



CAVERSHAM COURT GARDENS AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH - READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Caversham Court Gardens Church Road, Reading

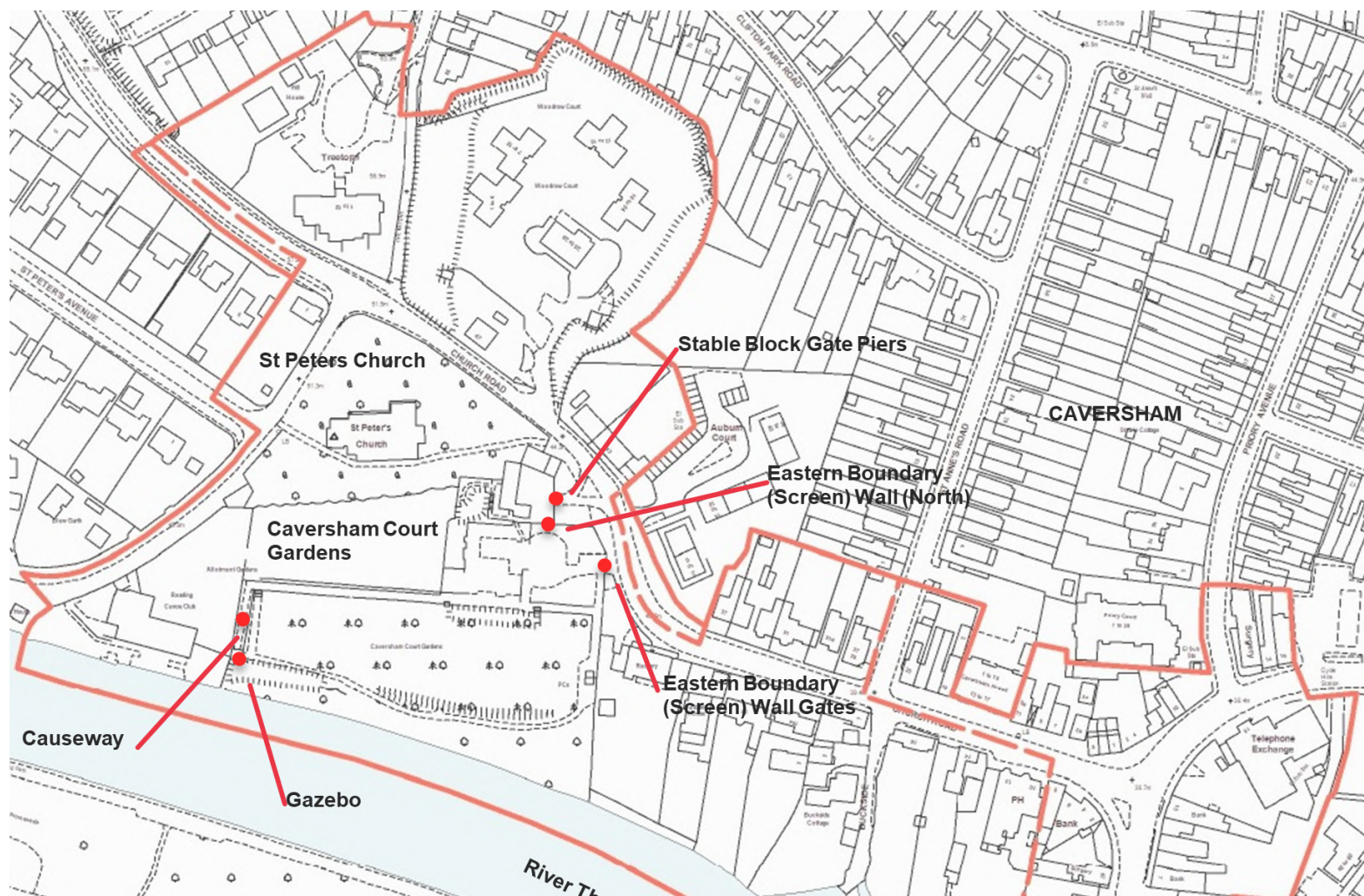
- Gazebo
- Causeway
- Stable Block Courtyard Wall and Gate Piers
- North Boundary (Screen Wall) Buttress & Wall
- East Boundary (Screen Wall) Gate Piers and Gates

Design and Access Statement

April 2026

Contents

1.0	Introduction	p.3
1.1	Purpose	
1.2	Associated Drawings	p.4
1.3	Property Listing Details	p.5
2.0	Existing Site	p.6
3.0	Gazebo	p.7
3.1	Assessment of Significance	
4.0	Causeway	p.8
4.1	Assessment of Significance	
5.0	The Stable Block, Boundary Wall and Gate Piers	p.9
5.1	Assessment of Significance	
6.0	North Boundary (Screen Wall) Buttress & Wall	p.10
6.1	Assessment of Significance	
7.0	Courtyard Boundary (Screen East and North Walls)	p.11
7.1	Assessment of Significance	
8.0	Proposal	p.12
8.1	Scope of Works	



ST PETERS CONSERVATION AREA MAP- HIGHLIGHTING APPLICATION AREAS- READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
1053 - CAVERSHAM COURT- GAZEBO - DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

1.0 Introduction

Site Location: Caversham Court Garden
Church Road
Caversham
Reading, SO21 1AN
Applicant: Reading Borough Council
Architect: Morse Webb Architects

This Design and Access Statement has been produced by Morse Webb Architects to support both a Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent Application for the repair and consolidation work to the Gazebo, Causeway, Stable Block boundary wall and gate piers, East (screen) wall gates and gates opening and buttress to the adjacent garden wall.

This report is to be read together with the submitted drawings, and heritage statement which are attached as part of the application.

The proposed works are necessary to return significant designated heritage assets back to a good state of repair.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is:

- To communicate design approach and the scope of the repairs proposed and associated works. The scope of the repairs proposed and associated works, and how this responds to the significance of the existing historic host building and adjacent related structures within the boundary of the site.
- To communicate access arrangement to the site.

Several site visits were conducted by Morse Webb Architects to become familiar with the site. The photographs included in this report illustrate key details and character to support the proposal; however, this document is not intended as a comprehensive photographic survey.

Existing survey drawings (plans, elevations, and sections) of the Gazebo, Causeway, Stable Block Courtyard Wall and Gate Piers and East Boundary (Screen Wall) Gate Piers and Gates dated April 2008 produced by Hampshire County Council, were made available to Morse Webb Architects by Reading Borough Council for use in this statement for identification purposes.

1.2 Associated Drawings

The project is separated into five distinct elements of work:

1. Gazebo
2. Causeway
3. Stable Block Courtyard Wall and Gate Piers
4. North Boundary (Screen Wall) Buttress and Wall
5. East Boundary (Screen Wall) Gate Piers and Gates

This design and access statement is to be read with the following submitted planning drawings:

- 1053 100 PL00 Location Plan
- 1053 101 PL00 Block Plan Gazebo and Causeway
- 1053 102 PL00 Block Plan Stable Block Courtyard and Gate Piers, North Boundary Buttress and Wall and East Boundary Gate Piers and Gate
- 1053 103 PL00 Existing Site Plan Gazebo and Causeway
- 1053 104 PL00 Existing Site Plan Stable Block Courtyard and Gate Piers, North Boundary Buttress and Wall and East Boundary Gate Piers and Gate
- 1053 110 PL00 Gazebo Plans as Existing
- 1053 111 PL00 Gazebo Roof Plan as Existing
- 1053 115 PL00 Gazebo Elevations as Existing
- 1053 116 PL00 Gazebo Elevations as Existing Photographs
- 1053 117 PL00 Causeway Elevations as Existing
- 1053 118 PL00 Causeway Elevations as Existing Photographs
- 1053 119 PL00 Stable Block Boundary Wall and Gate Piers as Existing
- 1053 120 PL00 Stable Block Boundary Wall and Gate Piers as Existing Photographs
- 1053 121 PL00 North Boundary Buttress and Wall as Existing
- 1053 122 PL00 North Boundary Buttress and Wall as Existing Photographs
- 1053 123 PL00 East Boundary Gate Piers and Gate as Existing
- 1053 124 PL00 East Boundary Gate Piers and Gate as Existing Photographs
- 1053 125 PL00 Gazebo Sections as Existing
- 1053 130 PL00 Floor Plans Repairs
- 1053 139 PL00 Gazebo North Elevation Repairs
- 1053 140 PL00 Gazebo East Elevation Repairs
- 1053 141 PL00 Gazebo South Elevation Repairs
- 1053 142 PL00 Gazebo West Elevation Repairs
- 1053 145 PL00 Gazebo Section AA Repairs
- 1053 146 PL00 Gazebo Section BB Repairs
- 1053 147 PL00 Gazebo Section CC Repairs
- 1053 148 PL00 Gazebo Section DD Repairs
- 1053 149 PL00 Causeway Elevations as Proposed
- 1053 150 PL00 Stable Block Boundary Wall and Gate piers as Proposed
- 1053 151 PL00 North Boundary Wall Buttress as Proposed
- 1053 152 PL00 East Boundary Main Gates and Gates as Proposed
- 1053 500 PL00 Detail 01
- 1053 501 PL00 Detail 02



VIEW OF CAVERSHAM COURT GARDEN ACROSS THE THAMES FROM THE SOUTH EAST SHOWING THE GAZEBO AND PART OF THE CAUSEWAY
- VISIT READING



- 1053 Caversham Court Gardens Gazebo Heritage Statement Revision 0
- 1053 SCH 01 PL00 Gazebo Schedule of Repairs
- 1053 SCH 02 PL00 West Retaining Wall to Raised Walkway Schedule of Repairs
- 1053 SCH 03 PL00 Stable Block Courtyard and Gate Pier Schedule of Repairs
- 1053 SCH 04 PL00 North Courtyard Screen Wall and Buttress Schedule of Repairs
- 1053 SCH 05 PL00 East Boundary Wall Opening and Gates Schedule of Repairs

1.3 Property Listing Details

Caversham Court

Heritage Category: Park and Garden

Grade: II

Date First Listed: 30-Sep-1987

Listing Entry Number: 1000582

Location: Riverside Garden Pavilion, at Caversham Court, Church Road

National Grid Reference: SU7084774819

Latitude / Longitude: 51.468,-0.980

District: Reading (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

Riverside Garden Pavilion at Caversham Court (Gazebo)

Grade: II

Date First Listed: 22-Mar-1957

Listing Entry Number: 1113447

Location: Riverside Garden Pavilion, at Caversham Court, Church Road

National Grid Reference: SU70833 74809

Latitude / Longitude: 51.467,-0.981

District: Reading (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

Caversham Court Stables (including boundary wall and gate piers)

Grade: II

Date First Listed: 22-Mar-1957

Listing Entry Number: 1321972

Location: Caversham Court Stables, Church Road

National Grid Reference: SU7094874884

Latitude / Longitude: 51.468,-0.979

District: Reading (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

Retaining Walls to Raised Walk to Riverside Garden Pavilion at Caversham Court

Grade: II

Date First Listed: 14-Dec-1978

Listing Entry Number: 1154940

Location: Retaining walls to raised walk to Riverside Garden

Pavilion at Caversham Court, Church Road

National Grid Reference: SU7083474829

Latitude / Longitude: 51.468, -0.981

District: Reading (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

Screen Wall at the North East End of Caversham Court Recreation Ground

Grade: II

Date First Listed: 14-Dec-1978

Listing Entry Number: 1113446

Location: Screen Wall at North East End of Caversham Court

Recreation Ground, Church Road

National Grid Reference: SU7097474835

Latitude / Longitude: 51.468, -0.979

District: Reading (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

For listed building description/details for each designated heritage asset, refer to heritage statement.

Source: Historic England

2.0 Existing Site

Caversham Court Gardens – Registered Historic Park and Garden of Special Interest

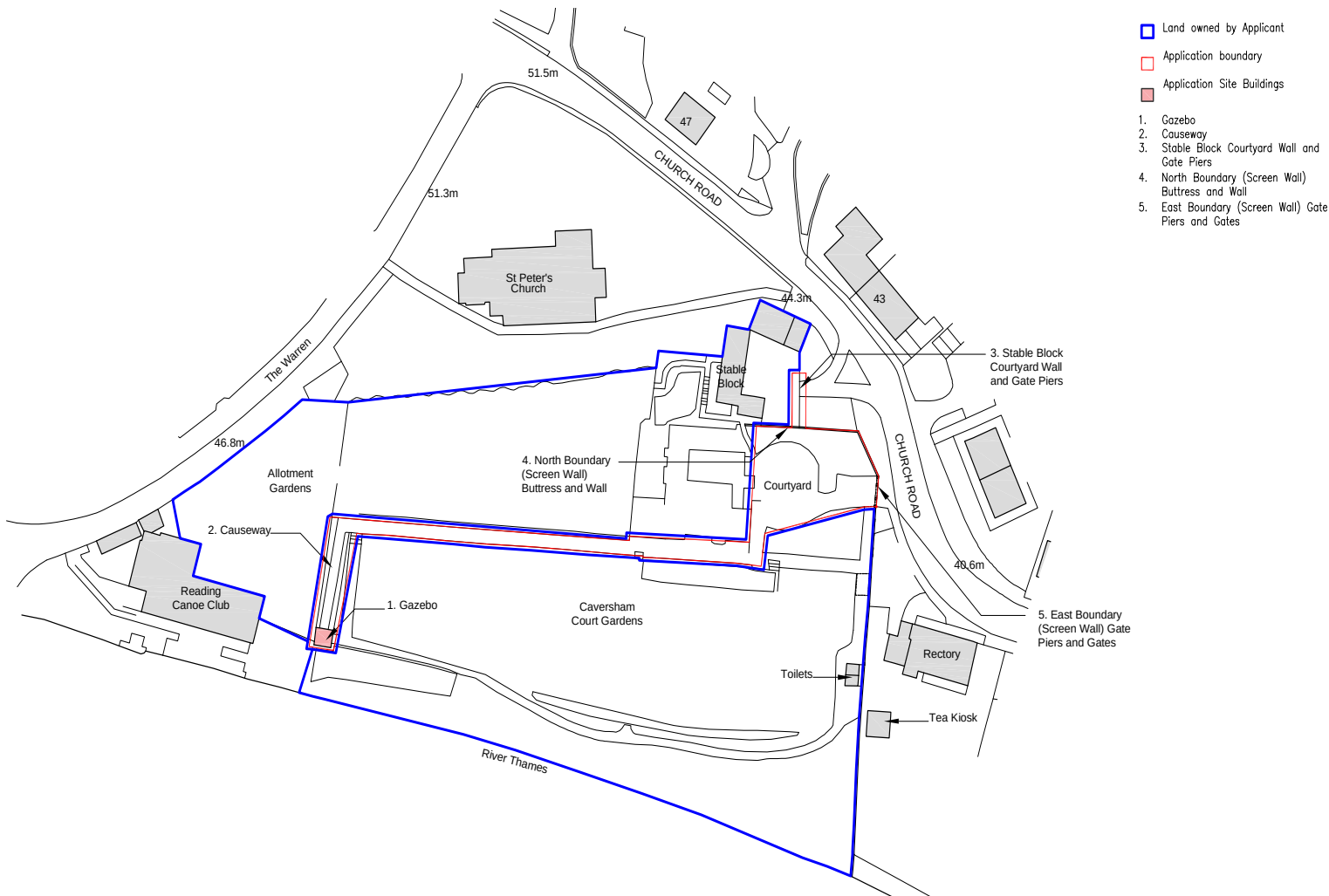
Caversham Court Gardens is a public garden owned and managed by Reading Borough Council. It is located on the north bank of the River Thames in Caversham, approximately 1.5 miles from the centre of Reading.

The formal gardens were originally laid out around a former rectory, which was demolished in 1933. However, a number of historic ancillary residential and garden buildings and structures remain, contributing to the character and significance of the site, which is now open for public enjoyment.

Caversham Court is a Grade II listed Historic Park and Garden and is situated within the St Peter's Conservation Area.

The gardens also form part of a wider network of riverside open spaces along the River Thames as it passes through Reading. These include Thameside Promenade, Christchurch Meadows, Hills Meadow, View Island, and King's Meadow.

Refer to Heritage Statement submitted as part of the application.





Gazebo External- North



Gazebo External- West



Gazebo External- East



Gazebo External- South

3.0 Gazebo

3.1 Assessment of Significance

The Gazebo (listed) is important and significant for the following reasons:

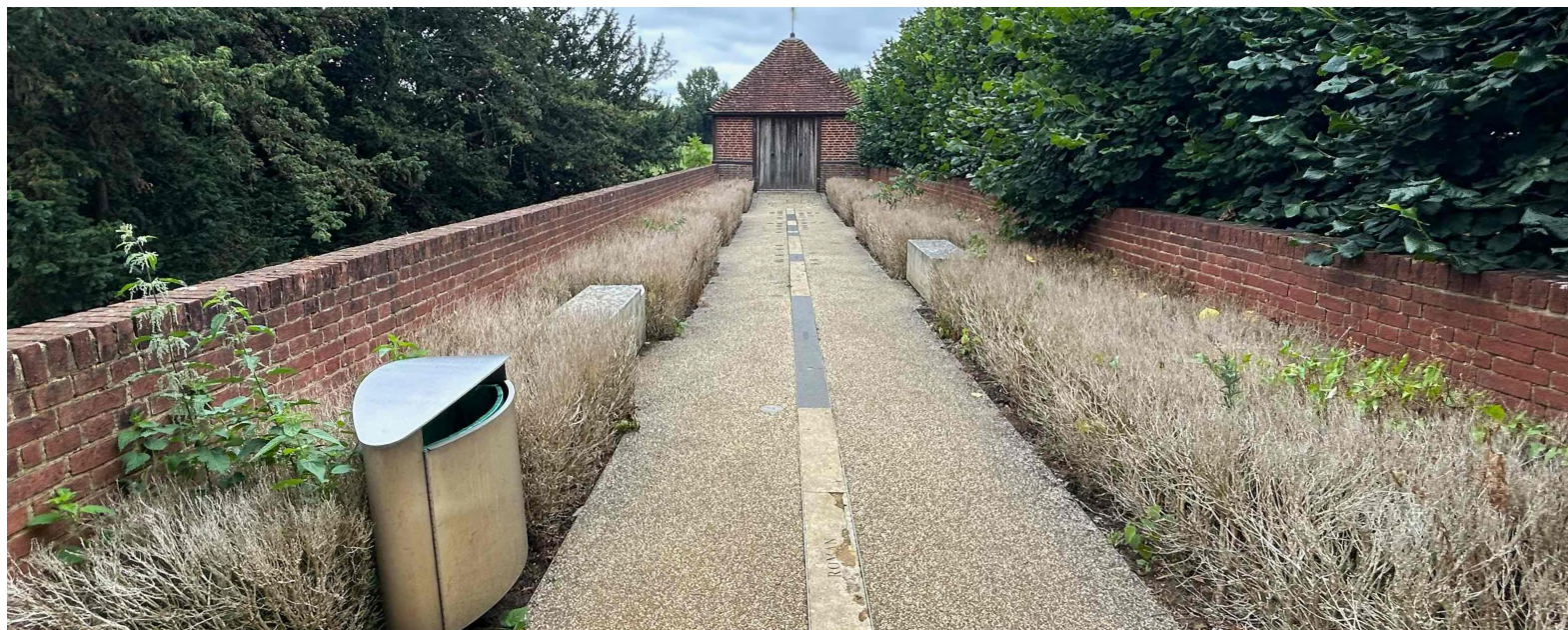
- The 17th-century gazebo (or viewing pavilion) at Caversham Court is historically significant as one of the oldest surviving riverside structures of its type on the Thames, built by 1663 as a part of a fashionable retreat.
- Architecturally, it serves as a example of the Restoration period, representing a “viewing” summerhouse designed to showcase views along the river and therefore make a significant visual and physical contribution to its wider setting.
- The gazebo, along with the retaining walls, dates back to the 17th-century, highlighting the era when the surrounding gardens were laid out.
- One of the last surviving building from the old former rectory/mansion estate, which was largely demolished in 1933.
- Cultural legacy: It survived the English Civil War, and in the 21st century was fully restored (2008–9) after a campaign to save it.
- It is part of a historically important elaborate garden landscape developed along the Thames, featuring a two-story design intended for enjoyment of the riverside setting.
- The building is a key Grade II listed feature within the registered Caversham Court Gardens, providing a focal point for the riverside park.
- It features a restored wind vane (a replica of the original) and sits on a terrace overlooking the water, maintaining a visual link with the adjacent, St. Peter’s Church.
- While originating in the 17th century, the gazebo is part of a complex of historic features including, brickwork reflecting, construction styles up to the 19th century.

4.0 Causeway

4.1 Assessment of Significance

The Raised Walk/ Causeway (retaining walls listed) is important and significant for the following reasons:

- For its 17th-century, top-of-bank position, offering historic, uninterrupted views of the Thames. It connects the upper terrace—site of the old rectory—to St Peter's Church, serving as a historic "gallery garden" walk as a feature of a landscaped riverfront.
- Due to its Historic Connectivity: The raised walk was used as a private, elevated route from the main house to St Peter's Church, often used by the priest and residents.
- As an important landscape feature contributing to its immediate and wider setting: It runs along the top of a steeply terraced bank, often lined with historic yew trees, and provides views over the C18 yew hedge and lower riverside lawns to the terraced garden.
- Architectural Context: the raised walk provides direct access to the upper chamber of the C17 gazebo. Its historic walls anchor the garden's layout to the former mansion by way of connecting terrace walks.
- Cultural Significance: historically the raised walkway connects with paths that establish maintained links between the public gardens and the adjacent churchyard, preserving the site's historic pedestrian flow.



Raised Walk (Causeway) – view of the top of the Causeway looking south towards the Gazebo and river



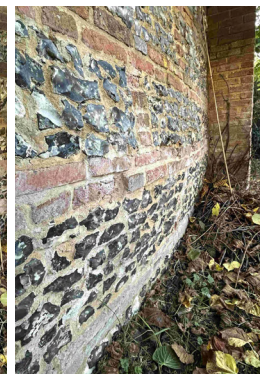
Causeway- East



Causeway- East



Causeway- East



Causeway- East



Causeway- East



Causeway- East

5.0 The Stable Block, Boundary Wall and Gate Piers

5.1 Assessment of Significance

The Stable Block, Boundary Wall and Gate Piers (listed) are important and significant for the following reasons:

- A 500-year-old brick building that originally served as a Tudor laundry and brew house. It is a rare surviving service building conveying centuries of site evolution, from Tudor origins to its later use for stabling and as a coach house, providing physical evidence of the estate's historic, ancillary uses that supported the principal residential function of the house.
- The building, courtyard walls and gate piers are a significant part of the former estate and designed landscape (Caversham Court Gardens) and represents the older, service-oriented architecture, contrasting with the Victorian Gothic style of the former main mansion (since demolished in 1933).
- The Stable Block, walls and gate piers are located within a 12th-century site that is now a listed park and garden, contributing to the historical character of the immediate historic context as well as to the conservation area in which it is located.



Stable Block Boundary Wall & Gate Piers from Highway



Stable Block Boundary Wall & Gate Piers Showing Damage from Highway



Stable Gate Piers



Stable Gate Piers



Stable Gateway- Damaged Wall



Stable Gateway- Damaged Wall



Boundary Wall- Caversham Court Gardens



Boundary Wall- Loose Flints



Boundary Wall- Damaged Pier Base



Boundary Wall- Damaged Pier



Boundary Wall- Damaged Pier



Boundary Wall- Damaged Pier

6.0 North Boundary (Screen Wall) Buttress & Wall

6.1 Assessment of Significance

The North Boundary (Screen Wall) Buttress & Wall is not individually listed, However it holds importance and significance for the following reasons:

- Its location within Caversham Court Gardens, registered historic park and garden.
- For its position within the St Peters Conservation Area

These considerations are not limited solely to the North Boundary (Screen Wall), buttress and wall. They are equally relevant to all buildings and structures included within the full planning and listed building consent application.



Stable Block Boundary Wall & Gate Piers from Highway



Damage to Gate Pier



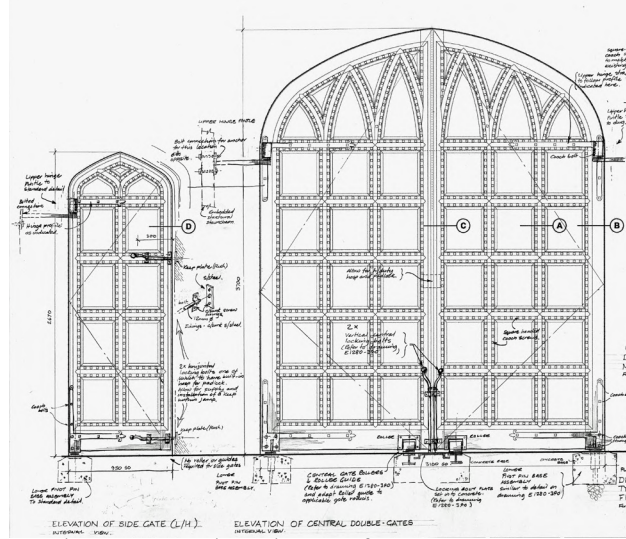
Damage to Hinge Pin



Central Gate from Courtyard



Damaged Main Entrance Gates and Bollard: Remains of gates following impact damage by car.



Hampshire County Council Record Drawing of Main Entrance Gates- NTS

7.0 Courtyard Boundary (Screen) East and North Walls

7.1 Assessment of Significance

The Courtyard Boundary (screen) east and north walls are important and significant for the following reasons:

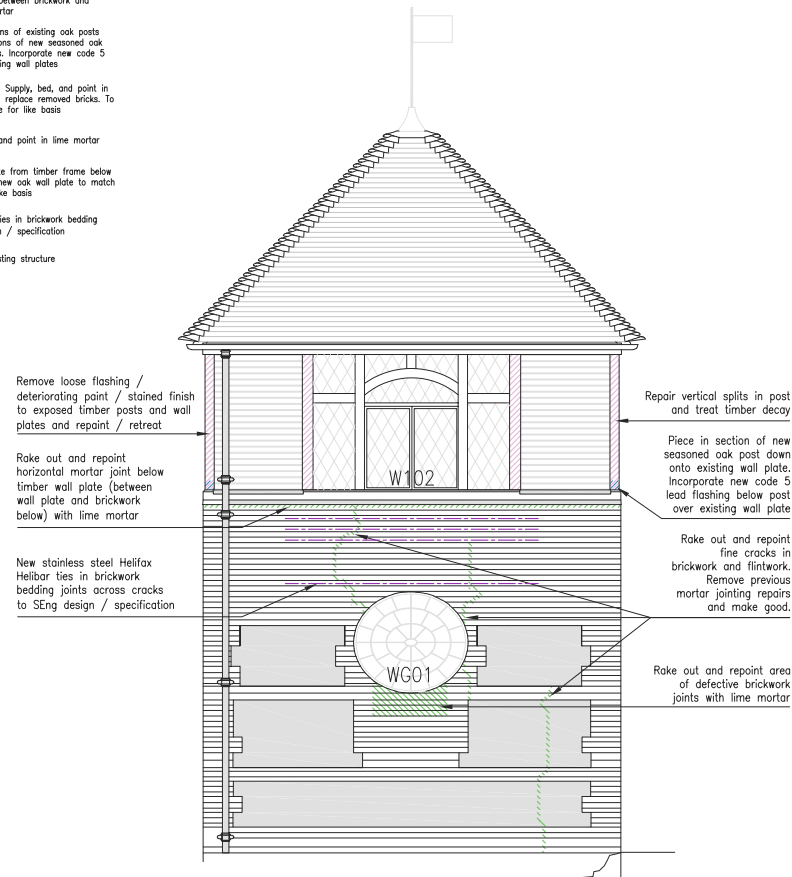
- Historically, due to its age and association with the past reflecting life in the early Victorian period. The wall dates back to the early to mid C19 (1840s). Other than repairs, and some part re-building works, the wall remains largely intact from its C19 origins.
- Architecturally due to the appearance and detailing of the wall. Its style, form and detailing is Gothic revival informed and influenced by the medieval late Gothic period or the C15 and early C16. It is therefore an important Gothic revival structure of the C19.
- Architecturally due to its association with A W N Pugin, the eminent C19 architect who promoted Gothic revival architecture based on medieval English precedent.
- For its relationship and association with the former C19 rectory, also by Pugin. The wall and associated gateway forms the principal entrance and carriage way into Caversham Court Gardens.
- Materiality and workmanship, for its use of flint, dressed ashlar stonework and brick using stone masons, bricklayers and flint knappers of the C19.
- By association with regards to the people and families who lived at Caversham Court and those who worked there.
- For its physical and visual contribution it makes to its setting as part of the garden and its wider context in Caversham, and predominately in the St Peters Conservation Area.

Repair Legend

All dimensions must be checked by the contractor before commencing work on site.
No deviation from this drawing will be permitted without the prior written consent of the Architect.
This drawing is to be read with all relevant Morse Webb Ltd, Structural, M&E and Specialist drawings, reports and specifications.
Any discrepancies in dimensions or details on or between these drawings / reports / specifications should be brought to the attention of Morse Webb Ltd in writing for clarification.
Refer to S.Eng drawings and documents.

Parapet Walls and Coped Gables

- Remove loose flashing / deteriorating paint / stained finish to exposed timber posts and wall plates and repaint / retreat
- Rake out existing defective mortar between brickwork and flintwork and repoint using lime mortar
- Cut out and remove decayed sections of existing oak posts above wall plate and piece in sections of new seasoned oak posts down onto existing wall plates. Incorporate new code 5 lead flashing below posts over existing wall plates
- Remove all defective existing bricks. Supply, bed, and point in lime mortar new individual bricks to replace removed bricks. To match existing appearance on a like for like basis
- Reinstat missing flints and bricks and point in lime mortar
- Remove section of existing wall plate from timber frame below window cill and replace section of new oak wall plate to match existing appearance on a like for like basis
- New stainless steel Hellfax Hellbar ties in brickwork bedding joints across cracks to SEng design / specification
- Remove all vegetation from the existing structure

**01 SOUTH ELEVATION - REPAIRS**

GAZEBO- REPAIRS- NTS - EXAMPLE OF REPAIRS

8.0 Proposal

8.1 Scope of works

The building and structures at Caversham Court, subject to this Design and Access Statement, have fallen into disrepair with a range of defects and faults. Proposals for their repair and conservation have been prepared to return the relevant parts of their structure and fabric back to good condition.

The repairs proposed are detailed in the schedule of works for each building and the justification for the works is set out in the Heritage Statement. The repairs are not intended to alter or change any of the buildings or structures at Caversham Court. The aim of the proposals is to remove the risk of loss and fabric from heritage assets which, if allowed to happen, would impact negatively on their significance.

Localised and isolated repairs are necessary now to stop or reduce further decay and deterioration which will meet the owners obligations to retain or return heritage assets to a good condition.

Repairs and conservation work are proposed to rectify defects to the structure and fabric of the following buildings and structures within the registered park and garden.