4).

Pavilion Extension and Parkland to the north of Caversham Park House

To the west of the existing pavilion there will be a small extension to include a cafe and Interpretation Hub. Visually this will sit behind the existing pavilion to the north-east and retained mature trees to the south and west, meaning that it will not form a dominant element in views from the surrounding area. The existing car parking in this area will be re-configured and include an additional area of spaces that will extend to the north, towards the retained tennis court. These spaces will also benefit from some screening by existing retained trees to the west and east, and also from additional new shrub, hedgerow

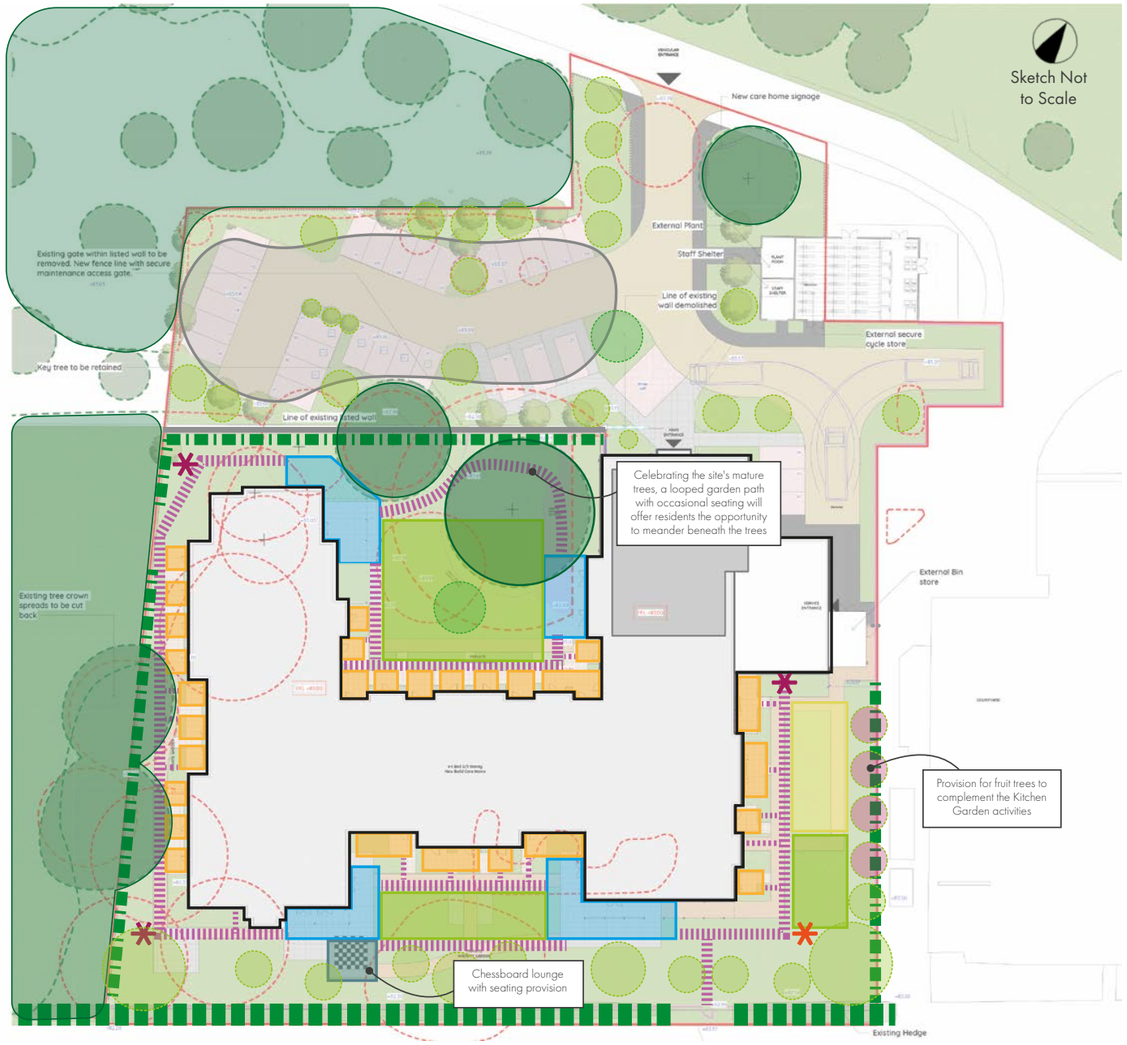


Key

- Existing trees retained
- Proposed trees
- Existing orchard managed and enhanced including additional traditional orchard tree planting
- Proposed private gardens (including patios)
- Proposed ornamental shrubs
- Existing semi-improved grass managed as wildflower meadow (Areas of reinstatement/new meadow to be seeded with Emorsgate EM4F 'Wild Flower for Clay Soils')
- Proposed amenity grass
- Pavements/Paths: Asphalt
- Existing/proposed path (Buff/golden colour self binding gravel): public access during daylight hours (route to also include litter/dog waste bins)
- Car Parking: permeable block paving (Marshells Tegula Priora, Burnt Ochre, or similar agreed)
- New access road: permeable block paving (Marshells Tegula Priora, Pennant Grey, or similar agreed)
- Pedestrian paths with tar and chip dressing (Golden Gravel/Buff colour): public access during daylight hours (route to also include litter/dog waste bins)
- G3 Proposed gate

NOTE:
- Final tree numbers will seek to reflect the Reading Tree Strategy aim of a 30:20:10 ratio, i.e. to include no more that 30% or any one Family, 20% of any one genus and 10% of any one species.

Figure 11 Landscape Strategy: Western Development



Parking Courtyard - Offering low level planting the parking court will be framed by formal hedge and tree planting that will compliment the wider parkland setting

Communal Lawns - Formal lawns with opportunities for seasonal events and informal recreation appropriate to the end user and care programme

Private Terraces - Formed by a series of private patio gardens, these will allow residents to gain access to the communal gardens from their individual suites

Communal Terraces - Aligned to the internal building design, the communal terraces will provide a series of outdoor activity areas allowing residents to interact and socialise

Kitchen Garden - Provision for a greenhouse and raised planters providing opportunities for residents to benefit from gardening / horticultural therapy

Sensory Walk - Surrounded by sensory planting, incorporating a mix of sizes, textures, colours, seasonal variation and scents, that will support the residents well-being and encourage them to interact with the natural environment. Pathways formed by block paving will create pleasant routes for residents to venture out into the garden. To alleviate the dementia residents who are more at risk, all pathways have focal furniture at the end to ensure that there are no dead ends, reducing the risk of dementia residents from becoming lost within the gardens.

Existing Hedge to be retained and enhanced

Existing Trees to be retained

Proposed Hedge

Tree Planting Provision

Focal Features

Arbour Seats Gazebo



PRECEDENT IMAGES

DEACON DESIGN

DOC. REF.: DD551101 REVISION B

CAVERSHAM PARK, READING

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS SKETCH & PRECEDENT IMAGES

Figure 12: Care Home: Landscape Proposals Sketch (Courtesy of Deacon Design)

and tree planting around the car park extension. These works around the existing pavilion will necessitate the removal of nine trees together with parts of several groups of Category C shrubs (G17). The trees to be removed comprise a Category C red oak (T36), tulip tree (T37) three ash (T40, T61, T62), a horse chestnut (T41) and two silver birch (T42, T60) and a and a silver maple (T65). The Category C trees do not contribute to the historic character of the parkland and their removal would enable a more cohesive approach to be taken to the structure of the planting around this area.

Thirteen new trees are proposed around the new car parking, pavilion extension and within the parkland immediately to the east of this area, together with an area of formal shrub beds and hedgerows around the car park. This new planting will create an attractive setting to the pavilion extension and car park and ensure that there will be a net increase of four trees. Overall the change here is judged to be 'neutral'.

Caversham House Main Entrance

To the immediate north of the house, 17 trees will be removed, together with an area of formal shrub planting appearing to date from the late 20th century. Some of these tree removals will be to accommodate new parking spaces, but the majority of the removals are to restore the historic character and open up views in this area of the park. The trees here predominantly date from the mid 20th century and were planted during the time of the BBC occupation. They are generally not native and comprise small ornamental species that were popular in garden planting during the 1950s to the 1970s. Species here are all Category C and comprise six cherries, (T68, T69, T72, T174, T179, T185), a rowan (T71), a weeping birch (T184), a Deodar cedar, (T183), a field maple (T180), two purple plum (T175, T177), a hornbeam (T176), three purple Norway maple (T170, T173, T178) and a black walnut (T171). A further black walnut (T172c) in this area will be retained however, given that it is Category A and has a memorial plaque. The rationalisation of trees in this area is beneficial in terms of the restoration of the historic parkland and setting of the house. To retain open views to and from the house only three new trees will be planted immediately close to its northern entrance, but instead a further 16 trees will be planted to the north-west and between the new parking bays to the east of the pavilion and a further four trees within the parkland to the south-east of the proposed bowling greens. Overall then, the removal of the 17 trees to the north of the house will be replaced by a total of 16 new trees, giving a net reduction of 1 new trees in this area.

Care Home Development Parcel: Landscape Appraisal

The proposed care home will occupy an area already occupied by buildings and parking areas dating from the late twentieth century. Whilst the development takes place in a registered park and garden the overall landscape sensitivity for this area is 'medium' given that it is currently occupied by areas of hard-standing and late 20th century buildings associated with the BBC occupancy of the property but is located close to the listed Caversham House (see Section 5.4.)

The proposed development has been designed to minimise the removal of existing trees and will result in the removal of approximately 11 no. trees and parts of four groups of trees. These are predominantly Category C trees or early mature Category A and B, including a Category B beech (T88) and two Category A beech (T513 and T518,) a Category C ash (T105) and three Category A ash (T511, T512 and T514) a Category A hornbeam (T517), and Category C Turkish hazel (T106), yew (T132) and sweet gum (T107). The groups of trees to be removed would include a group of early mature Category B beech and ash (G16) together with part of a group of Category C apple, pear and cherry trees (G3). Groups G15 and G17 and H5 would also be removed, however these comprise overgrown shrubs rather than trees.

To compensate for these removals 36 new trees will be planted around the proposed care home parking area, and gardens (see Figure 12 Sketch Landscape Proposals opposite) Additional orchard trees will be planted within the existing area of orchard to the west (see p.38 and Figure 11 above). This orchard will also be extended westwards, to ensure that there is no net loss of orchard area.

In summary, the majority of trees to be removed to accommodate the new care home are either of low quality or are relatively young. Whilst T511, T512, T513, T514 and T17 are all Category A trees, the Arboricultural Impact Assessment states that these are all 'early mature' trees of 'average or 'below average' physiological condition. The Assessment considers that their high value is conferred given their component of a wider collection only, rather than as individual specimens. Given that these trees lie adjacent to mature woodland to the west, the retention of this woodland beyond means that the overall contribution that the woodland makes to the backdrop of this part of the site will remain.

The care home has been carefully designed to retain a mature Category A English oak tree (T131) and Category C sycamore (T133), which will both be retained as focal features within the northern parts of the gardens. In addition, the new grounds will provide a green setting to the new building, including lawns, ornamental shrub areas and private patio spaces. The new building and grounds will be of a far higher quality than the existing *ad hoc* buildings and parking areas built for the BBC within this area and will be designed to respect the built form of the adjacent listed Caversham House. Based on the definitions set out in Appendix A, Table D, the change in the landscape character of this part of the site and its wider parkland as a result of this part of the development would be of 'low' beneficial magnitude and 'minor' beneficial significance, despite the removal of a small number of trees (Table E).

Development Parcel to the North-East of Caversham House: Landscape Appraisal

The conversion of Caversham House will be accompanied by significant enhancements to the grounds to both the north and south as set out in Section 4. These elements will all complement the country house character of the property, compared to the semi-institutional character that this external area currently has. In addition, a large area of BBC car parking will be rationalised and replaced with a new drive leading to proposed housing to the north-east and east of Caversham House and new grass and tree planting

To the north of this current parking area, there will be an access to mews style development enclosed by three blocks of houses. These will create a semi-formal courtyard. This area currently comprises grassland with semi-mature trees and does not have a strong parkland character.

To accommodate these new homes and associated parking a number of trees will be removed. These are predominantly young or early mature scattered trees that are classified as Category C or U. These comprise a group of early mature goat willow (G1), two small groups of mixed group of semi mature native and non-native trees such as oak, beech, horse chestnut, hazel, hawthorn, whitebeam, alder, rowan, wild service, Norway Maple, poplar, hornbeam, cherry plum, cherry, field maple Lawon cypress, Scots Pine, cherry, holly and ash (G9 and G11), and a number of individual trees, namely a cherry (T278), a western red cedar (T279), a goat willow (T283), three silver birches (T284-T286), three limes (T287, T288, T292), three horse chestnuts (T289, T293, T298), four field maples (T290, T291, T294, T295), two ash (T297, T302) two whitebeam (T305, T310, T312) a Hybrid Cockspur thorn (T306) and a Lawson cypress (T308). Only two Category B (moderate) trees would be felled, T307, an early mature whitebeam and T309, an early mature variegated western red cedar.

To compensate for the removal of the 25 individual trees and three groups of trees to accommodate the new homes to the north-east of the house, their loss will be more than compensated for by the planting of a well-structured series of 43 no. garden and forest-scale specimens in this area which can include native species such as oak and beech. Some of these will be planted to the west of the new houses and will further integrate the new homes with the parkland setting whilst others will also be planted adjacent to the north of the access drive and parking areas to the north-east of Caversham House.

The landscape sensitivity of the area to the north-east of the house is judged to be 'medium' (see Section 5.4). Based on the definitions in Appendix A, Tables D and E, the proposed residential development to the north-east of the house would initially result in an effect of 'medium' adverse magnitude and 'moderate' significance on the landscape character of the this area. When considered with the associated landscape enhancements to both this area and the wider area of parkland to both the north and south of the house, the residual effects of the development within the north-eastern part of the parkland would be of 'medium beneficial' magnitude and 'moderate beneficial' significance. The overall effects on the northern parkland alone would be of 'high' magnitude and 'major' significance.

Development Parcel in Eastern Parkland: Landscape Appraisal

To the east of Caversham House, a courtyard development is proposed. This is inspired by an historic stable block and will occupy an area currently covered by semi-improved grass, a glasshouse and satellite dishes. The new building will be oriented to reflect the alignment of Caversham Park House. Car parking areas will be situated within the courtyard, ensuring that no cars are visible from the surrounding parkland.

This area is well concealed by existing mature trees on all sides and this structure will be retained, helping to conserve the relatively remote feel to this part of the park, despite its proximity to both Caversham Park House and Lowfield Road. The layout has been designed to minimise the removal of trees and will retain and respect the historic vista and associated hedgerow to the south. Eight trees will be removed in association with the western apartment block, however some of these are Category U and should be removed for safety purposes in any event.

A Lawson Cypress (T235) would be removed to allow access to the parking area to the immediate east of the historic house, however this is a Category C tree of low historic importance. A small part of G7, an area of overgrown shrubs, including yew and laurel would also be removed however the overall structure of this group would remain.

The courtyard building would also result in the removal of 19 trees together with parts of G12 and G13. These are all

Category C semi-mature or early mature trees that appear to date from the late 20th century. These comprise a hornbeam (T240), three English oak (T245 - T247), a Cedar of Lebanon (T249), five Norway maples (T250 - T52, T254, T255), a black walnut (T253) three limes (T260, T261, T486), a sycamore (T262), three horse chestnuts (T248, T263, T265) and an ash (T264).

The introduction of housing in this part of the Registered Park and Garden would initially have an effect that is of 'low' adverse magnitude and 'minor' adverse significance (see Appendix A, Tables D and E), given that an area that is currently dominated by satellite dishes and twentieth century planting would be partially replaced by a new courtyard building set within a generous area of parkland. Whilst 19 existing trees and parts of two groups of trees will be removed to accommodate this, in general these are of low quality and not mature. The planting of 10 new trees in and around the new courtyard housing, together with a further 23 new trees within the driveway area to the north and parking area to the east of the main house will more than compensate for these.

When the changes to this area are considered in conjunction with the enhancements to the wider area of parkland to both the north and south of the house, the residual effects of the development within the north-eastern part of the parkland would be of 'medium beneficial' magnitude and 'moderate beneficial' significance.

Landscape Features and Character Appraisal: Southern Parkland

Whilst there will be no built development to the south of the house, the scheme provides a commitment to enhancing the parkland and grounds to the south, as set out in the Landscape Strategy (see Section 4). This will include:

- The restoration/enhancement of existing hoggin paths through the areas of woodland to the south-west and south-east of the house. The path through the western wood will be available to members of the public during daylight hours, thereby allowing public access into an area that is currently restricted.
- Repair works to the 'ha ha' wall and removal of scrub species here to open up views. The introduction of a mown grass path around the southern parkland. This path will allow public access into a landscape that is currently inaccessible and will therefore be a beneficial landscape asset.
- The management of the parkland and field to the south of the 'ha ha' as wildflower meadow.
- The planting of new hedgerows around the southern part of the parkland, adjacent to the Cemetery. This will provide visual separation to both land uses and help restore the parkland character of the area.
- The planting of clumps of forest-scale trees within the southern parkland. Whilst there is no known mapping of the Capability Brown designs for this part of the park, the aim will be to reflect how the parkland may have been designed at this time. Tree species will be native, primarily comprising oak and beech. Whilst detailed planting plans will be subject to a planning condition, the Illustrative Landscape Strategy is showing the potential for planting approximately 250 new trees in this area.
- Woodland management/restoration within the western and eastern woodlands to the south of the house. This will include the removal of any unsafe elements as well as species such as laurel. Whilst the overall structure of the woodlands will remain, the management of the south-western woodland will seek to open up views of terracing that are believed to date from the Stephen Switzer parkland design. The precise aspects of this woodland management will be subject to a detailed proposal as a condition of planning consent.
- The retention of the large satellite dish within the north-eastern corner of the southern parkland. This will reflect the history of the BBCs occupation of the site and will be accompanied by interpretation.
- The restoration of the small pond garden to the south-east of the house. This dates from the BBCs occupation and does not contribute to the heritage value of the parkland. It can be enhanced to provide an attractive areas for residents to enjoy however.

Overall, the proposals provide the opportunity for a 'high beneficial' change to the landscape of the parkland to the south of the house. Given the 'high' sensitivity of the parkland, this would result in a 'major' landscape benefit to this area of the site based on the definitions set out in Table E.

5.6 Potential Townscape Effects

A landscape and townscape appraisal has been undertaken to ascertain potential effects on the landscape character and features of the site and surrounding townscape. This is not a heritage assessment, which is covered by the Montagu Evans Heritage chapter of the Environmental Assessment. Instead this appraisal focuses on changes to the existing landscape and townscape character and features.

Townscape Character Sensitivity: West of Caversham Park

When viewed from Peppard Road, the western development parcel is partially concealed by the built form of the BBC Written Archives Centre, buildings on Caversham Park Drive and a mature hedgerow along the site frontage. Whilst the upper parts of the proposed buildings may be glimpsed from Peppard Road they will form part of a logical leafy frontage that is typical of the built form elsewhere along the road. The new homes will front onto the street with a similar set-back to the existing housing on the eastern side of the street.
No boundary hedgerows will be removed other than a short stretch to provide a pedestrian access.

Whilst the character of this parcel will change from open grassland to a new residential area, the buildings and associated public open space will be sensitively designed to complement both Peppard Road and the adjacent parkland. The leafy frontage to Peppard Road will be conserved, with the proposed vehicular entrance to the housing coming from Caversham Park Drive to the north rather than adding a new entrance from Peppard Road for example.

Overall, the development will have 'negligible' adverse indirect effect on the townscape character to west of Caversham Park.

Townscape Character Sensitivity: South of Caversham Park

The proposed development will not be visible from the area to the south of Caversham Park and will therefore not result in any direct or indirect changes to the townscape character of this area. The introduction of new planting in the southern part of the adjacent to the cemetery will provide a leafier backdrop to this area.

Townscape Character Sensitivity: North and East of Caversham Park

The proposed development will be glimpsed from the Lowfield Road area during the winter months. Given the existing urban character of Lowfield Road and retention of the mature belt of trees around the park boundary, changes to the townscape character here will be indirect and of 'negligible adverse' indirect magnitude and significance.

5.7 Landscape and Townscape Appraisal Summary

The appraisal shows that whilst the introduction of new housing within and adjacent to the existing registered parkland has the opportunity to have an adverse effect on existing landscape character and features, the eroded character and low quality landscape assets of some of these areas and their secluded nature mean that the proposals need not result in a significant adverse effect on the existing landscape character. Instead some of the development provides the opportunity to replace existing low quality buildings and extensive parking areas with high quality buildings and associated circulation spaces and gardens.

Whilst the change from parkland to housing will have a 'moderate' adverse effect in the areas of parkland where new housing is proposed to the north-east and east of the house, when considered with the landscape enhancements within the wider parkland, the overall effects will be of significant benefit. Beyond these areas of proposed built development, the scheme will be accompanied by significant enhancements to the existing parkland to the north, including new parkland and orchard tree planting and ornamental garden areas around existing and proposed buildings. To the south of the house, the proposals will also introduce a new circular footpath route around the park which will provide public access to an historic landscape that is currently private, the restoration of the ha ha wall, the management of the woodlands, wildlife enhancements to the existing pond and the management of the parkland as a wildflower meadow. Additional planting of approximately 250 new forest scale trees within the southern parkland will help reinforce its character as a Capability Brown landscape and overall there will be a net increase of approximately 340 trees within the site area. Overall, the proposals will result in a 'major beneficial' effect on the parkland landscape to the south and 'moderate beneficial' effect on the landscape to the north. The proposed development will therefore result in a net beneficial landscape effect on Caversham Park.

Due to the existing woodland screening around the site and strategic positioning of the proposed development there will be no significant direct or indirect effects on the townscape or landscape character and features of the surrounding area.



'Overall there will be a net increase of approximately 350 trees'

6. Visual Appraisal

6.1 Potential Visual Effects

This section addresses issues relating to potential impacts upon the visual amenity of the study area likely to result from the proposals. It describes and evaluates the sensitivity of visual receptors, the magnitude of potential change in existing views and the significance of these effects.

Effects on Visual Receptors Within the Site

There is currently no public access to any part of Caversham Park and buildings. There would therefore be no potential visual receptors within the site who would experience changes to their views.

The setting of the listed house is covered by the Montagu Evans Heritage chapter within the Environmental Statement. View 1 (opposite) is included here for information only, given that it is a private view. This shows that whilst there are elevated, open views to the south from the listed building, there would be no new built infrastructure within this view. Instead, enhancements to the parkland such as new tree planting and the restoration of the 'ha ha' hedgerow would enhance views.

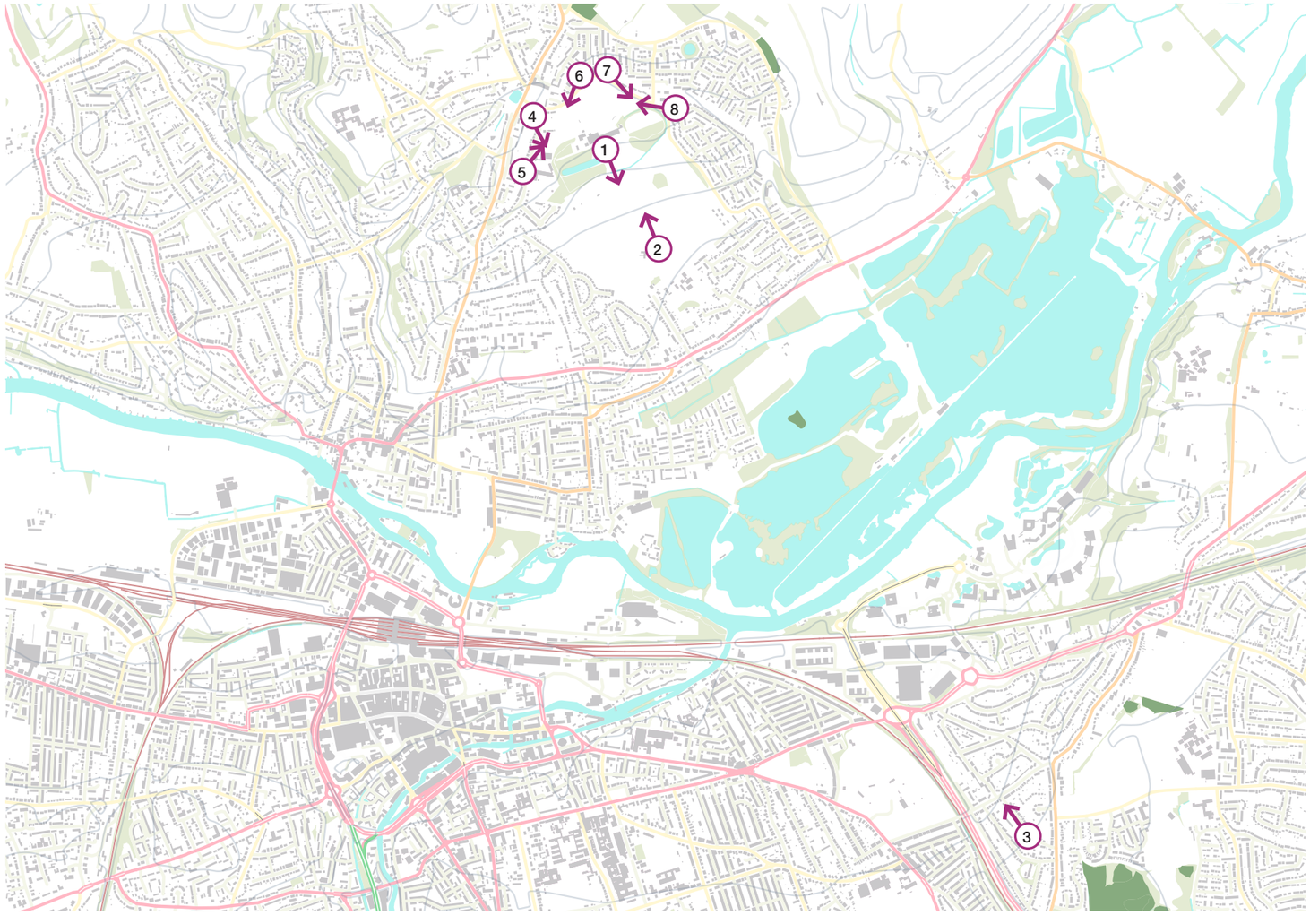


Figure 13: Viewpoint Locations



View 1: View from a first floor window of Caversham Park house, looking south. The town of Reading is visible in the distance, giving an urban context to the view. Reading Cemetery can be glimpsed beyond the park boundary showing its relationship with the northern edge of Reading. No new development will be visible in this view.

Effects on Visual Receptors to the South

A survey of views from the south including Reading Crematorium (see View 2) and streets within Reading (see View 3) showed that whilst the house and park can be seen as a distinguishable distant landmark on the hillside above the town (including from the railway line into Reading Station and the A3290), the mature woodland areas that flank its southern elevation will screen all of the proposed new-build development to the west and east of the house.

The proposed development to the north-east of the house would also be screened in views from this direction by mature trees along the southern edge of this area and also by the built form of Caversham House itself.

Whilst there area open views of Caversham Park House itself from the south, the conversion will not result in any significant external changes to its appearance.

The only changes to the view will be the planting of new trees and hedgerows around the parkland boundary and within the parkland itself, which will help restore the appearance of the 'Capability Brown' historic landscape.



View 2: From Reading Cemetery & Crematorium, looking north, whilst Caversham Park House can be clearly seen in the distance, parkland vegetation screens the proposed development areas. The proposals will therefore not result in any change to this view.



View 3: From Palmerstone Road, Reading, looking north. Caversham Park House is a distant landmark in an urban view. The areas proposed for the adjacent development are screened by vegetation to the south. The proposals will therefore not result in any change to this view.

Effects on Visual Receptors to the West

From the west, the built form of Peppard Road screens views from the wider area, meaning the only potential visual receptors will be residents of the properties immediately to the west of the site, visitors to the BBC Written Archives Centre and users of Peppard Road. Based on the definitions set out in Appendix A, Table F, this view is of 'low' to 'medium' value; being a glimpsed view of a suburban street, but benefiting from the leafy character of its frontage hedgerow and mature trees within the adjacent BBC archives and school buildings. Residents of the adjacent houses are defined as having a 'high' susceptibility to change whilst users of the road and the BBC Written Archives Centre have a 'low' susceptibility. Overall this gives residents a 'medium' to 'medium-low' sensitivity and road users a 'medium-low' to 'low' sensitivity.



View 4: From Peppard Road at entrance to Caversham Park, looking south. The proposed western development site will sit behind the existing mature hedgerow. The upper storeys and rooftops of new dwellings would be glimpsed beyond the retained hedgerow but not result in a dominant change to the view.

The only changes to views will be from the short stretch of Peppard Road adjacent to/slightly beyond the site's western frontage (See Views 4 and 5). Here, the existing hedgerow will be retained and continue to provide good visual enclosure, other than gaps to allow two pedestrian routes into the new housing. The upper storeys and roofs of new buildings will be glimpsed beyond this however. Given the existing leafy, suburban character of this street, the proposed buildings will visually integrate with the area, resulting in a 'negligible adverse' change to the view. This would be of 'negligible adverse significance to residents, road users and users of the adjacent BBC Written Archives Centre.



View 5: From Peppard Road at entrance to BBC Written Archive Centre, looking north. The proposed western development site will sit behind the existing mature hedgerow. The upper storeys and rooftops of new dwellings would be glimpsed beyond the retained hedgerow but not result in a dominant change to the view.

Effects on Visual Receptors to the North and East

To the north and east of the site, Caversham Park benefits from extensive areas of woodland tree planting together with mature parkland specimens which provide a good degree of screening.

To the north of the site, there are glimpses through this vegetation, from Lowfield Road and from a small number of residential properties immediately adjacent to the north-west boundary of the park (see View 6).

Any glimpsed views into the parkland from the north will not include the new areas of proposed development due to the screening provided by mature trees around the northern boundary of the park, trees within the park and the existing buildings on Caversham Park Drive.



View 6: From Lowfield Road adjacent to the northern boundary of Caversham Park, looking south-west. Mature and semi-mature woodland trees screen views into the park. There would be no discernible change to this view.

Similarly to the east of the site, mature vegetation around the park boundary provides good screening. Whilst there are glimpses of the parkland in the winter months (see View 7), the proposed care home and western development parcel will be screened by the numerous parkland trees. At the eastern side of the site, there will be glimpses of the new buildings proposed to the north-east of Caversham Park House, however these will not be seen in their entirety, and instead will be seen as partial elements behind the mature planting in the foreground. Similarly views of the new homes to the east of Caversham Park House will also benefit from screening by existing trees (see View 8) and will only be glimpsed.

Potential visual receptors to the east will be users of a short stretch of Lowfield Road ('low' susceptibility to change) and residents of housing on the eastern side of Lowfield Road here ('high' susceptibility to change). Given that this is a suburban view that benefits from the presence of the parkland on one side, it is judged to be of 'medium' value. This gives the visual receptors an overall sensitivity of 'medium-low' and 'medium' respectively.

The glimpsed views of the proposed homes to the north-east of Caversham Park House and a new footpath link between Lowfield Road and parkland will result in a 'low adverse' change to both residents and users of this short stretch of Lowfield Road. This will be of 'negligible' and 'minor' adverse significance respectively. (see Appendix A, Tables I and J).

The overall wooded character of views into the site will remain, and during the summer, the new homes may be scarcely noticed.



View 7: From Lowfield Road adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of Caversham Park, looKing south-west. Mature and semi-mature woodland trees screen views into the park. There would be no discernible change to this view.



View 8: From Lowfield Road adjacent to the eastern boundary of Caversham Park, looing north-west. Mature and semi-mature woodland trees screen views into the park. Whilst there may be glimpses of new homes through this foliage in winter, it would not result in significant changes to the view.

6.2 Potential Visual Effects - Summary

A visual appraisal has been undertaken which included visiting both the site and the surrounding area. In particular, views from the south were appraised to ensure that the proposals complied with Policy EN5 of the Reading Local Plan and did not result in effects on View Corridors 1 and 8.

The site visit showed that whilst Caversham Park House is a prominent local landmark, occupying an elevated position to the north of Reading, the mature woodland within its grounds provide good screening to all of the proposed areas for development when viewed from the south.

There are no public rights of way running through the site meaning that the proposals would not result in any changes to existing visual receptors within the site.

To the west of the site, the built form of Peppard Road, and existing woodland and hedgerows within the site provide a good degree of screening. The western development parcel would be glimpsed from a short stretch of Peppard Road adjacent to the site boundary, however given the built context and retained boundary hedgerow frontage, the proposed buildings would integrate well with the existing views of the street and would not result in a significant adverse effect on either users or residents of the street.

To the immediate north of Caversham Park, there are glimpsed views of the park from Lowfield Road, however the dense boundary vegetation and trees within the parkland would help screen views of the proposed areas of development from here again meaning that there would be no significant effects on visual receptors here.

To the east and north-east of Caversham Park, this parkland vegetation also provides a good degree of screening, allowing only glimpses into the parkland from the public highway. Adjacent to the proposed development area to the north-east of Caversham park House, it is likely that there will be glimpses of some of the new homes, especially in the winter months, from a very short stretch of Lowfield Road. Whilst the new homes may be partially visible they will not form a dominant element in the view and are likely to have a minor adverse effect only. To the east of the house, the existing vegetation is even thicker, meaning that effects on visual receptors within this part of Lowfield Road are likely to be negligible adverse only.

In summary, the proposals will not result in any significant adverse visual effects.

Figu

Appendix A

Assessment Definitions

Table A: Landscape Value Criteria

Landscape Value	Criteria
High	A landscape/townscape element or area of high scenic/perceptual qualities in good condition. Highly valued for its quality and/or Landscape character, and may be designated at international or national level, such as World Heritage Sites, Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens.
Medium	A landscape/townscape element or area of medium scenic/ perceptual qualities, in at least moderate condition. Valued at a local level, for example, Conservation Areas and Locally Listed Buildings. It may also include undesignated Landscapes with some of the following: ▪ High scenic quality ▪ Intact Landscape character ▪ Presence of distinctive elements/ features in the landscape ▪ Features of particular landscape or cultural heritage importance ▪ Recreation value ▪ Historical associations
Medium-low	An undesignated landscape/townscape that has some landscape features that contribute to its sense of place and are of value to the local community, but that may be in mixed condition and include some detractors that weaken its overall character and scenic quality.
Low	A landscape/townscape with few or no scenic/perceptual qualities and in poor condition, not particularly valued, and not designated.

Table B: Landscape Susceptibility to Change Criteria

Landscape susceptibility to change	Criteria
High	An area where landscape/townscape character would be noticeably changed by the proposed scheme, either due to the loss of important landscape features, or due to the introduction of new features that are not typical of the area. The potential for intrusive development may also be due to a relatively open character with few elements that could screen the proposed development.
Medium	A landscape/townscape which is partially tolerant to change of the type proposed. This may be due to the presence of existing landscape detractors or the relative lack of a strong concentration of typical landscape characteristics. The capacity of the landscape to accept change may also be due to the presence of some elements that may screen the proposed scheme, such as vegetation, buildings or landform features.
Low	An area that is tolerant of substantial change of the type proposed. This may be due to a lack of existing distinctive landscape elements or characteristics, the presence of a number of landscape detractors, or the presence of elements that may screen the proposed scheme.

Table C: Overall Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape susceptibility to change (from Table B)	Value (from Table A)			
	High	Medium	Medium-low	Low
High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium-low
Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium-low	Medium-low
Low	Medium-low	Medium-low	Low	Low

Table D: Magnitude of Landscape Effect

Landscape Scale/ Size of Change	Criteria
High adverse/ beneficial	The proposals would be at total variance (adverse) or totally accord (beneficial) with the key characteristics of the existing landscape, and/or there would be a very noticeable loss or change in landscape/townscape elements, features or characteristics. Beneficial effects would restore, recreate, or permanently benefit the condition or character of the landscape.
Medium adverse/beneficial	The proposals would noticeably be at odds (adverse) or fit well (beneficial) with the key characteristics of the existing landscape, would noticeably improve or harm the condition or character of the landscape, and/or would result in the partial loss or alteration to one or more key landscape elements, features or characteristics.
Low adverse/beneficial	The proposals would not quite fit (adverse) or have a degree of fit (beneficial) with the key characteristics of the existing landscape, and/or there would be minor loss or alteration of landscape elements, features or characteristics. Beneficial effects would go some way towards improving the condition or character of the landscape.
Negligible adverse/beneficial landscape impact	The proposals would create a just discernible loss/change, or improvement to the key characteristics of the existing landscape. The proposals may not be uncharacteristic of the existing landscape.
Neutral	Where the development would cause a change to the landscape, but would be in keeping with its existing elements, thus having neither an adverse or beneficial effect.
No change	The proposals would not cause any change to the key characteristics of the existing landscape/townscape.

Table E: Overall Significance of Landscape Effects

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptor (from Table C)	Magnitude of Landscape Change (from Table D)				
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible	Neutral
High	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
Medium-low	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
Low	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral

Table F: Visual Receptor – Value Criteria

Value	Criteria
High	Views with high scenic value, views to heritage assets or valued landscape features. Recognition of value shown through planning designations or in relation to heritage assets. Views may be referenced in tourist guides or maps and accompanied by facilities to facilitate their enjoyment, such as parking or interpretation boards.
Medium	Views of medium scenic value. Views not necessarily promoted widely for their value, but may be appreciated by the local community as a popular place to walk/visit.
Low	Views are of low value, for example, due to landscape detractors, and may only be seen for periods of shorter duration such as visibility from roads or railways.

Table G: Visual Receptor – Susceptibility to Change Criteria

Susceptibility to Change	Criteria
High	Residents at home. People engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is likely to be focused on the landscape and particular views. Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views are an important contributor to the experience. Communities where views contribute to the townscape setting enjoyed by residents.
Medium	Travellers on road, rail or other transport, where travel involves recognised scenic routes. People at their place of work where views are an important contributor to the setting and quality of working life.
Low	Vehicle users on roads used principally for passage, where the attention is not necessarily focused on the view. People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the townscape. Occupants of places of work whose attention may be focused on the work and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life.

Table H: Visual Receptor – Overall Sensitivity

Susceptibility to change (from Table G)	Value (From Table F)		
	High	Medium	Low
High	High	Medium	Medium-low
Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium-low
Low	Medium-low	Medium-low	Low

Table I: Magnitude of Visual Change – Definitions

Size/Scale of Effect	Criteria
High	Where the development would cause a dominant or complete change to the composition of the view, and the appreciation of landscape/townscape character, contrasting in terms of form, scale and mass, height, colour and/or texture. Views of the scheme are unlikely to be screened to any extent.
Medium	Where the development would cause a clearly noticeable change in the existing view, which would have some effects on its composition, and/or the appreciation of landscape/ townscape character. It would not result in a dominant change to the view however and the overall effect is likely to be mitigated either due to distance from the viewer, complementary colours and textures, or the presence of some screening elements.
Low	Where the development would cause a perceptible change in the existing view, but would not materially affect its composition, or the appreciation of landscape/townscape character, either due to its distance from the viewer, the presence of screening elements or complementary colours and textures. Views of the proposals are more likely to be glimpsed rather than full.
Negligible	Where the development would cause a barely perceptible change in the existing view, either due to the presence of screening elements or distance from the viewer. Whilst the development would be visible, it would not result in a change to the overall composition of the view or landscape character of the area.
Neutral	Where the development would cause a change to the view, but would be in keeping with its existing elements thus having neither an adverse or beneficial effect.

Table J: Overall Significance of Visual Effects

Sensitivity of Visual Receptor (From Table H)	Magnitude of Visual Change (From Table I)				
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible	Neutral
High	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
Medium-low	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
Low	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral

Appendix B

Historic England List Description: Caversham Park Registered Park and Garden

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Park and Garden**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1000524**

Date first listed: **30-Sep-1987**

Location

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **Reading (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **SU7257476164**

Details

This record was the subject of a minor enhancement on 7th April 2016.

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.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Lord Craven owned the Caversham Park estate during the mid to late C17, rebuilding the Elizabethan manor house after 1660, probably with William Winde as the architect. The estate was sold in 1697, passing by the 1720s into the hands of William, first Baron, and later Earl, Cadogan (d 1726). Cadogan, a soldier and friend of the Duke of Marlborough, rebuilt the manor house in grander style, probably on a new site. A detailed agreement of 1718 between Stephen Switzer (1682-1745) and the Earl of Cadogan (Berkshire RO) describes a proposal to make terraces, canals, fisheries and a great formal parterre, for £1394, which corresponds closely with a plan of 1723 published by Colen Campbell in Vitruvius Britannicus III, 1725 (Bisgrove and Stoneham 1993). Campbell's accompanying description mentions a Mr Acres, who was probably employed to lay out the extensive formal garden surrounding the house, which was constructed around an axis described as a 'noble terrace, which is twelve hundred feet long'.

In the mid 1760s Lancelot Brown (1716-83) was employed by the second Baron Cadogan to landscape the grounds, at which time the formal gardens, still present in the 1750s (Rocque, 1761), were largely swept away, although Brown incorporated major structural elements into his own designs. It appears that none of Brown's drawings survive, nor his account books for this period. The results of Brown's work are described by Thomas Whately in his Observations on Modern Gardening (1770), and again by Thomas Jefferson in his 'Memorandums Made on a Tour to Some of the Gardens in England' (1786). The house burnt down during this period, being replaced by a smaller building, enlarged by Major Charles Marsack following his purchase of the estate in 1784. William Crawshay bought the estate in 1838, following a period of some dilapidation (National Trust 1990) and in 1850 the house burnt down once more, to be rebuilt again, this time possibly by J T Crews. The Crawshays sold the estate in 1920, it being occupied by the Oratory School until the Second World War. During the War the BBC moved into the house, which remains the home of their Monitoring Service. Large parts of the parkland were engulfed by Caversham Park Village in the 1960s and 1970s.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Caversham Park lies enclosed by the C20 development of Caversham, once a separate village but now a suburb of Reading. The c 40ha site is bounded largely by the mid to late C20 development of Caversham Park Village, with to the south the open spaces of allotments and Reading Cemetery and Crematorium. The house and park to the north lie on a plateau at the top of a south-east-facing slope. Panoramic views extend southwards from the house and garden terraces at the top of the slope across Caversham and Reading, towards low, distant hills, probably formerly with views of the Thames which lies 2km to the south.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Caversham Park is entered at the north-west corner of the park, off Peppard Road, 250m west of the house. Here the drive is flanked by two stone gate piers, topped with ball finials, supporting iron gates, in turn flanked by iron pedestrian gates and beyond this iron railings terminated by a further pair of stone piers (c 1850, listed grade II). The drive passes a single-storey lodge standing adjacent to the south, continuing east through the park and passing to the north of the stuccoed former stables (now converted to accommodation) standing close to the west end of the house. The drive arrives at a tarmac carriage sweep adjacent to a porte-cochère on the north front of the house, overlooking the north park which is now maintained as playing fields.

Formerly, during the C19 and until the mid C20 (OS) and the development of Caversham Park Village, the drive continued from the north front north-east through the park, curving south-east past Milestone Wood to a lodge standing by the Henley Road 1.2km south-east of the house. Part of the course of this drive is now incorporated in a pedestrian path running parallel and to the east of Galsworthy Drive. In the early C18 (Vitruvius Britannicus) the house was approached directly from gates to the north via a straight avenue arriving at a formal forecourt on the north front.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Caversham Park (1850s, possibly J T Crews, listed grade II) stands at the centre of the northern half of the site, at the top of a slope down to the Thames to the south-east, overlooking Caversham and Reading and beyond this a low range of wooded hills. The three-storey ashlar house replaced a series of houses , the last of which, dating from the late C18, burnt down in 1850. The house has been modified and extended for office use during the mid to late C20.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens consist of formal 1720s and mid C19 terraces descending south from the garden front of the house, flanked by wooded pleasure grounds containing further remains of the formal 1720s layout.

The south, garden front of the house opens onto a broad gravel path running along the top of an adjacent terrace. From here three flights of stone steps descend a grass bank to a rectangular lawn, from the south side of which three further flights of stone steps descend to a lower rectangular lawn bounded on the south side by an iron fence dividing the lawn from a paddock beyond. The paddock is now (1998) part of the parkland, but formerly (OS 1877; 1914) was part of the pleasure grounds, divided from the parkland by a ditch and bank, possibly part of a former ha-ha. The remains of the ditch, lying c 150m south of the house, are bounded by a sporadic, informal hedgerow.

The upper terrace extends 200m from the west end of the house, laid to grass flanked by clipped laurel hedges and beyond this woodland, and terminated at the west end by a stone temple (C19, on the site of an earlier structure, listed grade II) with a tetrastyle Doric portico overlooking the length of the terrace to the east. From here a path runs south-east down the hillside on which is situated the west arm of the wooded pleasure grounds. The path passes the west end of a 200m long canal situated 250m south-west of the house. Surrounded by a grass path, the canal is set within woodland, overlooking to the east the lower lawn lying south of the house. From the canal the grass path continues south-east along the west boundary of the pleasure grounds, turning north-east 300m from the house to run along the northern boundary of the former walled kitchen garden. Some 150m south of the house the path turns north to arrive at the east end of the canal from where informal lawns planted with specimen trees and shrubs extend north to the upper terrace by the house.

The broad gravel path on the upper terrace extends through the wooded eastern arm of the pleasure grounds,

terminating at the boundary, 250m east of the house. An informal path encircles this arm of the pleasure grounds, leading south-east off the gravel path at the east end of the house. A small, south-facing wooden pavilion stands within the southern half of the woodland, close to the southern edge, possibly having formerly overlooked the park sloping away to the south, before trees obscured the view. The area north of the west/east axial path has recently been replanted with specimen trees set in informal meadow, and also contains transmitting equipment. A brick wall (C18/C19, listed grade II) encloses parts of the boundary of this arm of the pleasure grounds to the north and east.

In the 1720s Switzer's grand garden surrounding the house (described and depicted in Vitruvius Britannicus 1725) contained parterres to the east and south. Two 200m long canals were constructed, possibly with cascades and amphitheatres at the outer ends as quoted for by Switzer (Berkshire RO: D/EX 258/9), on the hillside to the south-west and south-east of the house. The present canal appears to be one of these two, and was at that time flanked to the south by a wilderness containing a serpentine path. This area, now wooded, retains some mature yew trees and sculpted land formation. By the mid C18 (Rocque, 1761) the axial terrace walk was dominant in the garden, terminated at the west end by a garden building. A third canal appears to have been added by this time, lying adjacent to that lying south-west of the house, and several of the parterres seem to have been removed and others simplified. Brown's landscaping retained the axial terrace path and the canals. By the 1870s (OS 1878) the two terraced lawns had been constructed below the centre of the great axial terrace, the lower one being dotted with small, oval flower beds. Additionally, two of the canals had gone, leaving that shown on Switzer's plan lying to the south-west of the house, although in shorter and wider form than that advocated by Switzer, and more rounded in outline.

PARK The remains of the park are divided into two sections, the area north of the house, and that extending south from the garden and pleasure grounds. The northern section, occupying a plateau, is now largely given over to playing fields with trees planted around the northern perimeter. The north park is overlooked by the north, entrance front of the house, and enjoys views north towards a low, wooded hillside lying beyond Caversham Park Village. The Village occupies land that was formerly part of the park.

The southern section of the park, laid to pasture with two clumps of trees, occupies the south-facing slope overlooking Caversham, Reading and beyond this low, wooded hills. Formerly (before Caversham's C20 development) the park probably enjoyed views down to the Thames.

In the early C18 (Vitruvius Britannicus, plan of 1723) the broad entrance avenue extended from the north front across what became the north park, flanked by four rows of trees to either side. To the east lay open parkland containing a sequence of formal ponds and a farm complex. To the west of the avenue lay a formal arrangement of trees, possibly an orchard, and a further rectangular pond. Three parallel avenues extended from the gardens on the south front across extensive lawns which subsequently became the south park, flanked to west and east by belts of trees laid out in rows. 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. This arrangement remained largely intact until the mid C18 (Rocque, 1761), Lancelot Brown landscaping the estate in the 1760s. The park retained much of Brown's work until the 1960s and 1970s, when it was much reduced on all sides by the construction of Caversham Park Village and associated items including Reading Crematorium, Cemetery and allotments, and a school.

KITCHEN GARDEN The brick-walled kitchen garden (C18/C19, listed grade II) lies 200m south-west of the house, at the south-west corner of the park, and is now (1998) largely filled with mobile homes. Brick cross walls divide the area into several compartments, connected by communicating arches, and support mid C19 potting sheds. The walled garden is reached via a straight lane from the Peppard Road to the west, the entrance being marked by a C19, two-storey lodge lying 500m south-west of the house.

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OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1877 2nd edition published 1914 3rd edition published 1938 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1878 2nd edition published 1913 3rd edition published 1932

Description written: September 1998 Register Inspector: SR Edited: March 2000

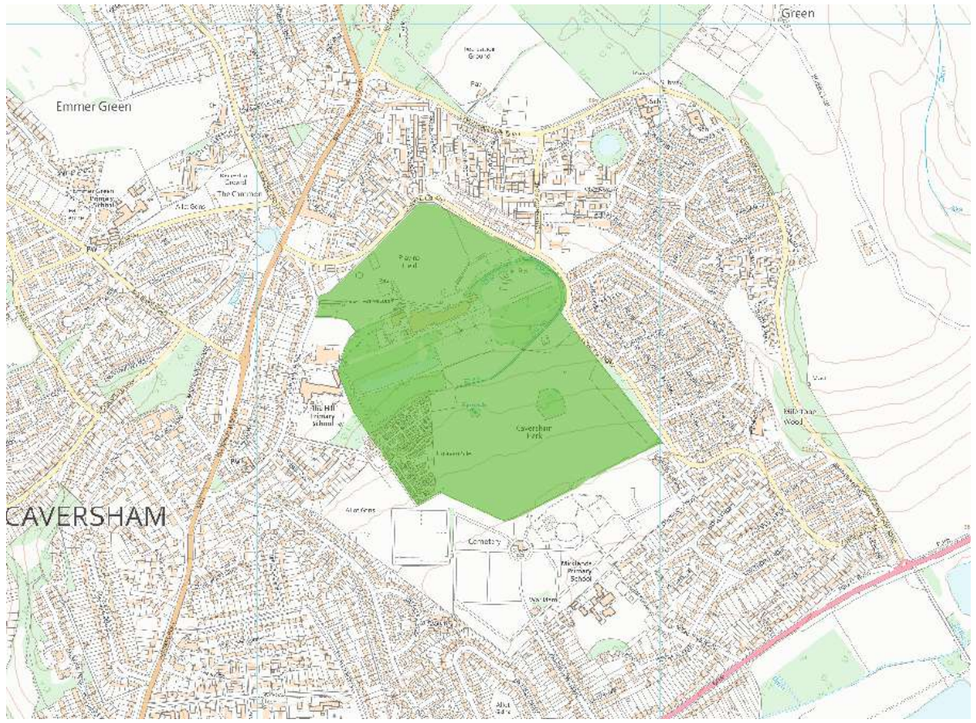
Legacy

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Legacy System number: **1503**

Legacy System: **Parks and Gardens**

Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale.
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End of official list entry