

CHEL TENHAM

# Local development framework

## 9. THE PARK CHARACTER AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

JULY 2008





# Central Conservation Area

## 9. The Park Character Area Appraisal and Management Plan July 2008



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### **Key characteristics**

This Character Appraisal of the Park Character Area within Cheltenham's Central Conservation Area concludes that the special interest of the area derives from the following key characteristics:

- The tear-drop shaped plan form of the Park is a distinctive feature within the town and sets a basis for the other special qualities of the area;
- The pattern and layout of streets, the spaces between buildings, the form of the buildings and use of quality building materials complement each other. They combine together to give the area grandeur, elegance and spaciousness;
- The extensive green space within the Park itself "...makes the single greatest contribution to (establishing) the spacious character of the area;"<sup>1</sup>
- The well established tree-lined streets, particularly in and around the Park, greatly enhance the area's character and appearance and the setting of its buildings. The trees create a leafy character for many of the residential streets;
- The character area contains large numbers of Georgian and early Victorian formally laid out villas and terraces. The villas particularly contribute to the form and the distinct and impressive character of the area;
- This character area is an area of rich architectural and historic interest. It contains over 100 statutory listed buildings (some of which are grouped under the same listing) and structures and some buildings and structures which are included on the Local Index;<sup>2</sup>
- There are a large number of surviving gate piers fronting the Georgian and Victorian villas. These structures form an attractive and historic boundary treatment and enhance the setting of buildings.

### **Key issues**

A number of problems and issues have been identified and have a negative impact on the character of Park character area. These form the basis for the Management Proposals of the Management Plan in the Part 2 of this document and are summarised below:

- Control of new development;
- Loss of traditional architectural features on some historic buildings;
- Negative impacts of the presence of equipment or installations on or around buildings, such as large aerials or satellite dishes;
- Poor street furniture;
- Drives and loss of front gardens;
- Tree management;
- Boundary enclosures;
- Setting and views;
- Enhancement of existing buildings and land;
- Visually intrusive double yellow lines following the line of the tear drop curved form of The Park.

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<sup>1</sup> The Park character area statement written by Cheltenham Urban Character Area Partnership (CUCAP) no pg. number given

<sup>2</sup> Cheltenham Borough Council [Index of Buildings of Local Importance](#) (adopted 2007)

# Part 1 – Character Appraisal

## Townscape Analysis Map of the Park Character Area

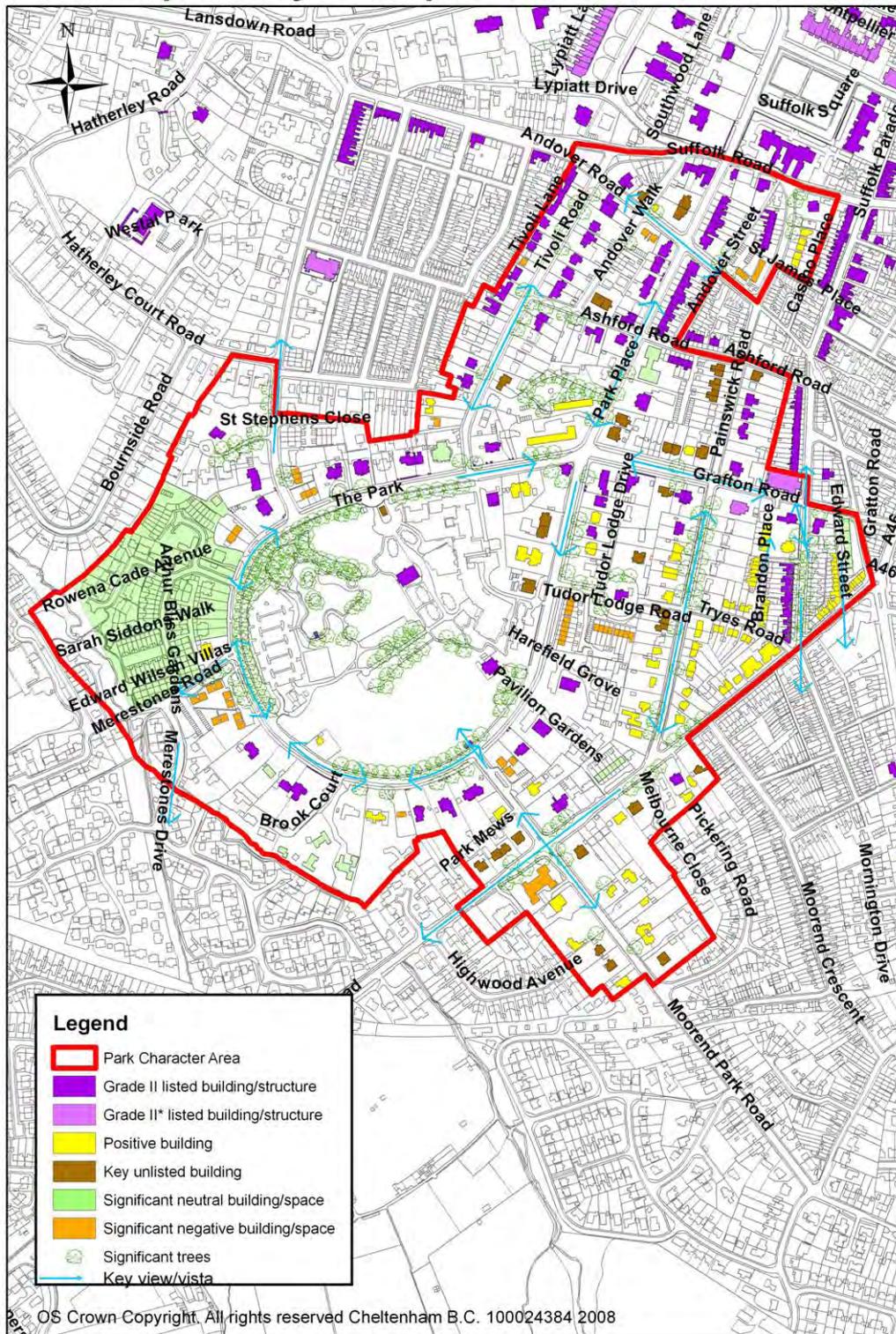


Figure 1 Townscape Analysis Map of the Park Character Area

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## **What is a Conservation Area**

1.1 A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, in which the character or appearance is seen to be worth preserving or enhancing. It is given special protection under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Government policy in relation to conservation areas set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15). This legal protection enables the best features of an area to be preserved and new buildings and street works to be designed in-order that they enhance the area.

1.2 Some building work which does not require planning permission (known as “permitted development”) can damage the special qualities of a conservation area. “Article 4” directions can be applied by the planning authority to limit permitted development rights and thus give extra protection to particular buildings.

## **The need for an appraisal**

1.3 PPG15 stresses the need for local planning authorities to make an assessment of the special character and appearance of all conservation areas in their districts. The Government has also made the preparation of such assessment appraisals for all conservation areas a Best Value Performance indicator for local authorities. These assessments should be reviewed by local planning authorities every five years.

1.4 This document has been split into two parts. Part 1 of the document forms the character appraisal which provides an assessment of the character of a conservation area or parts of it. This appraisal provides the basis for Part 2, which comprises a management plan which gives guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance can be achieved. It also provides a sound basis for development control and other decisions made by local authorities (such as the design of highways or the appropriateness of the design of new buildings or open spaces).

1.5 Both parts of this document were subject to public consultation between 3<sup>rd</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2008. Following consideration of representations received it was adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2008 as a Supplementary Planning Document. It will be used in conjunction with the Local Plan as a material consideration in determining planning applications.

## **Planning context**

1.6 Cheltenham Borough Council has various adopted and emerging planning related documents. They can be found on the Council's website - [www.cheltenham.gov.uk](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk). Some of the documents are quite broad in their content, whilst others are thematic, site specific or area specific. However, all fall within the statutory planning framework and all are material considerations in determining planning proposals. All these documents together look at various aspects of the built environment and need to be read as a whole within a particular context.

1.7 This document is part of that overall framework. The Character Appraisal (Part 1) is one of a number of such documents each assessing the character

of parts of the conservation area and highlighting negative issues, which are then addressed through Management Proposals within the Management Plan (Part 2). In developing planning proposals, the Character Appraisal and Management Plan need to be considered along with advice, guidance and policy set out in other planning documents, be they general, thematic or spatially specific.

- 1.8 Cheltenham's Civic Pride project aims to regenerate specific areas within the town. The project intends to develop and deliver public realm enhancement schemes and redevelop under-utilised council land including car-parks. More information on Civic Pride can be found at [www.cheltenham.gov.uk](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk) Although this project is outside The Park Character Area, it is possible that there may be some consequential benefits.

### **The Central Conservation Area**

- 1.9 Cheltenham is known as the most complete Regency town in England. It lies at the foot of the Cotswold scarp, where the valley of the River Chelt meets the Severn Vale. Currently the whole of the Cheltenham Borough area has a population of approximately 112,000 people.
- 1.10 Cheltenham's Central Conservation Area was designated by Gloucestershire County Council on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1973 and its boundary was extended by Cheltenham Borough Council on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1987. The Central Conservation Area includes the whole of the town centre, most of the Victorian, Edwardian and some of the later 20<sup>th</sup> century suburbs. It covers commercial, industrial, retail and residential areas, as well as the University campus complexes, some extensive school campuses and the hospital complex.
- 1.11 There is a Government requirement for existing conservation area boundaries to be re-assessed from time to time. Due to the size of the Central Conservation area (reputedly the largest conservation area in Europe covering 600 hectares), it has been necessary to sub-divide it into approximately 19 character areas. These have been appraised separately, in-order to identify their individual key components and in turn establish how each may best be preserved and enhanced.

### **The Park Character Area**

- 1.12 In May 2001 Cheltenham Borough Council published a draft Urban Design Framework for Cheltenham, produced by Latham Architects (the "Latham Study"). It was never formally adopted by the Council, but has been a useful stepping stone for the development of a number of subsequent initiatives. It included a plan which divided the whole town into character areas and is the basis of the character area boundary used in this study.
- 1.13 The study suggested the boundary of the Park character area be drawn to include part of Moorend Park Road and buildings on both sides of the road, which are currently outside the Central Conservation Area boundary. Residential buildings along this road complement the built form of the Park, where detached houses are set back from public space within spacious grounds. Some of the buildings in this suggested extension are on the Index of Buildings of Local Importance. The value of including this area has been recognised, and it has therefore been decided to incorporate the area into this character appraisal for the Park character area.

- 1.14 The Park character appraisal is not intended to amend the boundary of the Central conservation area. However, it may be desirable to review the boundary in the future, and notes have been made on this area for such a time.
- 1.15 Overall, the boundary of the Park character area (see Fig. 2) within Cheltenham's Central conservation area has been based on the historic plan form of the Park, the streets leading to the Park and the buildings contained within these streets. It is the built form of the streets and spaces, and the individual buildings along these roads which give the Park its special character and appearance and its distinctive identity.

### **Summary of special interest**

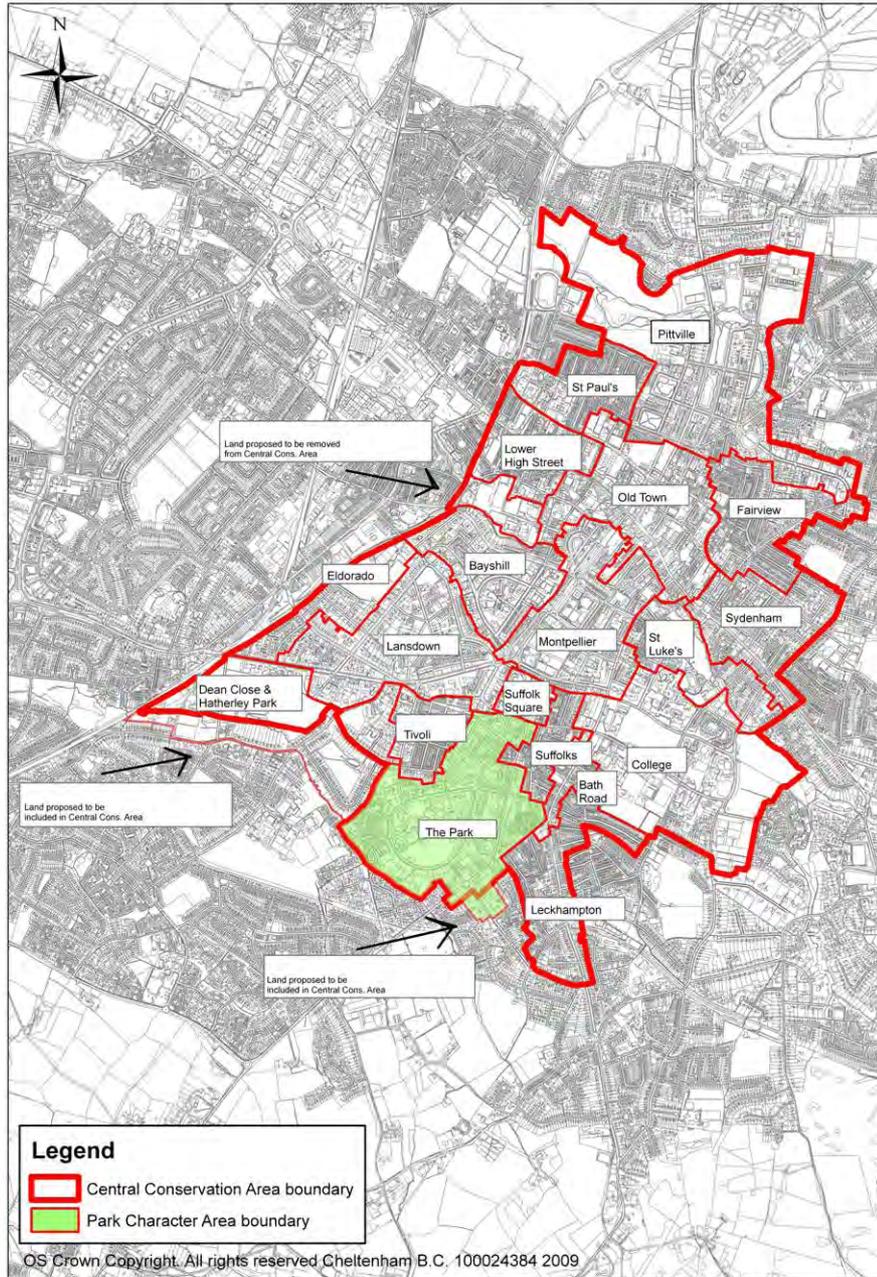
- 1.16 The Park character area is special because:
- a) The tear-drop shaped plan form of the Park is a distinctive feature within the town and sets a basis for the other special qualities of the area;
  - b) The pattern and layout of streets, the spaces between buildings, the form of the buildings and use of quality building materials complement each other. They combine together to give the area grandeur, elegance and spaciousness;
  - c) The extensive green space within the Park itself *"makes the single greatest contribution to (establishing) the spacious character of the area;"*<sup>3</sup>
  - d) The well established tree-lined streets, particularly in and around the Park, greatly enhance the area's character and appearance and the setting of its buildings. The trees create a leafy character for many of the residential streets;
  - e) The character area contains large numbers of Georgian and early Victorian formally laid out villas and terraces. The villas particularly contribute to the form and the distinct and impressive character of the area;
  - f) This character area is an area of rich architectural and historic interest. It contains over 100 statutory listed buildings (some of which are grouped under the same listing) and structures and some buildings and structures which are included on the Local Index<sup>4</sup>;
  - g) There are a large number of surviving gate piers fronting the Georgian and Victorian villas. These structures form an attractive and historic boundary treatment and enhance the setting of buildings.

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<sup>3</sup> The Park character area statement written by Cheltenham Urban Character Area Partnership (CUCAP) no pg. number

<sup>4</sup> Cheltenham Borough Council [Index of Buildings of Local Importance](#) (adopted 2007)

## The Park Character Area within the Central Conservation Area



**Figure 2** The Park Character Area within the Central Conservation Area

## 2 LOCATION AND SETTING

### Location and context of Cheltenham

- 2.1 Cheltenham is located in Gloucestershire. It is approximately 8 miles east of Gloucester, 40 miles west of Oxford and is immediately to the east of the M5 motorway. The town is set on low-lying land at the foot of the Cotswold scarp. Views of the Cotswold scarp from within the conservation area contribute to its character and setting. The town is surrounded by open countryside. Much of this is protected by the statutory Cheltenham/Gloucester Green Belt (to the west and north) and the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

(AONB) to the south and east. To the west of Cheltenham is the River Severn, with the Forest of Dean and Wales beyond the Severn.

### **General character and plan form of the Park Character Area**

- 2.2 The Park character area within Cheltenham's Central Conservation Area is located south of the town centre.
- 2.3 The character area contains Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian residential areas as well as some later 20<sup>th</sup> century residential developments. It was designed as an exclusive residential area from the 1830s. The predominance of formal terraces and particularly the grand detached villas set in wide verdant streets combine to establish the overall character of the Park. The formal street plan and the many historic buildings set in large grounds together formed the original Park Estate. They have been retained and are dominant features today. The presence of the wide and verdant tree lined streets, green open space within the Park, spacious private gardens and sizeable building plots combine to create a sense of space and grandeur.
- 2.4 Although the Park character area is principally a residential area, there are other land uses. The buildings of the University of Gloucestershire's Park Campus occupy the central space of the Park and have a significant impact both on the space and the general character of the area. Other building uses in the character area include a church, a hotel and small businesses.
- 2.5 The plan form of the Park character area is based on a deformed grid pattern set around the striking tear-drop form of The Park itself. The historic streets themselves display two different forms – the wide main streets and the narrow service lanes at the rear of some of the historic terraces and villas. Their characteristics are explained in detail below -

#### **a. The wide main roads:**



**Figure 4** Curving plan form of The Park

- Streets are long and broad (e.g. Tivoli Road, Park Place, Painswick Road and Shurdington Road);
- The Park has elements consistent with these other main streets, but has a tear-drop form, coming off the southern end of Park Place. This constantly curving form results in constantly changing views and experiences of enclosure.
- There are a considerable number of trees planted in the highway grass verges. The Park is a particularly striking tree-lined avenue;
- The streets form large urban blocks within which:
  - some terraces are present to the east and north-east of the Park;
  - villas and large detached buildings are the predominant building form within much of the Park character area. They are sited within spacious plots (particularly evident around the



**Figure 5** The Park comprises a striking tree-lined avenue

Park, Tivoli Road, Painswick Road, Grafton Road and Shurdington Road);

- The space in the streets allows views to open up – both medium and long distance of the countryside;
- The open space within the Park itself is a particularly striking feature. This space is owned by the University of Gloucestershire, where several of its buildings are sited. The Park provides a highly attractive setting for the University buildings and the surrounding villas.

**b. The narrow service lanes:**



**Figure 6** Tudor Lodge Drive service lane

- Service lanes run to the rear of some of the historic buildings and are particularly in evidence to the north and east of the area. Their presence splits the urban blocks;
- They represent a tighter network and layout of streets;
- There is little opportunity for street planting;
- The service lanes contain some modest buildings, many of which are ancillary buildings within the grounds of the large historic properties;
- Buildings often front directly onto the street with no separation between public and private space;
- There are few long distance views of other buildings within the character area.

**Wider landscape setting**

2.6 The Park character area is surrounded on all sides by urban development – that to the north and west being within the Central Conservation Area. However, the distance views of Leckhampton Hill presented from the linear form of many roads creates a rural connection linking the countryside and urban area. These distance views of the hills in turn reinforce and enhance the character and setting of the area, and provide a rural backdrop for some of the set pieces of architecture such as Cornerways.



**Figure 7** View of Leckhampton Hill from Moorend Park Road



**Figure 8** View of Leckhampton Hill down Edward Street

- 2.7 A large number of both historic and modern landmark buildings are present within the Park character area. Historic landmark buildings include Cornerways, Church of St Phillip and St James, Hilgay Lodge and Fullwood House. Modern landmark buildings include Dorchester Court, part of the Park Gate and Mercian Court development and Park House. Both historic and modern landmark buildings have a striking visual impact upon the street scene. Some of the historic buildings have ornate architectural detailing which enhances the Park's uniqueness and historic character. The taller buildings can dominate views of the skyline both from within and outside the character area often stopping the vistas created along many of the linear streets. Complementing the long vistas are the street trees which create a sense of enclosure and the open spaces which provide spaciousness, the whole giving the area a range of experiences.



**Figure 9** Landmark buildings within the Park Character Area

### 3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

#### **Archaeology within the town of Cheltenham**

- 3.1 Some archaeological research has been conducted within the Borough of Cheltenham and in-depth research can be found in "Pre-Regency Cheltenham: An Archaeological Survey".<sup>5</sup> Many archaeological artefacts would have been lost during the expansion of the town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and so medieval and post-medieval finds have been very limited.
- 3.2 A few prehistoric remains have been found within the town, raising the possibility that men from Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age periods travelled or lived here. An Iron Age enclosure ditch was uncovered on the site of the present day Children's Library in 1986-87. This indicates that an area of Iron Age occupation was likely situated nearby.<sup>6</sup> During the last 30 years, archaeologists have pinpointed several areas within the town which have been identified as areas of Roman occupation, and where Roman artefacts such as coins and pottery have been discovered. Within the Park character area, however, no finds have been noted under the Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Record.
- 3.3 Archaeological remains unearthed provide a basis for researching the origins and early development of Cheltenham, and contribute indirectly to a sense of place in the modern era.

<sup>5</sup> 'Pre-Regency Cheltenham: An Archaeological Survey' Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum, 1975

<sup>6</sup> 'Pre-Regency Cheltenham: An Archaeological Survey' Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum, 1975

### Summary of Historic Development of Cheltenham

- 3.4 The first documentary reference to Cheltenham itself occurs in an account of the Council of Cloveshoe held in 803. It is highly likely, given the archaeological finds and possible place-name derivation that Cheltenham was in existence as a farming village for a long time before the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Its status was raised to that of a market town in 1226 and the market played a key role in its economy for several centuries. From c. 1247 Cheltenham was also a Liberty. Spa waters were discovered adjacent to the town in 1716 and after King George III's visit to sample the waters in 1788, Cheltenham grew rapidly as a fashionable spa resort. The popularity of the town as a summer resort resulted in Cheltenham having a wealth of tree-lined walks and rides, squares and gardens. Its popularity led to expansion of the town away from the ancient High Street, and many fine Regency buildings were built for the growing population. The popularity of the spa waters waned from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and Cheltenham developed other roles in the form of its growing importance as a major educational centre during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In turn this led to the development well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century of some acclaimed public schools and churches. Before World War II, light industry boosted the town's economy. The establishment of GCHQ in Cheltenham immediately after World War II has had an enormous impact on employment in the town. Today, the town's attractions include fine shops and events such as the races and numerous cultural festivals as well as its legacy of Regency architecture, with trees, parks, gardens and public spaces.

### General history of the Park character area

- 3.5 Hart explains that *"as early as 1833 the Park— an area of 100 acres- was laid out by its owner Thomas Billings as an oval tree-lined carriage-drive enclosing a central park. Four years later a joint-stock company was formed to establish Zoological Gardens in this park..."* In 1838, to coincide with the coronation of Queen Victoria, the Zoological Gardens in the Park were opened and offered many attractions, including various animal and bird species, botanical gardens and promenades. Pakenham explains how the zoo was *"...converted, after financial failure, into a pleasure ground with cricket fields, archery butts and flower-lined walks"*.<sup>7</sup> In 1844 the site was up for sale for building purposes. Billings sold the land to architect Samuel Whitfield Daukes. Daukes laid out the Park in the 1840's, and designed many buildings including *"...Cornerways, which is estimated to have been built...in about 1865"*.<sup>8</sup> Cornerways stood at the entrance to the Park Estate. Prior to the construction of Cornerways, the Park Spa was positioned on this site but Bradbury explains that *"...it probably lasted for only fifteen to twenty years."*<sup>9</sup> The Park Spa was established by Billings in 1850 on the north point of his pleasure grounds. In 1844, Andrew Taylor brought the southern part of the Park and sold the land to James Gilbertson who built Fullwood (1847) and Broadlands (1833-60). At its height, the Park estate contained 37 villas. In 1921, the central space of the Park became St Mary's Teacher Training College. Pakenham states that *"...women...left the nearby house of residence to go halfway across Cheltenham to their own establishment (St Mary's College)..."*<sup>10</sup> This in turn became Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education, which was designated as the University of Gloucestershire in 2001. Today, the Park retains a distinctive setting for its buildings, which exemplifies its historic era of grace and refined taste.

<sup>7</sup> G. Hart 'A History of Cheltenham' (1965) pg. 180

<sup>8</sup> S. Pakenham 'Cheltenham A biography' London, Macmillan London Ltd. (1971) pg. 104

<sup>9</sup> O. Bradbury 'Cheltenham's Lost Heritage' Stroud, Sutton Publishing Ltd. (2004) pg. 44

<sup>10</sup> O. Bradbury 'Cheltenham's Lost Heritage' Stroud, Sutton Publishing Ltd. (2004) pg. 44

<sup>11</sup> S. Pakenham 'Cheltenham A biography' London, Macmillan London Ltd. (1971) pg. 169

- 3.6 The map depicting the historic development of The Park character area accompanies this section (see Fig. 10).

### **Development by 1820**

- 3.7 The 1820 Post Office map of Cheltenham does not depict the area covered by the Park character area. It is likely that the land where the Park is situated was considered to be too remote from the main focus of development at the time to be of any interest to developers.

### **Development by 1834**

- 3.8 The overall layout and plan form of the Park character area was established by 1834 and is clearly depicted on Merrett's map of 1834. The map shows the majority of buildings in the character area had been planned but not constructed at this time. Some were planned but never built, such as Park Crescent, which was intended to be situated within the central space of the Park. It consisted of a crescent of villas. Also planned was a curving walkway leading from Park Crescent to a building within the centre of the park, and a path from the building to a large lake.

- 3.9 Bryan Little believes "...the impetus to development came from the discovery of a mineral spring"<sup>12</sup> in 1837. The oval shaped Park was laid out and named 'The Park Rides and Walks'. Promenading was a popular recreational past-time amongst the town's gentry during the Regency and Victorian periods. Within the grounds of the Park itself, a small area at its entrance had been set aside and laid out as pleasure grounds.

- 3.10 A large number of grand villas, set within spacious grounds were planned to surround the Park. Some of these had been constructed by 1834, many of which featured ponds in their rear gardens and coach drives along the front.

- 3.11 Tivoli Road and Park Place had been built. Park Place was used as the main approach road to the Park. This road was well developed and contained many villas and terraces. Painswick Road was also present with large detached villas planned along its western side.

- 3.12 Several villas were planned along the length of Tivoli Road, but few had been constructed by this time. A number of detached and semi-detached houses had been planned along the west side of Painswick Road and Shurdington Road. Two extensive terrace blocks had been planned on either side of Gratton Road. Virginia Water "...was the first house to be built on the Park Estate...between 1831 and 1833..."<sup>13</sup> It was positioned towards its entrance. Bradbury explains that "The house...was demolished in about 1959 and replaced with Eric Lyon's Park House flats of about 1960."<sup>14</sup> In the estate of Virginia Water, the Westal Brook was damned to form two lakes, one of which survives in the grounds of what is now the Park House development.

- 3.13 Service lanes such as Tivoli Lane and Casino Place had been established at the rear of the grand villas. A small number of subsidiary buildings were featured along these lanes.

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<sup>12</sup> Little, B. 'Cheltenham' London & Colchester, Spottiswoode, Ballantyne Books Limited (1952) pg. 98

<sup>13</sup> O. Bradbury 'Cheltenham's Lost Heritage' Stroud, Sutton Publishing Ltd. (2004) pg. 168

<sup>14</sup> O. Bradbury 'Cheltenham's Lost Heritage' Stroud, Sutton Publishing Ltd. (2004) pg. 168

- 3.14 The tram road ran through the north of the character area, following the route of the future Norwood Road and Andover Road. The Cheltenham and Gloucester tram road ran from Leckhampton Hill across town to Gloucester Road, then onto the Gloucester Docks in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It transported stone used as a building material, which was quarried at Leckhampton Hill.

### **Development by 1897**

- 3.15 In 1838, Thomas Billings opened a zoo within the open central space of the Park. The zoo was short-lived. In 1842 the failed Gloucestershire Zoological, Botanical and Horticultural Gardens were turned into Park Gardens and owned by architect Samuel Whitfield Daukes. Daukes bought the Park estate c.1839, by which time most of the houses around the Park had been built. Park Gardens were put up for sale in 1844. The Park was labelled 'Fullwood Park' on the 1897 map, due to the villa Fullwood, which built in 1847, sited within its grounds.
- 3.16 The Park Spa originally consisted of an entrance lodge to the Park estate in Park Place. The lodge was sited near Segrave villas. The Cheltenham Looker-On for July 1850 explains how the lodge was removed and converted into a pump room which became known as the Park Spa. It is unknown when the Park Spa was demolished, although it is thought it probably lasted for only 15-20 years, due to the fashion for spas fading into the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and other attractions such as the town's schools taking over. The spa was replaced by Cornerways, believed to be built by "architect SW Daukes...(in c1839-50."<sup>15</sup>
- 3.17 The area surrounding the Park had become further established by this time. Further development had occurred within the Park itself and a number of villas had been constructed around the central space of the Park. Some of these had been the planned houses shown on Merrett's 1834 map.
- 3.18 Within the Park grounds, there was a boat house on the lake and villas situated within spacious grounds which included 'Cornerways'.
- 3.19 A house named 'Woodlands' had been constructed in vast grounds to the west of the Park. Woodlands, together with its grounds, was seen as possibly the largest private garden in Cheltenham's history. It appears to have been first set out on an 1833 plan of the Park Estate. The "...*Gothic Revival property (contained) a lodge, wilderness, footbridges, a lake...and a boat house.*"<sup>16</sup>
- 3.20 Roads within the area had become further established by this time. They fed into the Park from other areas of the town such as Tivoli and Leckhampton.

### **Development in the 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> centuries**

- 3.21 During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was relatively little change within the Park character area since it had been originally developed in the 1830s. Today, the overall plan form remains with the retention of the area's special qualities although some of the historic buildings have been demolished and replaced by modern buildings.

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<sup>15</sup> Department of Culture, Media and Sport 'Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest' Borough of Cheltenham 1998, pg. 954-955

<sup>16</sup> O. Bradbury 'Cheltenham's Lost Heritage' Stroud, Sutton Publishing Ltd. (2004) pg. 162

- 3.22 In 1921, the central space of the Park became St Mary's Teacher Training College. Pakenham states that "...women...left the nearby house of residence to go halfway across Cheltenham to their own establishment (St Mary's College)..."<sup>17</sup> This in turn became Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education in 1990, which became designated as the University of Gloucestershire in 2001. Teaching and accommodation blocks have been added within the central space.
- 3.23 Several villas on the original Lansdown Estate were demolished in the 1960s, which included:

Virginia Water St Clair Belfont	Woodlands Tudor Lodge	Woodleigh Lyncourt
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- 3.24 A number of modern flats have been constructed in their place. For example, the Park House development was built on the site of the demolished Virginia Water in "about 1960".<sup>18</sup> The majority of historic villas have been converted into flats.
- 3.25 The Cheltenham Urban Character Area Partnership (CUCAP) for The Park states that "All 22 of the surviving period dwellings, and their gateposts, (in the original Park Estate) are Grade II listed."<sup>19</sup> (This is confirmed by the list descriptions for buildings within the original Park Estate).
- 3.26 Woodlands with its 23 acres of land, was purchased in 1938 by the County Council for use by North Gloucestershire College of Technology, which later became GlosCAT (Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology). Bradbury states that "The house was demolished in about 1955."<sup>20</sup> In 2002 Gloscat was demolished and a large housing development has recently been built on the site, predominantly comprising of formally planned town houses in a Regency pastiche style.

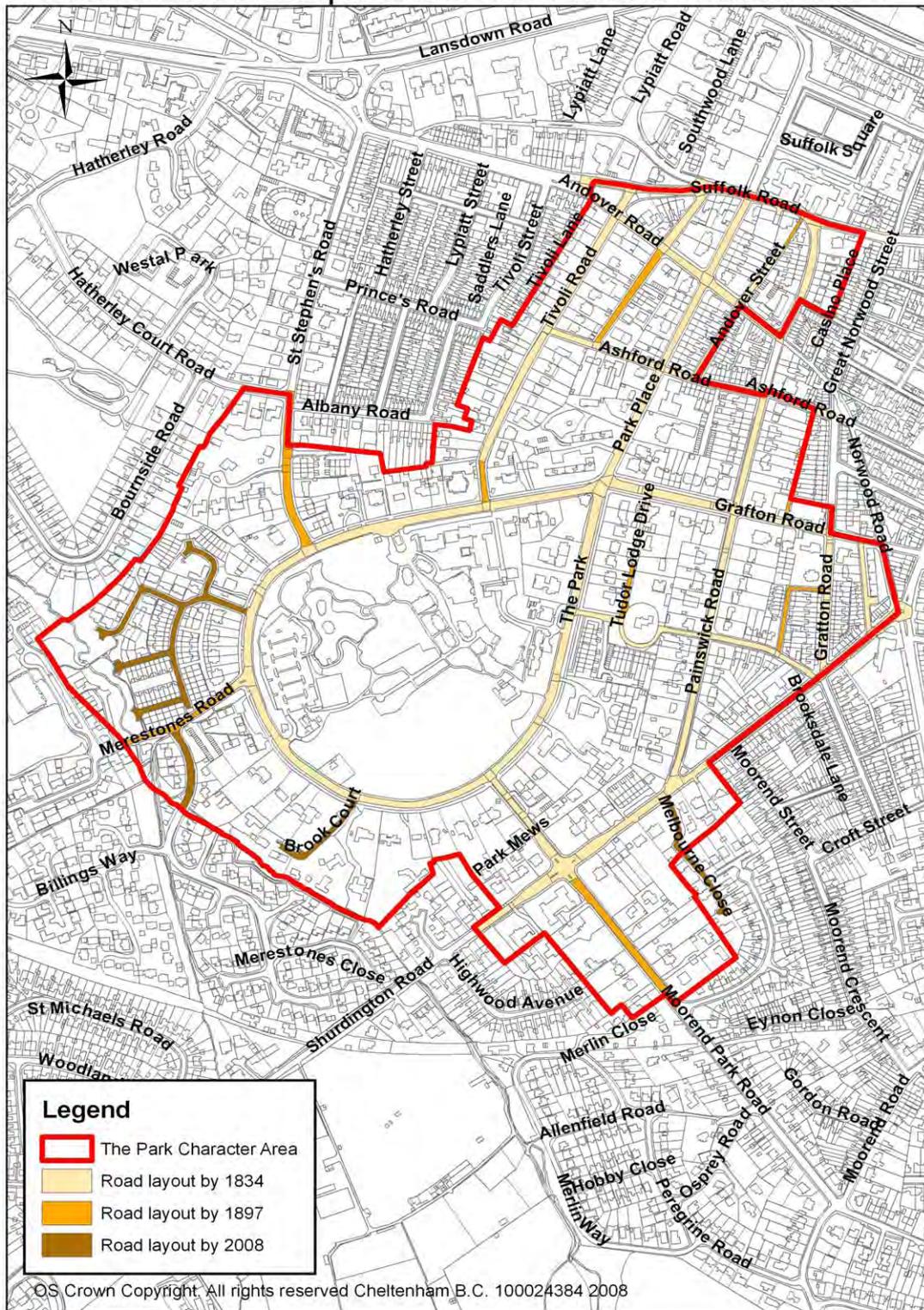
<sup>17</sup> S. Pakenham 'Cheltenham A biography' Stroud, Sutton Publishing Ltd. (1971) pg. 169

<sup>18</sup> O. Bradbury 'Cheltenham's Lost Heritage' Stroud, Sutton Publishing Ltd. (2004) pg. 168

<sup>19</sup> The Park character area statement written by Cheltenham Urban Character Area Partnership (CUCAP) (2003) no pg. number given

<sup>20</sup> O. Bradbury 'Cheltenham's Lost Heritage' Stroud, Sutton Publishing Ltd. (2004) pg. 162

## Historical development of the Park Character Area



**Figure 10** Historical Development of the Park Character Area

## 4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

### The character and interrelationship of spaces within the area and key views and vistas

#### Public and private space



**Figure 11** Buildings set back from pavement on Moorend Park Road



**Figure 12** Green space within the Park



**Figure 13** Tivoli Lane service lane



**Figure 14** Railings employed as boundary treatment on Park Place

- Public and private spaces, together with views out of, into and within the Park character area are a major component in establishing its character which overall has a sense of spaciousness. Its plan form largely determines this through its wide roads with the positioning of buildings set back from roads within spacious grounds.
- The central space of the Park is the essence of the area's uniqueness, despite the fact that it now contains a considerable number of buildings and paraphernalia as part of its University function.
- Around The Park, the historic detached villas at the southern end of the tear drop are set out on an increased radius and distance back from the road; when compared to the detached villas and semi-detached villas at the northern end of the tear drop. The building line is not uniform.
- In contrast to the sense of space prevalent in most of The Park, there are a small number of service lanes at the rear of the terraces. These include Tivoli Lane and Casino Place which are positioned on the character area's boundary. Often there will be a high brick wall between the lane and the property's rear garden. The narrow service lanes contain small mews houses and garages which front directly onto the footpath. There is very little (if any) separation between public and private space within these lanes. This evokes a sense of enclosure as the villas and terraces and their ancillary buildings rise on either side of the lanes. Historically, they would have been utilised by servants and horses. Since they have a functional historic use, their appearance is utilitarian.



**Figure 15** Coach drive to 93-95 The Park



**Figure 16** Latter half 20<sup>th</sup> century and historic buildings follow similar building line on Tivoli Road

### Boundary treatments



**Figure 17** High level of historic gate piers around The Park

- The historic layout of the buildings in the Park significantly enhances the quality of the streets and spaces. Historically they address the street in various ways including:
  - across a front garden with various degrees of set back enclosed predominantly by railings and hedgerow; and
  - behind a coach drive at some distance from the back of footpath. Coach drives are apparent fronting the villas around the Park and along Painswick Road, Shurdington Road, Park Place, Tivoli Road and St Stephen's Road. Boundary treatments are commonly gate piers and railings, with or without hedging, often at back of footpath and on the building boundary.
  
- Many buildings from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century complement historic buildings in following the same building line, being positioned set back from the public space of the footpath and containing good sized frontages. A sense of space and elegance is created through this plan form and the accompanying wide roads.
  
- There are varied boundary treatments in The Park character area, including historic gate piers and railings, hedgerow, fencing and brick boundary walls. These boundaries generally provide an attractive setting for buildings and act as enclosure. There are several Grade II listed historic gate piers which remain at the frontage of villas surrounding the central space of The Park. In contrast, some wooden fencing which encloses the central space of The Park itself is a poor, inappropriate and unattractive boundary enclosure.



**Figure 18** Poor fencing employed as a boundary treatment

## Garden space



**Figure 19** Front garden space outside Greville House



**Figure 20** Front gardens evident on recent residential development on west side of The Park



**Figure 21** Hard standing evident outside house on Ashford Road

## Key views and vistas (see Fig. 1)



**Figure 22** Linear plan form of Grattan Road

- Gardens, historically and today, form an attractive, traditional frontage to both historic and more modern buildings, providing them with a colourful, interesting setting and enhancing the special qualities of properties and the street scene. Well established front gardens are prevalent in the majority of roads. Attractive, contained front gardens behind railings and low hedging are in evidence along Grattan Road. Trees in front gardens help screen buildings from public view and space, creating privacy. Private trees are particularly valuable where few street trees are present, for example in Tivoli Road and Park Place. These gardens are of particular value in that they are located in an urban area, within close proximity of the town centre. While much of the historic setting of frontages is intact, many front gardens have at least partially been given over to parking. This frequently has a detrimental impact on the street scene. The development of poor settings detracts from the special historic and architectural qualities of buildings.

- The extensive linear street pattern is displayed in the majority of roads. The linear form permits medium and long distance views, which also contribute to a sense of space. The sweeping form of the Park provides an impressive and striking setting for surrounding buildings and creates



**Figure 23** Sweeping form of The Park



**Figure 24** View of Leckhampton Hill from Gratton Road



**Figure 25** View of Leckhampton Hill from Painswick Road



**Figure 26** View of St Philip & St James Church along Suffolk Parade & Great Norwood Street

interest as views are, in contrast, short and constantly changing as one travels around the boulevard. Views are highly important in enhancing the character and appearance of the Park character area.

- Long distance views of the countryside are prevalent over the roofs of some buildings and along streets. Such views of Leckhampton Hill can be seen from Moorend Park Road, Merestones Drive and Painswick Road. Extensive views of Leckhampton Hill are presented from Gratton Road and looking down Edward Street. Distance views in other areas are prevented due to the generally flat or very gently sloping level of the roads. The views displayed are important in establishing a rural connection and providing enclosure.

- Key views of the Church of St Philip and St James are apparent from various points within and beyond the Park character area. Its steeple is frequently seen rising above buildings and punctuates the skyline. It is clearly visible from Suffolk Parade, which is located within the Suffolks character area. From this road Leckhampton Hill can be seen rising in the distance.

## 5 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

### Use of area and how use creates special interest

- 5.1 The Park character area contains various land uses. Mixed use creates a dynamic street scene and contributes to the special interest of the area.

## Residential

- 5.2 The Park was designed and developed as an exclusive residential estate from the early 1830s. Today, the character area remains predominantly residential. The vast majority of buildings have stayed as houses (albeit many now converted into flats) which establishes unity and cohesion within the area. Some residential roads, including Tudor Lodge Road, Brandon Place, Edward Street and Painswick Road experience low noise levels.



Figure 27 Variety of residential building within the Park Character Area

## University of Gloucestershire

- 5.3 The University of Gloucestershire's Park Campus is situated within the central space of The Park. The historic open grounds have facilitated the presence of playing fields and tennis courts. The green open space enables the campus to have a grand setting, screened by mature tree growth. The playing fields and lake also provide an attractive setting for the University's buildings. The University generates activity in the area, which in turn brings increases in noise and traffic levels.



Figure 28 Central space of the Park & University buildings

## Commercial / Business

- 5.4 A photograph of a large, multi-story building with a parking lot in front of it. The building has a mix of brick and white walls and several windows. There are several cars parked in the lot.

Figure 29 Leckhampton Surgery, Moorend Park Road

There are a small number of commercial premises and small-scale businesses within The Park character area. These include personal services (e.g. a chiropractor), a doctor's surgery, a hotel and other small scale uses which tend to be sited in converted residential properties.

## Road Use

- 5.5 The Park is on the southern approach to the town. Part of Shurdington Road runs through the character area and is the



**Figure 30** A46 Shurdington Road

A46 which connects Cheltenham to Painswick and Bath. Consequently, this road experiences high levels of vehicular use.

- 5.6 The curving form of The Park itself makes it a popular through route between a number of locations, including the A46 Shurdington Road and to and from the A40 Lansdown Road.
- 5.7 The location of the area within the south west quadrant formed by the Shurdington and Lansdown Roads makes many of its streets attractive for rat-running. Many of its streets are subject to traffic management measures designed to discourage this traffic.
- 5.8 The University campus is a major traffic generator with cars and buses frequently travelling around the Park throughout the day.

5.9



**Figure 31** High levels of on-street parking evident along Tivoli Road

There are high levels of on-street parking along many roads, including Tivoli Road, Grafton Road and Painswick Road. This may be due to the proximity of these roads to the University campus and the town centre.

- 5.10 All these uses bring varying levels of activity throughout the day and evening which add to the character and vitality of this area; although some of the road uses can have negative impacts.

**Architecture and historic qualities of buildings**

- 5.11 Buildings which make up the original Park Estate consist of large elegant villas set within spacious grounds. Most date from the 1830s onwards. They are positioned well back from public space and follow a building line around The Park's boulevard which is on a gently increasing radius, so that the villas in the southern portion of The Park tear drop are set further back from the road compared to the villas in the northern section of The Park. Houses to the north and east of the boulevard in the remainder of the character area are diverse in terms of their age, size, scale and architectural styles and materials. They are frequently positioned within close proximity to one another. The Park's architectural character is strongly based in the fine Georgian and Victorian buildings. The elegance and formality of the 1830s is still evident here today even where new buildings have been added. Some modern buildings have been successful in complementing historic ones in terms of their size, scale and positioning, even if some of the modern buildings are of a pastiche style.

## Historic buildings

- 5.12 Historic villas tend to be two or three storeys. Some contain basements. They are set within spacious grounds. Detached villas tend to have a large footprint and follow the same building line. Houses are often similar in size and scale.



**Figure 32** Historic villas within the Park Character Area

- 5.13 A row of distinctive late Victorian red brick terrace houses are positioned along Painswick Road. They have unifying architectural features which include a raised ground floor level, bay windows at ground floor level, round arched windows at first floor level, slate roofs, wide eaves on brackets and black string courses. An attractive Grade II listed terrace, consisting of 14 houses, is positioned on the west side of Gratton Road. They have a striking visual impact within the street scene. Unifying architectural features include a *“continuous crowning frieze and cornice, low coped parapet (and)...Doric pilasters...”*<sup>21</sup>



**Figure 33** Edwardian red brick terraced houses on Painswick Road



**Figure 34** Listed terraces on west side of Gratton Road

## Architectural styles

- 5.14 There are varied architectural styles employed within the design of buildings in this area. This reflects the influences and fashions at time of construction. Architectural styles cover the Neo-Classical style displayed on buildings including Fullwood House and villas on Park Place; Gothic Revival style displayed on St Stephens Manor and Italianate style displayed on Cornerways. Number 44 Shurdington Road is on the Council’s Index of Buildings of Local Importance. The Index states that this house is a unique example of the Surrey vernacular style within Cheltenham. The entry in the Index states that *“This is for Cheltenham a unique example of the Surrey vernacular style as popularised by Voysey and Lutyens.”*<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Department of Culture, Media and Sport ‘Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest’ Borough of Cheltenham 1998, pg. 338

<sup>22</sup> Cheltenham Borough Council Index of Buildings of Local Importance, Item No. 348 (adopted by Full Council 28 June 2007) record 354 out of 422



**Figure 35** Neo-Classical style of architecture on villas in Park Place



**Figure 36** Gothic Revival style of architecture on St Stephens Manor



**Figure 37** Italianate style of architecture on Cornerways

### Historic construction materials and architectural detailing

- 5.15 Construction materials, typical of the town, are slate roofs, brick walls covered with ashlar or stucco painted in cream or white colours and timber windows. Roofs in some of these properties dating from the 1830s are flat or low pitched. Their structure is commonly hidden behind balustrading, great cornices or parapets. Some Victorian and Edwardian houses are constructed from red brick with slate roofs. They commonly exhibit bay windows.

### Church of St Philip and St James

5.16



**Figure 38** Church of St Philip & St James

The Church of St Philip and St James is located in a prominent position on the junction of Grafton Road and Gratton Road. The church occupies almost the whole of what had previously been the graveyard around an earlier and smaller church on the site. It is a visually attractive and significant feature within the street scene, which enhances the character and appearance of the Park character area. The Church, with its attached walls and gates is Grade II\* listed.

- 5.17 The List Description states that the Church of St Philip and St James was built circa “1879-82 (by well-known) architect John Middleton”.<sup>23</sup> It opened in 1882. The Church is constructed of “coursed rubble with ashlar and red sandstone dressings and plain tile roof”.<sup>24</sup> Its architectural design is “Gothic Revival in Decorated style”.<sup>25</sup> The List Description states that the Church is one of Middleton’s “...finest works, and is particularly notable for its fine interior.”<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Department of Culture, Media and Sport ‘Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest’ Borough of Cheltenham 1998, pg. 339-40

<sup>24</sup> Department of Culture, Media and Sport ‘Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest’ Borough of Cheltenham 1998, pg. 339-40

<sup>25</sup> Department of Culture, Media and Sport ‘Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest’ Borough of Cheltenham 1998, pg. 339-40

<sup>26</sup> Department of Culture, Media and Sport ‘Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest’ Borough of Cheltenham 1998, pg. 340

### Buildings from the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

5.18 Houses dating from the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards are found throughout the Park character area. They have often been built within close proximity of older buildings, either within their grounds or as infill development. Some of them contrast with each other and historic properties in terms of their architectural detailing and site density. Despite this diversity, properties tend to be set back from the road, creating a consistent building line which is sympathetic to the form of the historic buildings.

5.19



**Figure 39** Residential development built on the former Gloscat site

A significant residential development which dates from the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century comprises the town houses built on the former Gloscat site. The houses facing on to The Park have been designed to replicate the mass and scale of the historic villas; however their architectural detailing is not historically accurate. Their architectural contribution to the quality of the area is questionable. The area of new housing immediately to the south west of The Park, which also has been built on the former GlosCAT site, is also of a Regency pastiche style. However, although it is a very high density development, its simpler architectural detailing has enabled the scheme to be more successful.

### Listed buildings

5.20 Listed buildings are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. All listed buildings due to their listed status are extremely important. There are over 100 listed buildings and structures within The Park character area. Some of these buildings are listed as part of a group. All listed buildings are Grade II with the exception of:

BUILDING	GRADE	DATE OF LISTING
Brandon House, No. 62 Painswick Road	II*	12/03/55
Church of St Philip and St James, with attached walls and gates	II*	14/12/83

Refer to [www.cheltenham.gov.uk](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk) for full list descriptions and [www.imagesofengland.org.uk](http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk) for photographic records.

### Index of Buildings of Local Importance

5.21 An Index of Buildings of Local Importance has been prepared for Cheltenham. Buildings and structures on the Index are protected by a Supplementary Planning Document.

### Contribution of key unlisted buildings

5.22 A number of buildings are not statutory listed and are therefore less important. However they do encompass qualities of age, style and materials

which are locally distinct and which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the character area and Conservation Area. Some of these buildings make a positive contribution as part of a larger group. All key unlisted buildings in the table below are on the Index of Buildings of Local Importance. Please see the Index for further details about these buildings. Key unlisted buildings include:

25 Andover Road	As group – 2 to 4 Ashford Road	As group – 2 to 8 Grafton Road
9 Grafton Road	As group – 10 to 12 Grafton Road	Moorend Park Hotel, Moorend Park Road
25 Moorend Park Road	27 Moorend Park Road	30 Moorend Park Road
40 Painswick Road	As group – 45 to 47 Painswick Road	As group – 49 to 55 Painswick Road
67 Painswick Road	As group – 83 to 87 Painswick Road	5 Park Place
7 Park Place	50 Park Place	52 Park Place
The Rowans, Shurdington Road	44 Shurdington Road	56 Shurdington Road
As group – 73 to 85 Shurdington Road	87 Shurdington Road	22 Tivoli Road
Hazlewood, Tudor Lodge Drive	Melrose & Lindholme, The Park	Lodge House, University of Gloucestershire, The Park
Dunholme Villa, The Park		

### Positive buildings

- 5.23 Positive buildings are identified on the Townscape Analysis Map as those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of each character area. They often have a collective group value. Although a small number of buildings in the overall Central Conservation Area are in a poor condition, they may still be identified as positive if the building itself makes a positive contribution. In comparison to positive buildings, key unlisted buildings tend to have individual value and qualities which make a greater contribution to enhancing the character and appearance of each character area.

### Local details

- 5.24 Local details within the Park character area collectively enhance the character and appearance of not just the Park but the whole of the Central Conservation Area. Interesting details include –

The tear-drop plan form of the Park	The Grade II listed boat house, lake and extensive playing fields within the grounds of the Park. The lake was part of the scheme for the original Park Estate
The leafy suburban character of the majority of the roads	The service lanes and their mews-houses
The surviving entrance pier of The Park Spa Pump Room, originally positioned at the “ <i>entrance to The Park Estate</i> ” <sup>127</sup>	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> century and early 20 <sup>th</sup> century pillar boxes



**Figure 40** Surviving entrance pier of the Park Spa Pump Room



**Figure 41** Example of historic pillar box on junction of Painswick Road/Ashford Road

The surviving gate piers, which are particularly in evidence around the Park

## Materials

### Building material

- 5.25 The use of building materials reflects the availability of materials at the time of construction of historic buildings. Cheltenham expanded rapidly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the readily available Lias clay and local sand allowed enough bricks to be produced to build most of the original spa town. The majority of these houses were built of locally-fired bricks, and were faced with either stucco or ashlar limestone. Much of the stone used in Cheltenham would have been quarried at Leckhampton or Birdlip. Unfortunately neither of the quarries continues to produce stone. The painting of stucco in a uniform colour gave the town cohesion. Stone was occasionally used to front the buildings. Red or brown bricks were commonly used in the construction of boundary walls and in Victorian/Edwardian properties. Materials used on more recent buildings vary in the extent to which they complement the older buildings. The size, scale and positioning of some of the more recent buildings, however, tends to be subservient to the historic buildings so as not to detract from them.

### Ground surface material

- 5.26 Few surface materials throughout the area are original or have any historic value. Roads are tarmac, with concrete kerbs. Paving is predominantly concrete slabs or flags and tarmac. Painted red concrete delineates cycle routes throughout the area. Some blocks have been used on pavements and private spaces. Natural materials such as gravel or bonded aggregates are sympathetic ground surface materials, which complement the setting of buildings.

- 5.27 The present condition of The Park's footpath around the central space is poor. The Cheltenham Urban Character Area Partnership's character area statement for The Park states that *"The original stone flags and the gravel strip between the footpath and the boundary of properties needs reinstating."*<sup>28</sup>

### Street furniture

- 5.28 Street signage and furniture throughout The Park character area is inconsistent and of poor quality.
- 5.29 There are many traffic signs in parts of The Park character area. This is typical of a built-up urban area within close proximity of the town centre. These signs are most frequently displayed at road junctions. They are functional in design and can be intrusive and occasionally are redundant or duplicate each other.

- 5.30 Service/inspection boxes are found located around The Park and St Stephen's Road. They are visually unattractive features in street scenes.
- 5.31 Very few bins and benches are provided throughout the character area.
- 5.32 Overhead telegraph wires are visually prominent within the street scene of some roads, in particular parts of Painswick Road and Tivoli Road.
- 5.33 The lamp standards around The Park itself are of an inconsistent design and are occasionally positioned differently within the street. This creates a cluttered appearance within the street scene. Frequently the lamp standards have a utilitarian design which does not enhance the character or appearance of the character area.

**Contribution of trees and green spaces**

- 5.34 Within the Park character area there are generally large amounts of private green space but comparatively little public green space. This may be due to the majority of houses being sited within good-sized plots and containing front and rear gardens. The occurrence of public and privately owned trees and green spaces in the area greatly enhances its setting, character and appearance. Such spaces need to be well maintained and protected.

**Impact of street trees**

- 5.35 There is a strong presence of mature tree-lined streets throughout the character area, particularly evident around The Park and along Painswick Road, Moorend Park Road, Gratton Road, Grafton Road and Shurdington Road. Around the park and within its central space, species include oak, lime, horse chestnut, horn beam, wellingtonia and cyprus. Painswick Road contains beech and sycamore trees; the junction of Shurdington Road with Moorend Park Road contains large cedars, redwoods and wellingtonia; and Gratton Road has distinctive silver birch trees along part of its length. The tree-lined streets provide a leafy, wooded feel to some of the residential streets, in particular Gratton Road, Painswick Road and the Park. Along with enhancing character and appearance, trees perform another important function in screening properties from public space, acting as a 'soft' boundary treatment, establishing enclosure and privacy.



**Figure 42** Street trees within the Park Character Area

**Other forms of greenery**

- 5.36 Other forms of greenery such as hedges and grass verges are characteristic and provide attractive features and boundary treatments within the Park character area. Hedging is used as a natural



boundary treatment to soften edges and enhance the setting of buildings.

**Figure 43** Hedging acts as a natural boundary treatment around the central space of the Park

### Private green space

- 5.37 Private green space is particularly prevalent within the Park character area. Houses tend to have contained front gardens and large rear gardens. Neatly planted gardens enhance the setting of properties. Some modern buildings and developments complement the historic plan form by being positioned within large grounds set back from public space along a similar building line. Many front gardens have been at least partially converted to hard-standing for cars. This is evident within most of the roads in the character area. It is therefore important that front gardens are retained where possible as their presence greatly enhances the character and appearance of not just individual buildings, but the area generally.



**Figure 44** Front garden space and gardens converted to hard-standing within the character area

### Central space of the Park

- 5.38 The green open space of the Park is a particularly important historic feature within the character area. It greatly enhances the character and appearance of the Park and “...makes the single greatest contribution to (establishing) the spacious character of the area”.<sup>29</sup> It has largely retained its historic form as a teardrop shaped open space, which was historically developed as a zoo then turned into pleasure grounds in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Modern buildings owned by the University of Gloucestershire have been built in the north and east part; however a large amount of green space has been retained, which provides an attractive setting for the University’s buildings. There are many large specimen trees within this space which screen buildings and act as a soft boundary treatment. Species include oak, lime, horse chestnut, horn beam, wellingtonia and cyprus trees.



**Figure 45** Central space of the Park

### **Negative factors**

5.39 Due to high levels of development of The Park character area, modern changes and intrusions have, to a degree, negatively impacted on the area's overall character and appearance. Negative factors include significant negative buildings and spaces, which are identified as those buildings and spaces that detract from the character and appearance of the area but offer potential for enhancement. This identification may result from the visual prominence of the site, or the development's inappropriate scale, design or materials, amongst other factors. The identification of buildings as negative factors in this section and as significant negative buildings or spaces on the Townscape Analysis map is an indication of a need for improvement, not necessarily demolition. Negative changes and intrusions include –

- **Loss of traditional architectural features**, particularly alterations to windows, has occurred within some of the historic buildings;
- The presence of large, projecting **Velux roof lights** on historic buildings has eroded the visual quality of the historic roofscape. Where there is evidence of historic roof lights or where new conservation roof lights may be appropriate, each case will be considered on its own merits;
- Modern intrusions in the form of **satellite dishes and large aerials** are also harmful to the overall appearance of buildings and detract from the special historic and architectural qualities. These additions can often be seen clearly from public space which harms the character and appearance or not just the individual buildings, but the area generally;
- Some **poor boundary treatments** are evident throughout the character area. Poorly quality and poorly maintained fencing is present and is an unattractive feature within the street scene. Poor wooden fencing and wire mesh fencing is positioned around parts of the Park, enclosing the central space. This is generally poor in appearance and is a negative feature within the street scene;
- **Many front gardens have been adapted either totally or partially into hard-standing areas** for cars. This change has reduced the area of green and soft landscaped private gardens, and generally increased the hard urban appearance of the Park character area. It has resulted in a negative impact on the appearance of the area. However, where properties have retained their front gardens, there has been a continuing enhancement to the street scene;
- **High traffic volumes** create pressure on road systems and pedestrian spaces. This is particularly apparent on the A46 Shurdington Road; on some of the rat-runs in the north east; in roads leading to St James Primary School at drop off/pick up times; and around the Park where high levels of traffic movement is generated by the University;
- A large amount of **on-street parking** is particularly evident within parts of the Park character area. This tends to happen in areas which are within close proximity of the town centre or where off-street parking is not available. High levels of parking creates active streets, but focuses attention and activity on the road rather than the historic buildings and the open spaces between buildings;

- **Large, utilitarian blocks of flats** dating from the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are often visually unattractive and do not sit well within their historic context in terms of their size, scale, footprint, positioning and use of materials. These include Dorchester Court, Mellersh House, Tudor Lodge, Waterford Court and Woodleigh developments. (Although considered a 'negative' building, Mellersh House has interesting origins in that it was named after a local councillor and built by the Borough Council to re-house the occupants of pre-fabricated houses elsewhere in the town);
- Around the **junction of Shurdington Road and Moorend Park Road** there has been a high amount of pressure over recent years to remove private trees, many of which have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) placed on them;
- The **street furniture** within the Park character area tends to be inconsistent and of a poor quality design;
- The **double yellow lines** around the tear drop form of The Park are visually intrusive and are an unattractive feature within the character area;
- **Poor quality tarmac footpath** around the tear drop form of The Park.

### **Neutral areas**

- 5.40 Some areas within The Park character area neither enhance nor detract from the character or appearance of the character area but have the potential for enhancement. They tend to be visually prominent within the street scene. The identification of buildings as being neutral in this section and as significant neutral buildings or spaces on the Townscape Analysis map is an indication of a need for improvement, not necessarily demolition.
- 5.41 The development of 16 flats for the elderly on the east side of Edward Street, which date from the late 1970s/early 1980s. Although they encompass modern buildings materials, such as uPVC windows, the development complements the historic terraces positioned opposite, through its similar size, scale and architectural design;
- 5.42 The row of terraces on Tudor Lodge Road. Although these terrace houses differ in architectural design and materials to the historic buildings, they are not positioned in a prominent location. They are small scale and do not detract from the historic buildings within close proximity, such as Hilgay Lodge. The Ashley Court terraces on Shurdington Road impact similarly upon the street scene;
- 5.43 The Brook Court and Park Gate housing developments are other examples of neutral buildings within the Park character area.

### **General condition of area**

- 5.44 Much of the building stock in the Park character area is in good condition, reflecting high property values and the prosperity within this popular and affluent residential area. The Park's magnificence and grandeur is

demonstrable through a combination of factors including the area's plan form, large number of listed buildings, grand villas and mature tree-lined streets.

- 5.45 It is highly important that the physical condition of the historic buildings is preserved in-order to retain not just the Park's, but Cheltenham's fine distinctiveness and identity.

**Pressures and capacity for change**

- 5.46 The designation of the Conservation Area is not intended to prevent change, especially that which would enhance the character or appearance of the area. It seeks to ensure that future development is appropriate to the character of the area.
- 5.47 The redevelopment of the GlosCAT site brought considerable localised change in recent years, however there is now generally little remaining capacity for new development on open land due to a very limited amount of suitable vacant land.
- 5.48 The replacement of some inappropriate modern buildings with a well-designed development which is in keeping with, and enhances the character of the area may be an option but careful consideration would need to be given to this suggestion.
- 5.49 There have been high levels of pressure over recent years to remove a number of privately owned trees from the grounds of some buildings on the junction of Shurdington Road with Moorend Park Road. Trees are a particularly important feature within the Park character area and on the highly utilised A46 approach road into Cheltenham. The removal of trees from this area would have a significant negative impact on the street scene and the setting of buildings.

## **Part 2 – Management Plan**

## 1. Introduction

### **Purpose of the management plan**

The purpose of Part 2 of this document is to present proposals to achieve the preservation and enhancement of The Park character area's special historic character and appearance. It has been subject to public consultation. Part 2 was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2008. It will inform the planning and other decisions of the Council.

The special qualities of the Park character area have been identified in the Character Appraisal which forms the Part 1 of this document. The Management Plan draws upon the themes identified in sections 5.39 'Negative factors' and 5.40 'Neutral areas'.

The proposals are written with the awareness that, in managing Cheltenham's conservation areas, resources are limited and therefore need to be prioritised. Financial constraints on the Council mean that proposals may take longer than is desirable to implement. However, the Council will continue to encourage improvements to the conservation area in co-operation with property owners, groups and local businesses. As such, the management plan can be considered to have three broad functions:

**1 a control tool** - its action points will be material considerations in decision making on applications for planning and related consents;

**2 a project development tool** - it identifies proactive work which can address some of the negative factors identified in the Character Appraisal. The responsibility for the work falls within the remit of various agencies (primarily Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council). Many of the projects do not yet have resources (funding, staffing etc) and few are programmed. However, their inclusion in this document is important because as an adopted document, the management plan can form the basis for bids for resources and programmed works;

**3 a best practice guide** - it establishes a series of action points to preserve and enhance the area's character. They should be considered in the design and implementation of all projects regardless of the need for permissions and who is undertaking them (public bodies, corporate bodies or private individuals).

Both the Character Area Appraisal and accompanying Management Plan will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis.

### **Legislative background**

This document satisfies the statutory requirement of section 71 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 namely:

*"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation area."*

The document reflects Government guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' and policies set out in the Cheltenham Local Plan.

## 2. Article 4 directions

There are some buildings within the Park character area which, although not listed, have qualities of age, style and materials which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the character area and Central Conservation Area. These properties are however vulnerable to future change. Some of which have already suffered from modern intrusions by way of alterations and inappropriate additions e.g. uPVC windows, large aerials and satellite dishes.

There are a number of categories of minor works for which a planning application is not normally needed. This is known as *permitted development*.

Permitted development rights are more restricted in conservation areas for works which include:

- a. the addition of dormer windows to roof slopes;
- b. various types of cladding;
- c. erection of satellite dishes fronting a highway; and
- d. there is a reduction in the size of extensions which have permitted development rights.

In order to protect the character of conservation areas, legislation allows local planning authorities to remove permitted development rights in parts of conservation areas facing on to the highway or open space by using Article 4 (2) Directions. These cannot be introduced through this conservation area management plan – the Council will need to embark on a separate process. However, it is advisable that the Council uses this document to identify areas of concern, where it may apply Article 4 (2) Directions. If introduced, these will provide long-term protection against unsympathetic alterations which have the potential to adversely impact on the character of the conservation area. The effect of a Direction would be that certain alterations to unlisted residential properties which formerly did not require planning permission would then need planning permission.

If introduced to cover this character area, an Article 4 (2) Direction will mean planning consent is required for a range of external works fronting a public space, including:

- a. changes to windows, doors, chimneys and roofs;
- b. the painting of previously unpainted walling;
- c. the construction of external porches;
- d. the provision and removal of walls, gates and fences.

## 3. Management proposals

The management proposals have been divided into two sections, comprising of: Development control proposals and project proposals which relate to specific areas.

## **Development control proposals**

### **1 Control of Development**

It is essential that any development should preserve the setting of any adjacent listed buildings and the existing landscape features and trees and preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. Therefore, careful consideration must be given to the site including historic context and distinctive site features; as well as the size, scale, urban grain, layout, design, massing, height, plot width, frontage activity, landscape and materials in any such development. This does not dictate architectural style but helps deliver proposals which respond positively to their context with high quality design. Pastiche architectural styling, in which architectural historic elements are taken from different sources without being applied accurately, is not acceptable. However that is not to say that a variety of architectural styles, materials and forms of construction are not able to give interest within the conservation area and provided the new buildings are carefully designed it should be possible for them to have a harmonious and positive presence.

Cheltenham Borough Council Local Plan policies CP3, CP7, BE1, BE2, BE3 and BE5 relate.

In The Park, a high number of the historic buildings have been sub-divided into flats. This creates intensification of the use of buildings and added pressure on associated land and resources. Further sub-division of such buildings should ensure that the sub-division does not compromise the building or its associated land in a detrimental way.

**Action TP1:** The Cheltenham Borough Local Plan states that new development shall preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. The policies of the Local Plan set out a general approach to the consideration of planning and related applications for development in conservation areas – they cover a range of issues including:

- new build
- extensions
- loss of green space
- impact on views
- demolition

In applying Local Plan policies, the Council will use the assessment of character set out in the appraisal accompanying this Management Plan as a basis for establishing the important aspects of context.

### **2 Loss of traditional architectural features on some historic buildings**

Some of the older buildings within the Park character area have been adversely affected by the use of inappropriate modern materials or details such as the replacement of original timber sash windows with uPVC, the loss of original timber front doors and the introduction of roof lights which all erode local building detail and fail to preserve or enhance the character of the

Conservation Area. The Council's document Living and Working in a Conservation Area – Some Questions You Might Ask gives advice to building owners on their responsibilities.

Cheltenham Borough Local Plan policy CP 3 relates.

**Action TP2:** In order to preserve and enhance the character and setting of the Park character area, the Council will:

- a. Keep under review the need to bring in additional planning controls over minor works in the conservation area through Article 4 directions;
- b. Use its powers to enforce against unauthorised development;
- c. Encourage owners to repair rather than replace original features;
- d. Consider producing detailed design guidance and information regarding materials appropriate for use in the Central Conservation Area;
- e. Consider producing guidance to highlight to property owner's the importance of regularly maintaining gutters to ensure they function to their full potential, thus preventing ceilings and roofs collapsing due to heavy rain and blocked gutters.

In undertaking any works to buildings in the character area, owners should consider the implications for sustainable building practices. This could take a number of forms, including sustainable sourcing of materials and use of energy efficient designs. Additional information is available in the Council's supplementary planning guidance on Sustainable Buildings ([www.cheltenham.gov.uk](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk)).

### **3 Equipment or installations (for example satellite dishes, large aerials, small scale renewable energy schemes and other such features)**

The presence of various types of equipment or installations on or around buildings, such as large aerials or satellite dishes, can detract from the character of the Park character area and in some cases the special architectural qualities of the buildings. There is also the potential for domestic wind turbines and other elements to impact similarly. To minimise their visual impact, they should normally be positioned away from public view or prominent positions; a judgment then needs to be made between this and the optimization of energy generation.

The Cheltenham Borough Council Local Plan Policy CP 3 relates.

**Action TP3:** In order to preserve and enhance the character of the character area the Council will:

- a. Keep under review the need to bring in additional planning controls over equipment or installations in prominent locations in the character area through an Article 4 direction;
- b. Use any planning powers to ensure that equipment or installations are installed away from public spaces and views, so as not to detract from views within the street scene and the overall character of the character area. This will look at balancing the visual impact against energy generations. Where the Council has no powers property owners are encouraged to position such equipment with regard to this guidance;
- c. Consider producing guidance regarding the design and siting of renewable energy infrastructure in the Central Conservation Area.

#### 4 Drives and loss of front gardens

Very often the frontage of buildings in conservation areas is essential to the character of the conservation area. Historically, many buildings in the character area had front gardens with enclosing low railings, hedges or walls. Their gardens would be planted. The loss of front gardens to parking detracts from the historic setting. This can result from the nature of the materials used, the loss of boundary treatments, the intensity or volume of the parking or the loss of soft garden features which can cause a reduction in biodiversity and 'wildlife corridors'. The loss of front gardens in this manner is also an unsustainable form of development – increasing run off, reducing planting available for carbon fixing and encouraging car use. Where it is considered acceptable the use of brick or gravel instead of tarmac, with the retention of some garden space and the use of appropriate boundary treatments would reduce run-off, offer a more attractive setting for buildings and give a more sustainable approach than some current practice.

Cheltenham Borough Local Plan Policy BE 7 states that 'Development which introduces or extends the parking of vehicles on forecourts or front gardens of buildings in conservation areas will not be permitted.' Where there is existing frontage parking which adversely impacts on the character and setting of the conservation area, a new planning application may give opportunities to renegotiate a more sympathetic solution.

**Action TP4:** The Council will seek to limit the adverse impact of on-plot frontage parking by using its powers under planning and other legislation to secure the use of appropriate, traditional and complementary boundary and surface treatments which will in turn greatly reduce levels of surface water run-off.

The Council will prepare a guidance note on sustainable design of front garden parking.

#### 5 Tree Management

The presence of trees makes an important contribution to the overall character and appearance of the character area. They are particularly important features in the street scene along the length of Painswick Road, Moorend Park Road, Park Place, Tivoli Road, Shurdington Road and especially around The Park. Trees play an important role in reducing the effects of climate change through climate fixing, absorbing carbon dioxide and providing shade. They need to continue to be well protected and managed in the future. The private trees near the junction of Shurdington Road and Moorend Park Road are under particular pressure to be removed by local residents.

**Action TP5:** Cheltenham Borough Council will continue to maintain and protect trees by implementing Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) where appropriate, and replant with new trees when old trees die. Trees located in pavements or grass verges at the side of roads and which are designated as within the public highway are maintained by Gloucestershire Highways. Trees located in parks or green spaces within the conservation area are managed by Cheltenham Borough Council in accordance with best arboricultural practice.

When a trees dies or is removed from land within the conservation area, because it was dead, dying or dangerous, the land owner has a legal obligation under section 213 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to plant a replacement tree of an appropriate size and species. The Council will require owners to fulfil their legal obligation for replanting with new trees, especially where the old trees have made a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. Where appropriate the Council may decide to serve a tree replacement notice under section 207 of the Act

This proposed action will maintain the overall leafy character and appearance of the area. The creation of gaps within formal planted avenues of trees will also be avoided.

## 6 **Boundary enclosures**

At present, some poorly maintained boundary treatments harm the character and appearance of buildings and the overall street scene. Increased use of railings or trees and hedgerow as a 'soft' boundary treatment would enhance the historic qualities, character and appearance of the area. Additionally, trees and hedgerow contribute to biodiversity by providing wildlife habitats. If the same sympathetic boundary treatment were to be implemented along the length of a street where possible, this would enhance its character and appearance, by uniting properties within it.

The central space of The Park is currently partly enclosed by poor wooden fencing and wire mesh fencing. This is a poor quality and visually unattractive boundary treatment. There is a need for the implementation of a high quality, consistent boundary treatment to enclose the whole of the central space. A hedge may be a more appropriate boundary enclosure.

See Cheltenham Borough Local Plan Policies BE 5 and CP 3.

**Action TP6:** The Council will use enforcement and other powers under Section 215 of the Planning Act to secure the repair of poorly maintained boundary treatments and the reinstatement of traditional and historic boundary treatments to enhance the historic character of The Park character area.

The Council will require the use of contextually sensitive boundary treatments on new developments where appropriate.

## 7 **Setting and views**

The setting of The Park character area is very important. Any proposals for development will be required to demonstrate how the setting and long distance views within, into and from the character area have been taken into account. The important views are identified on the Townscape Analysis map. The Council will seek to ensure that all development serves to respect these important views.

**Action TP7:** The Council will ensure that all development respects the important views within, into and from the Park character area. These views are noted but not exclusively identified on the Townscape Analysis map. The Council will ensure that these remain protected from inappropriate forms of development and redevelopment and that due regard is paid to these views in the formulation of public realm works or enhancement schemes in accordance with the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan.

## **8 Enhancement of existing buildings and land**

Some land and buildings fail to contribute to the preservation or enhancement of the conservation area. In some cases, these are poorly maintained historic buildings. In other cases, these are modern buildings which have some aspect which fails to respond to its historic context. In the case of historic and modern buildings, the Council will, where necessary, use enforcement or other planning powers (e.g. Section 215 notices) to achieve repair and preservation. Some land in the curtilage of buildings is poorly maintained and in a prominent location – here, it may be appropriate to use powers to achieve improvement.

**Action TP8:** The Council will use enforcement and other powers under Section 215 of the Planning Act to achieve the enhancement of poorly maintained buildings.

## **Project proposals**

## **9 Street furniture**

The character area has a relatively small amount of street furniture (pedestrian signage, bollards, bins, seats etc). There needs to be a consistency of style to help create a cohesive identity for the Park. In particular, there is a need for more bins and seating to be provided, particularly around the central space of the Park (highly utilised by the University) and on routes to the Park. The presence of excessive or redundant street signage causes street clutter and is visually unattractive. The potential for additional signage throughout the Park character area is a cause for concern in respect of its impact on the character of the character area and overall conservation area.

The Civic Pride project is considering the issues of style, need, use and location in order to engender this cohesiveness, to minimise clutter and maximise effectiveness and though that project is largely outside the Park character area, there may be some carry over benefits.

PPG 15 Section 5 gives additional transport measure in historic environments. The Cheltenham Borough Council Local Plan Policy BE 18 relates.

**Action TP9:** The Council will lobby the Highway Authority to minimise signage, markings and other street furniture in its traffic management projects. Where it is safe to do so it will liaise with the Highway Authority to

remove redundant signage and street furniture and ensure that any new signage and traffic management schemes preserve and enhance the setting of the Park character area.

## **10 Lamp standards**

The lamp standards around The Park itself are of an inconsistent design. This creates a cluttered appearance which is a negative feature within the street scene. Many of the lamp posts are of a functional design which does not enhance the character or appearance of the character area. Some are also positioned at the back and middle of the footpath which creates inconsistency.

**Action TP10:** The Council will lobby Gloucestershire County Council to address the inconsistent design of lamp posts around The Park. A scheme to retain the historic lamp posts and replace the modern, functional lamp posts with an appropriate and complementary design, with consistent positioning in the street, would help to reinforce the character and enhance the street scene and overall appearance of the area. Any replacement street lamps should maximise their energy efficiency.

## **11 University of Gloucestershire's grounds within The Park**

The central green space within the teardrop form of The Park is a quintessentially important historic feature within the character area. The space was historically designed as pleasure grounds and has retained much of its open character despite several historic and more recent University buildings being located in the north eastern part of the grounds.

**Action TP11:** The Council will ensure the retention of the spacious character of this important central space within the Park through ensuring that any future development or redevelopment within the grounds does not erode any of the open space. This will ensure the retention of this area of green open space which makes an essentially important contribution to the character area.

## **12 Double yellow lines around tear drop form of The Park**

The double yellow painted lines around the tear drop form of The Park are visually intrusive. They are a negative feature within the street scene and detract from the special qualities of the character area.

**Action TP12:** The Council will lobby Gloucestershire County Council to introduce a restrictive parking zone around the central space of The Park. This would involve the removal of the painted yellow lines and all parking from this space. The implementation of this scheme would enhance the overall street scene around The Park, which is a historically important space within the character area.

**13 Footpath around the tear drop form of The Park**

The footpath around The Park is laid out in tarmac which is visually unattractive and is a negative feature within the street scene.

**Action TP13:** The Council will lobby Gloucestershire County Council to re-lay the footpath around The Park with appropriate, sustainably sourced materials where possible. This will improve the visual quality of the footpath and the overall appearance of the street scene within the Park.

## Annex 1:

### Cheltenham Central Conservation Area – list of Supplementary Planning Documents

19 character areas make up Cheltenham's Central Conservation Area. Each has a separate character appraisal and management plan. These comprise –

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Status</b>
1). <b>Old Town</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2007
2). <b>Montpellier</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2007
3). <b>Bayshill</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2007
4). <b>Lansdown</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
5). <b>Suffolk Square</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
6). <b>Eldorado</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
7). <b>Dean Close &amp; Hatherley Park</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
8). <b>Tivoli</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
9). <b>The Park</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
10). <b>The Suffolks</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
11). <b>Bath Road</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
12). <b>Leckhampton</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
13). <b>College</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
14). <b>St Luke's</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
15). <b>Sydenham</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
16). <b>Fairview &amp; All Saints'</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
17). <b>Pittville</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
18). <b>Lower High Street</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008
19). <b>St Paul's</b> character area appraisal and management plan	Adopted as a SPD on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2008

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