

Caversham Park, Reading

ES Addendum

Non-Technical Summary

March 2024

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Non-Technical Summary

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Beechcroft Developments Ltd ('the Applicant') propose the redevelopment of Caversham Park House for:

Redevelopment of Caversham Park for assisted living accommodation (Class C2) for over 55's through conversion of Caversham Park House, erection of a care home (Class C2) and age-restricted retirement dwellings (Class C3) including conversion of existing buildings Bursars House and The Lodge. Erection of affordable housing (Class C3 non-age restricted) and refurbishment/extension of existing pavilion to provide changing facilities, café/studio/interpretation hub, sports provision of 1 croquet lawn and 1 cricket ground, refurbishment of tennis court, footpath access to Lowfield Road, associated parking and landscaping following demolition of extensions/outbuildings to the main house (amended description). Full details of the Proposed Development are provided in Chapter 3.

- 1.2 This Environmental Statement Addendum (ESA) has been prepared by Savills (UK) Limited ('Savills'), with input from the project team, on behalf of the Applicant.
- 1.3 In June 2023, an Environmental Statement (ES) was submitted as part of planning application reference 220409 ('the Main ES'). As a result of the revisions to the scheme which was assessed in the Main ES, the assessment has been updated and the revised conclusions have been presented in this Addendum. The ESA should be read alongside the Main ES. This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) replaces the 2023 NTS in its entirety.
- 1.4 The ESA and this NTS accompany a suite of documents that together support a full planning application submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Reading Borough Council (RBC / 'the Council').
- 1.5 The Project Site location is shown in NTS Figure 1 at the end of this document.

The assessment team

- 1.6 The EIA project team is being led by consultants Savills, with input from other specialists both internal and external to the company. The project team comprises:

EIA Management and Co-ordination (Savills)

Heritage (Montagu Evans)

Landscape (Savills)

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.7 EIA is a process that formally considers the construction and operational aspects of a proposal that may have significant effects on the environment. The findings of an EIA are described in a written report known as an ES. An ES provides environmental information about the scheme, including a description of the development, its predicted environmental effects and the measures proposed to mitigate adverse effects: information that is taken into account in the planning decision.

- 1.8 This document is an ESA submitted with the planning application for the Proposed Development and should be read alongside the Main ES prepared in respect of the Caversham Park Site. Taken together the Main ES and this ESA set out the results of the EIA undertaken. This ESA is prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the 'EIA Regulations').
- 1.9 Subsequently, when the Council is deciding whether to grant planning permission, it can do so in the full knowledge of any significant effects predicted, and take this into account in the decision making process.
- 1.10 The 2017 Regulations set out the types of development that must always be subject to an EIA (defined as Schedule 1 development) and other development that will only require assessment if it is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects (defined as Schedule 2 development).
- 1.11 Given that the Proposed Development exceeded one or more of the threshold criteria set out for developments under Schedule 2 Section 10 (b), 'Urban Development Projects', it was considered that an EIA Screening Opinion was required. This was to request the Council's opinion as to whether significant environmental effects would be likely as a result of the Proposed Development and therefore whether an EIA would be required. A Screening Request was submitted to the Council on the 21st December 2021 and the formal EIA Screening Opinion was received on the 26th January 2022. The Screening Opinion concluded that significant effects could occur in relation to heritage and landscape, with particular regard to heritage setting, and therefore it was determined that EIA was required.
- 1.12 The topics to be assessed in the ES were primarily based on the views expressed by the Council in the Screening Opinion. As the council determined significant effects were only likely with regards to heritage and landscape, the Applicant has decided to scope in heritage with an appended landscape report which addresses potential effects on the heritage setting.
- 1.13 These topics have been assessed through the EIA process and the outcome of the assessments have been presented in the ESA and are also summarised in Section 4 of this NTS.

2 Site and Local Context

Site description

- 2.1 The Site is approximately 37.7 ha in area as shown on NTS Figure 1. The Site forms part of an historic estate in Caversham with extensive grounds located to the north of Reading and surrounded by suburban development. The majority of the Site is a Registered Historic Park and Garden and the main House itself is Grade II Listed.
- 2.2 The House and its grounds have been used by the BBC as its Monitoring Station since 1943 for broadcasting services and other related activity.
- 2.3 The Site is located within the northern suburbs of Reading and close to Emmer Green, which has a range of amenities and facilities and is a predominantly residential area. The Site is bounded largely by residential built development along its northern, eastern and western boundaries, although to the south of the Site are the open spaces associated with the allotments and Reading Cemetery and Crematorium.
- 2.4 Caversham Park House is located in the north of the Site and lies 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.

- 2.5 Vehicular access to the Site is at the north-west corner of the Site, via Peppard Road which is to the west of the house. The driveway is flanked by two stone gate piers and passes a single storey lodge standing adjacent to the south.

Local Context

- 2.6 The Site is located in the north-eastern area of Caversham, Reading. Caversham is a large suburb of Reading that lies on the north bank of the River Thames. It is directly linked to Reading via Caversham Bridge along the A4155, Reading Bridge along the B3345 and Christchurch Bridge along a pedestrian footpath.
- 2.7 The nearest environmental designation is the Clayfield Copse Local Nature Reserve which is approximately 300 m north (NTS Figure 2). The nearest scheduled monument is Reading Abbey which is located approximately 2.2 km south of the Site. The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is approximately 2 km north and west of the Site. The Surley Row Conservation Area is located approximately 350 m west of the Site.
- 2.8 In flood risk terms, the Site is located within Flood Zone 1, having the lowest probability of flooding. The Site is also not located within an Air Quality Management Area.

3 Proposed Development

The Development Proposals

- 3.1 The planning application is for:

Redevelopment of Caversham Park for assisted living accommodation (Class C2) for over 55's through conversion of Caversham Park House, erection of a care home (Class C2) and age-restricted retirement dwellings (Class C3) including conversion of existing buildings Bursars House and The Lodge. Erection of affordable housing (Class C3 non-age restricted) and refurbishment/extension of existing pavilion to provide changing facilities, café/studio/interpretation hub, sports provision of 1 croquet lawn and 1 cricket ground, refurbishment of tennis court, footpath access to Lowfield Road, associated parking and landscaping following demolition of extensions/outbuildings to the main house (amended description).

- 3.2 As the planning application has been submitted with full detail, it is accompanied by a series of detailed drawings and plans which show what is being proposed. The existing layout of the Site can be seen in the figure below, with the proposed layout appended to the end of this document.
- 3.3 The EIA has also considered any wider land outside the Site boundary needed for development-specific infrastructure.
- 3.4 The full drawing schedule showing all of the updated detailed plans of the Proposed Development can be found in ESA Appendix 3.1.

Image 1 Existing Site Layout (Maps Data; Google @2024)



Key elements of the Proposed Development

3.5 As shown in NTS Figure 3 (appended), the key elements of the Proposed Development comprise:

- The conversion of Caversham Park House, which is Grade II Listed, to provide 65 assisted living apartments (Class C2). Internal and external changes to Caversham Park House are kept to a minimum given its Grade II listed status.
- The construction of a two storey 64 bedroom Care Home (Class C2) to the west of the main house following the demolition of existing buildings.
- The conversion of the existing buildings, Nos. 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive, from their existing ancillary residential use to 4 x 2-bedroom dwellings.
- 41 retirement dwellings on land to the east of the main house in the area of existing car parking, hardstanding and infrastructure referred to as Eastern Parcel development, which would be available to the over 55's only.
- 5 Discount Market Sale dwellings and 22 affordable dwellings, referred to as the Western Parcel.
- Refurbishment and extension of the existing pavilion to provide changing facilities, café/studio/interpretation hub and sports provision comprising one croquet lawn, one Cricket ground and refurbishment of the existing tennis court.
- Associated landscaping and car parking on site.

3.6 Car parking is proposed to be located in discrete parcels and will be provided in line with RBC's policies. The parking need provision has been calculated to amount to 271 parking spaces to comply with RBC's parking standards.

Refurbishment and conversion of Grade II listed Caversham House

- 3.7 The proposals for the main house would see the conversion of the house to 65 assisted living units and communal areas. The following elements amendments have been made following the previous submission of the scheme:

- The use of the original Library as communal space.
- Removal of 5 no. mezzanine floors within apartments.
- Reduction in size of the mezzanine level in plots 17 & 21. The structure is now designed to be freestanding with no contact with historic walls or ceilings.
- Reinstall the original volume of the original Outer Hall. This would potentially reveal the original plasterwork decoration above.
- Remove modern partitions throughout the listed building, in particular the original Morning Room.
- Remove plant and later accretions at roof level.

Conversion of retained ancillary buildings

- 3.8 Numbers 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive were historically used as the gatehouses to the main house and will be converted to be used as dwellings.

Demolition

- 3.9 There are three areas in the vicinity of the main house that will have external demolition works, which are largely confined to the more modern extension of the western wing. A 1-2 story section of the western wing will be demolished to form the western courtyard. The glazed roof over the central area of the main house will be demolished to create a central courtyard. Lastly, the hipped roof over the long gallery to the west of the main range would be removed.
- 3.10 The ancillary buildings to the west of the main house and the satellite structures to the east of the house are proposed to be demolished and replaced by a 64-bedroom care home and residential dwellings, respectively.

New development replacing demolished buildings

- 3.11 The eastern parcel currently comprises two smaller areas of land located either side of Caversham Park Drive, with one section comprising a number of satellites and the other being used for car parking. These existing uses are proposed to be demolished and replaced by 41 dwellings. Since the previous submission, the following amendments have been made to this area in response to comments from RBC:
- A footpath linking to Lowfield Road has been introduced.
 - Removal of the 'L' shaped block from the Eastern area, including all associated infrastructure, parking and footpath links to further improve views and increase the separation distance between the Main House and the proposed development of the former satellite field area.
 - The drive under and parking arrangement for the courtyard block has been amended as a result of the dwellings being removed.
 - Two of the apartment blocks from the North East area have been removed along with their associated parking.

- The remaining three blocks are to be converted to houses.

- 3.12 The land adjacent to the west of the main house currently comprises a group of ancillary buildings which are proposed to be demolished and replaced by a new care home. The internal layout will consist of 32 bedrooms on each floor, with day facilities such as lounge and dining areas, and activity areas such as a library and cinema. The care home is designed to be accessible throughout for residents and visitors who may have physical impairments.

New development on land outside of the park and garden (the western parcel)

- 3.13 The parcel to the west is currently undeveloped and sits outside of the Registered Park and Garden boundary. The parcel will be accessed by Caversham Park Drive to the east of the existing gatehouses, with an additional pedestrian access from Peppard Road. The western parcel will consist of 27 dwellings, comprising 5 Discount Market Sale dwellings and 22 affordable dwellings, which will be centred around a Local Area of Play (LAP). The housing mix will comprise a combination of semi-detached, terraced housing and apartments.

Refurbishment and extension of the sports pavilion

- 3.14 The existing cricket pavilion will be refurbished and extended to accommodate a small studio / meeting room and a café. The cricket pitch will be refurbished, a croquet lawn will be proposed and the existing tennis court will be refurbished.

Housing Mix

- 3.15 The total number of dwellings proposed is 137. The breakdown of housing mix is shown below in the table below.

Table 1 Proposed housing mix

Dwelling Type	Quantity
1 Bedroom Flat	87
2 Bedroom Flat	69
2 Bedroom House	36
3 Bedroom House	9
Total	137

Proposed Access

- 3.16 The primary vehicular access to the Site is via the main gate on the junction between Caversham Park Drive and Peppard Road. Peppard Road is a two-way single carriageway 20 mph private residential street with a pedestrian walkway on the eastern side. Peppard Road runs north until it reaches Sonning Common and runs south until it joins Henley Road (A4155). Footpath access to Lowfield Road is proposed for pedestrians.

Landscape Strategy

- 3.17 A Landscape Strategy has been created to set out the enhancements to the grounds of Caversham Park that are planned as part of the Proposed Development. The key features included in the plan are set out below:

- Restore and replant the existing orchard area.
- Manage and enhance the existing woodland and scrub area for wildlife value and visual buffer.
- Condition survey of the oversize urn at the west end of the fishpond to be commissioned and recommended works undertaken.
- Enhancements to the 20th century pond garden, with new planting and seating.
- Refurbishment of the Edwardian summer house.
- Retention of the largest satellite dish from the BBC occupancy with interpretation boards providing information.
- Enhancement of biodiversity through the creation of extensive areas of wildflower meadow and management of existing woodlands to encourage understorey species.
- Limit change to the grounds and parkland to the south of Caversham Park House and respect the alignment of the existing terrace/axis in the development area to the west of the house in future planting proposals.
- Provide a circular walk around the northern parkland. This would be accessible from Peppard Road/Caversham Park Drive and be open to members of the public between the times of dawn and dusk.
- Retain important parkland trees and supplement these with new groups of native parkland species. Opportunities will be taken to gradually expose the original Stephen Switzer terracing in the south-western woodland, retaining the routes of the historic paths through the woodland.
- The northern entrance to Caversham House and its associated parking area would be rationalised and softened, with new lawns, shrub planting and hedgerows.
- New housing would be associated with small open spaces, including a small play area and extensive opportunities for formal shrub and hedgerow planting.

Drainage Strategy

- 3.18 The western parcel can support infiltration of surface water and therefore the access road and parking bays will be designed with permeable pavement which will drain runoff under their own footprint. Private soakaways will be installed in some gardens where they can avoid tree root protection zones. Runoff from the roofs of the remaining houses will drain into the shared soakaway.
- 3.19 The central catchment, comprising the care home and main house, drains runoff into the pond to the south west of the main house. Runoff from the pond then discharges freely into the field to the south.
- 3.20 The cricket pavilion and pitch area is currently served by a concrete ring soakaway north east of the car park. It is proposed to re-use the existing drainage infrastructure in this area as it considered to be suitable for the Proposed Development.
- 3.21 The eastern area is currently served by a series of soakaways. It is proposed for runoff from this area to be collected by a piped/culverted network with a flow control chamber to limit runoff release. Attenuation will be provided within the line geocellular storage crate system at the upstream end of the drainage network. A meandering swale will be installed immediately

downstream of the flow control chamber to optimise water treatment of runoff. Runoff from the roofs will be collected by a pipe network, whilst runoff from the roads will be picked up by a series of road gullies. Parking bays will be constructed as permeable pavement with lined sub-bases and with the outfalls into the main system.

Waste

Demolition waste

- 3.22 The quantum and composition of waste generated through the demolition of buildings will be established as part of the design of the detailed demolition programme in the CEMP for the relevant construction phase.

Operational waste

- 3.23 When completed and occupied, there would be an increase in the volume of household waste collected at the kerbside. The amount of household waste arising from the Proposed Development would be in the order of 120 tonnes annually.

Construction waste

- 3.24 In total, approximately 1,627 tonnes of waste may arise from the construction of the built development. This assumes no minimisation, reuse or recycling has taken place. It is therefore the baseline figure from which a reduction in waste arising can be established.

Design Evolution

- 3.25 Following additional feedback from the Council in 2023, further changes to the Proposed Development were made. One of the tennis courts was removed and replaced with additional parking to increase parking provision around the pavilion. The pavilion has been extended to include a museum for the public to visit. The cricket pitch has been retained and the proposals instead include provision for one croquet lawn. The western parcel has been rearranged to include a new central green space area and one fewer dwelling, now totalling 27 dwellings in the parcel. The parking area for the care home has been re-arranged to move spaces away from the main house and towards the western side of the proposed care home parking area. For the Main House, five mezzanines have been removed and additional landscaping has been added along the road in front of the house and care home. Finally, there have been changes in the eastern parcel, with the 'L' shaped building being removed, two further blocks removed from the north eastern area and three blocks in the eastern area to be changed from apartments to houses.

4 Findings of the EIA

- 4.1 Montagu Evans have prepared the built heritage chapter of the ESA. It considers whether there would be any change to the assessment of the likely effects of the Proposed Development on the designated and non-designated heritage assets identified in the Main ES.
- 4.2 The built heritage chapter is informed by the Heritage Statement Addendum, also prepared by Montagu Evans, which provides an assessment against relevant legislation and policy.
- 4.3 The built heritage assessment does not consider archaeological (below-ground) heritage assets.
- 4.4 There have been no changes to the built heritage baseline since the Main ES was prepared. The Site is mostly within a Grade II Registered Park and Garden ('RPG') and the main house

is a Grade II listed building. There are four other listed buildings in the grounds which are associated with the historic estate: Inner Park Walls at Caversham Park (Grade II); Temple to West of Caversham Park (Grade II); Entrance Gates and Gate Piers to Caversham Park (Grade II); Walls at Former Kitchen Garden at Caversham Park (Grade II); and Nos. 1 and 3 Caversham Park Drive (curtilage listed).

- 4.5 The main impacts on built heritage assets concern the RPG and main house.
- 4.6 The revisions to the Proposed Development would improve the impact on the main house because five mezzanines have been removed and two mezzanines have been reduced in size. The revisions also remove new blocks to the east of the house, thereby conserving more of the domestic landscape setting. Whilst they are improvements, they are not considered to change the overall level of impact, and the likely effect would remain beneficial (significant) after further mitigation, as described in the Main ES.
- 4.7 There would likewise be an improvement to Caversham Park, the RPG. However, given that the scheme would introduce a negative change to a high value receptor, the effect on the RPG is still considered adverse (significant).
- 4.8 The adverse effects that have been identified in the ES chapter have been identified as less than substantial harm according to paragraph 208 of the recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023). The Heritage Statement provides an assessment against legislation and policy, and particularly to consider whether the public benefits are able to outweigh the harm.

5 Cumulative Effects

- 5.1 The assessment has considered the potential for effects in combination with the cumulative developments identified through a review of planning applications to identifying those schemes within 1.5 km of the Site.
- 5.2 The cumulative assessment concluded that no significant adverse effects are likely to occur from the implementation of the Proposed Development with nearby existing or approved developments.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The ESA has considered how the environment and the local community would be affected by the Proposed Development and how the amendments to the scheme may have changed the conclusions of the Main ES.
- 6.2 A range of likely effects have been predicted to occur as a result of the Proposed Development, both beneficial and adverse, and mitigation measures have been identified either within the scheme design or additionally to minimise or offset identified adverse effects where possible. After the proposed mitigation is taken into account, there are no significant effects predicted to occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Next Steps

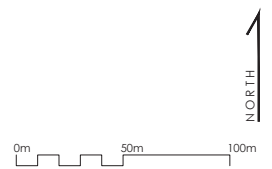
- 6.3 The ESA has been submitted alongside other documents in a planning application to Reading Borough Council. Prior to making a decision, the Council will consult with relevant statutory and non-statutory bodies for advice on the proposals. Members of the general public are also welcome to make comments on the application during this time. The feedback from these consultations will be taken into account by the Council in reaching their decision.

- 6.4 The full Environmental Statement Addendum can be viewed during normal office hours at RBC.
- 6.5 A copy of the Environmental Statement Addendum on USB flash drive is available at a charge of £25.00. Enquiries in respect of these or printed copies of the ESA and Appendices should be made to Savills: wimborneplanning@savills.com, or alternatively, telephone 01202 856 800.
- 6.6 Should interested parties wish to make representations on the content of this ES, they should be made in writing to:

*Planning Department
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading RG1 2LU*

- 6.7 Alternatively, representations can be made online by following instructions at:

http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb_PL/welcome.asp



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REVISIONS		
Rev.	Date	Description

Client :
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DEVELOPMENTS LTD

Job :
CAVERSHAM PARK

Drawing Title:
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A	14.12.21	Indicative outline added
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G	21.02.22	Southern boundary added
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AD	09.01.24	Updated
AE	14.01.24	Updated
AF	19.01.24	Updated
AG	25.01.24	Label Updated
AH	14.02.24	Landscape updated
AJ	26.02.24	Landscape updated

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Developments Ltd.

Job :
Caversham Park

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Nov 2023

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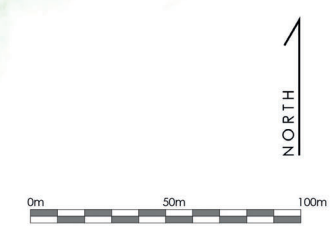
Revision:
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