



Coombe Abbey Park



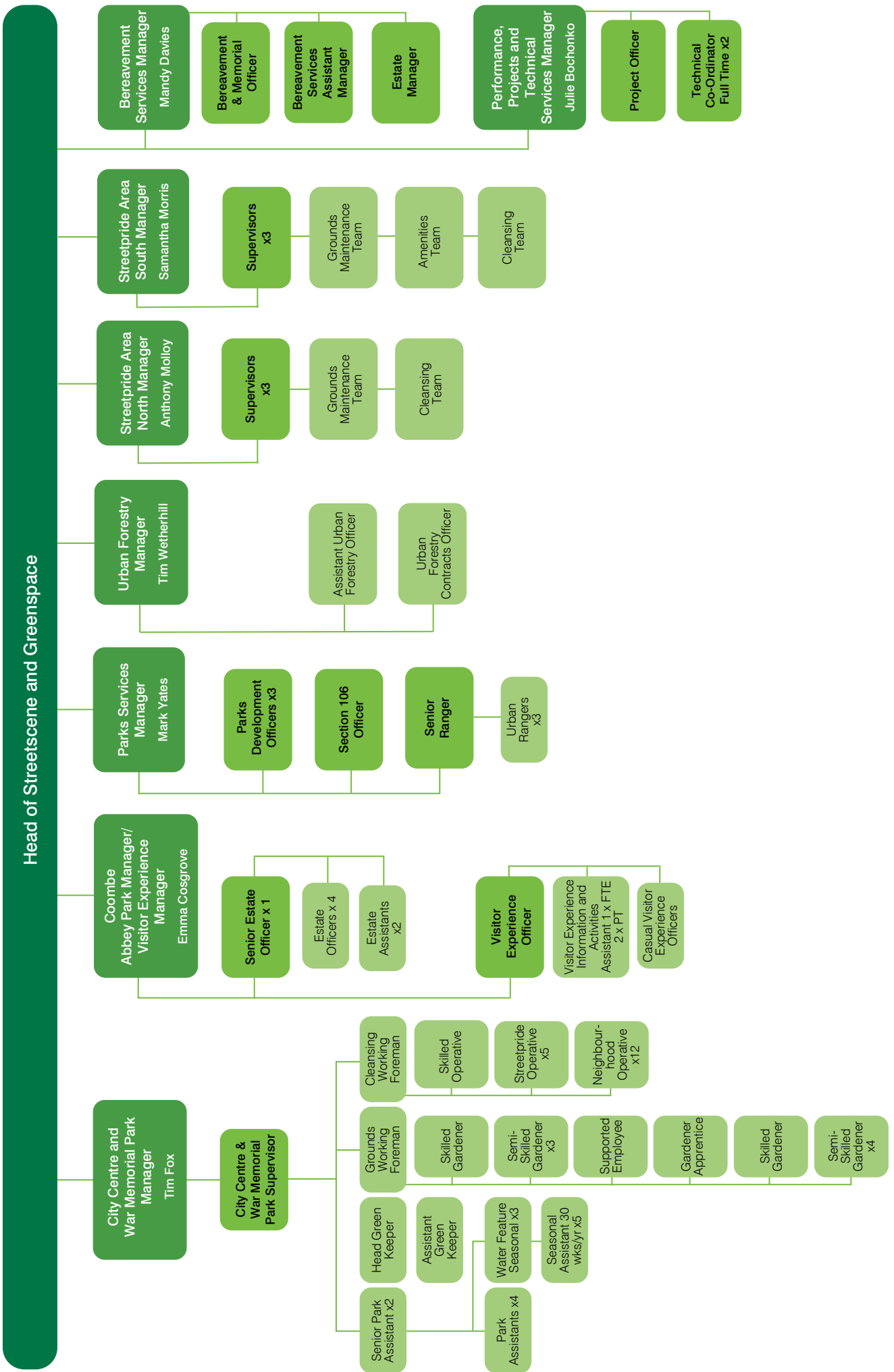
Appendices 2024 - 2028



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Appendix 1 Structure under review - November 2023



Members' Chart

Coventry City Council 2023/2024

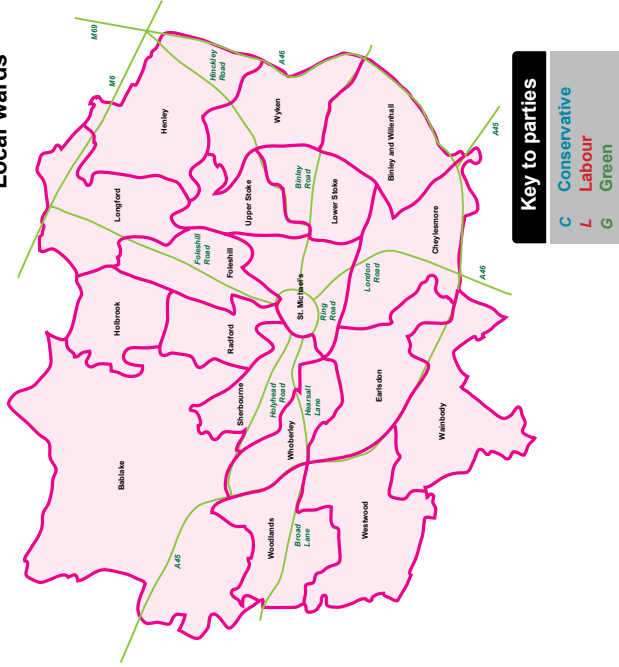


Lord Mayor of the City of Coventry
Cllr Jaswant Singh Birdi



Deputy Lord Mayor
Cllr Mai Mutton

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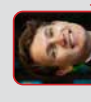


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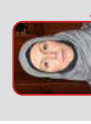


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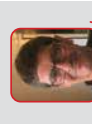
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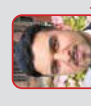


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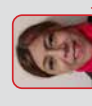
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Appendix 3 - Management proposals by character areas

The site has been divided into 14 management compartments based on landscape character and vegetation. Each compartment is described, recent management work outlined where relevant, management objectives and management proposals.

Area 1: Main Entrance and Avenue

Period of greatest influence

16th C, when the original avenues were laid out as the main approach to the house. The present avenue of horse chestnut and lime was planted in 1905, the young lime in 1981.

Design intent

A major axis and part of an extensive scheme of radiating avenues stretching to the boundaries of the estate.

Historic components

Ridge and furrow west of the entrance. Gate piers listed Grade 2. Pedestrian deer park gate. Late 19th/early 20thC railings to moat area.

Lost features

Abbey church and 17thC formal garden laid out within the footprint of the demolished church. Line of medieval road. Griffins on gate piers. Dog kennels by Brown/Holland.

Other artefacts

Low rails beside the road with removable rail accesses to the events field. Grass reinforcement to events entrances and corners of pedestrian path. Setts at pedestrian entrance and sett rumble strips on the approach to pedestrian crossing point. Tarmac bound gravel path. Mixed signage aluminum composite with wood effect finish. Pedestrian crossing.

Habitat

Over mature, mature and young avenue trees in amenity grassland, small area of parkland pasture style grassland to the south end of the main drive.

Visitors

Fully accessible.

Significance

Consistent with the historical angle of approach to the Abbey and house. Avenue represents recreation of 17thC approach whose use was revived in mid 19thC with the coming of railways – Brandon Station. To the south. Major element in park recalling formal landscape of 17thC. Provides setting and frame for visitors all important first views of main house and Country Park. Key importance to the visitor perceptions of Coombe.

Issues

Volume of traffic – only vehicle entrance for both country park and hotel. Sustaining avenue. Sustaining the ridge and furrow. Co-ordination of signage particularly between the park and the hotel. Security daylight and after hours. Visitor pressure.

Objectives

Conserve and enhance the avenue approach.

Conserve the uninterrupted view of the main house down the Avenue. Conserve the simplicity of trees in grass.

Maintain a quality visitor welcome.

Enhance biodiversity

Overcome impact of traffic on the grass when crossing into the events field.

Preserve ridge and furrow.

Ensure site security measures do not visually impact on the historic landscape.

Management proposals.

- The Avenue should be perpetuated and a constant canopy cover maintained by replanting trees that have failed with a disease resistant species capable of withstanding a changing climate. Although in this incarnation the avenue is not especially old, the feature of a strong planted line on the axis of the Abbey is. There should be no planting of trees and shrubs beyond that needed to perpetuate the Avenue, so that the strong character of the Avenue is not weakened, and the view of the main house is maintained.
- The area of 'ridge and furrow' to the west of the Drive should be preserved.
- Seasonal interest should be improved by increasing the planting of native winter and/or spring flowering bulbs e.g., Snowdrops, Bluebells, successional Daffodils, beneath the tree canopy.
- Biodiversity enhancement should take the form of a summer wildflower strip beneath the tree canopy to support butterfly populations.
- Maintain the recently adopted method of reduced mowing and leaf mulching rather than leaf collection to improve grassland sward and reduce compaction under the avenue canopy.
- Those trees that have failed in the younger avenue of limes should be replaced with trees of similar age/size.
- Crown management should be carried out regularly to maintain the visual impact of the avenue.
- Maintain a high standard of maintenance.
- Ensure utility companies maintain site services are aware of the requirements of this plan.
- Consider alternative fencing design at site frontage and along the deer park boundary, based on historical research and in sympathy with the gate piers. Metal parkland fencing would be appropriate for the period of the main entrance.
- Ensure signage and interpretation is coordinated and agreed.
- Undertake regular tree surveys to assess the health and vigor of the avenue trees, especially after storms.
- Maintain historical features to a high standard, through regular inspections.

Area 2: Car Park and Picnic Areas

Character

Period of greatest influence

Late 20thC.

Design intent

To provide parking and outdoor seating facilities for visitors.

Historic components

Earthwork relicts of former gardens. Deer Park fence post.

Lost features

Route of medieval road. 17thC formal gardens. 18thC kennels designed by Brown/Holland. Gate piers to side entrance – now placed at main entrance.

Other artefacts

Post and rail fencing. Car park bollards. Payment machines and barrier terminals. Signage and Interpretation panel. Picnic benches. Car park surfacing. Resin bonded gravel pathway. Airport beacon. CCTV. 3 rail fencing and birds mouth fencing.

Habitat

Amenity grass. Trees. Shelter belt shrub/tree belt east boundary.

Visitors

Fully accessible.

Significance

Archaeology Brown's dog kennels. Visitors first experience of Coombe after alighting from vehicles.

Issues

Upkeep of surfacing and drainage. Lack of coach parking and turning area. Damage to timber parking barriers. Peak flow patterns. Lack of policy on carrying capacity – capacity of parking/ visitor numbers. Lack of shade in some parking areas. Dense shade in picnic area to the north of car park. Choice of tree species planted in some plantations (Poplars).

Objectives

Enhance biodiversity.

To keep car parking in its present location where it does not intrude into the landscape of the park yet provides ready access to it.

Monitor carpark use to inform decisions on whether any extension to the existing car park, which may become necessary, can be equally inobtrusive. Re-surface the carpark subject to funding.

To maintain a high standard of security through and effective overnight lock down process, CCTV, lighting. To maintain the upkeep and appearance of the car park.

To maintain and improve picnic facilities.

To improve flow patterns within the existing car park.

Management proposals

Continuous monitoring of the car park and visitor trends in this area is required to assess impact and inform decision making.

The light in the picnic areas could be improved by selectively removing trees to create small glades and raising the crown of those trees that remain whilst still maintaining adequate shade in the summer.

The field archaeology of the Brownian Dog Kennels should be protected on site. Suitable interpretation of this former feature of the park should be provided. The archaeological remnant of the old road should also be protected.

Investigate improved landscaping to increase shade during hot periods.

Maintain a high standard of maintenance.

Ensure signage and interpretation is coordinated and agreed.

Undertake regular tree surveys to assess the health and vigor of the avenue trees, especially after storms

Reduce the visual impact of car park infrastructure by reducing fence heights.

Improve floristic diversity of the grassland both to the north and south of this area.

Area 3: Visitor Centre and Events Field

Character

Period of greatest influence

Late 20thC.

Design intent

To provide a new visitor reception and access to the Country Park when the main house was converted to a private hotel.

Historic components

Scheduled Ancient Monument, tree covered and unmarked. Deer Park fencing and gate.

Lost features

Line of medieval road to the Abbey. Line of 18thC drive to house.

Other artefacts

Visitor Centre 1992. Brick bin store for cafe. Children's play area refurbished 2022 taking inspiration from West Lodge. . Post and rail fence to west boundary, generally good condition, stock netting attached. Blue badge parking bays. Signage and interpretation. Service points for events field. Park furniture including benches, bins. Resin bonded gravel path. Lucy pillars. Grass reinforcement to events field. Orienteering posts. Low level fencing. Security bollards. Water hydrant. Radar kissing gate. CCTV. Car park payment machine. Bicycle repairs stand with pump. Lighting.

Habitat

Amenity grassland, semi improved grassland. Tall herb under 19th C tree groups. 1990's plantations, part of the restoration of the Brownian landscape. Veteran trees

Visitors

Fully accessible to visitors. Focal point for most visitors. Events field also used for parking.

Significance

Oldest evidence of human occupation of the site. Main point of entrance to the park for pedestrians.

Issues

Intensive usage. Visitor Centre, poor use of space. No direct connection with the landscape. Environmentally unsound design.

Management objectives

Retain events field as a site for events and informal recreation.

Protect the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Protect veteran trees.

Enhance biodiversity.

Management proposals

Apart from the perimeter tree belt there is no other parkland planting indicated on the Plan of Coombe Park 1778 in the events area. The land to the south of Coombe Pool has been restored for this reason, it is proposed that there should be no tree planting which is historically inconsistent along the western side of the events field.

Sward erosion should be managed and improved.

The plan of 1778 which depicts 'Capability' Brown's Parkland illustrates a carriage drive from West Lodge to the Abbey; the route of the drive can be traced from aerial photographs. The whole length of the drive, excluding the immediate surrounds of West Lodge but including the end section which runs through in this area, should be reinstated as a mowed grass track.

Another element of the Brown design which affects this area is the view from the Abbey to the Menagerie: this was one of the principal view lines and has been cut by the later planting of Nesfield and Miller, Willows and red chestnuts should not be replaced after failure to reinstate this view.

The yew hedge planted along the south side of the moat should be made clearly visible by periodically removing the scrub, which has grown up in front of it. This is to emphasise the importance of the Abbey behind it and the relationship it has with this area. Careful consideration of visitor management issues will need to be taken into consideration to avoid damage to the hedge line. Otherwise, the Nesfield/Miller parkland setting should be retained. The current use of different mowing and meadow management regimes to give the grassland in this area some diversity should be maintained and improved, by extending and scalloping the tall grassland edge this will provide more 'private' areas for seating and picnics. Seasonal interest in this area should be improved by native spring bulb planting and increasing sward herb diversity.

There should be no surface disturbance of the tumulus.

The survival and nature of medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains should be evaluated prior to any disturbance.

A clear plan of the VC usage should be developed in partnership with NOH.

Area 4: The Nesfield / Miller Gardens and Arboretum

Character

Period of greatest influence

Mid and late 19thC, early 20thC.

Design intent

To create a great contemporary garden around the house.

Historic components

Sections of 16thC/17thC masonry from the Elizabethan porch incorporated in the early 20thC retaining walls. The cascade, moat, bridge, and canal designed by WA Nesfield 1865.

A balustrade across the lake concealing a weir. 2 pairs of griffins. Sandstone paving and edgings. Remnants of Acacia Avenue. Stone circlet. 2 Garden shelters one temple documented by Cornelia Craven and country life in 1909 and a summer house built in the 1930's which has since been dismantled and repositioned to face the house. Pet cemetery

Lost features

Exotic specimen trees, topiary, pergola to temple, statuary, and other garden ornaments. 1980's Sculptures on/in trees. Fernery.

Other artefacts

1990's causeway providing access to the gardens and country park north of the lake. Fisherman and Nymph statue in moat.. Post and rail boundary fence. Low rail to mound. Park furniture – benches, litter bins., signage and interpretation panel

Habitat

Exotic trees, rhododendron beds, herbaceous border, bedding, close mown grass, longer grass to mound and to banks of the Smite brook.

Visitors

Fully accessible.

Significance

Concept and development are the major 19thC contribution to designed landscape at Coombe. Concept from Nesfields, father and son, management and the development work of Miller. Only area of formal gardens accessible to country park visitors.

Issues

Rabbit control. Presentation of moat and water features. Municipal tree planting in arboretum. Condition of sandstone walkways.

Management objectives

Develop the Gardens as a key element of the visitor attractions of Coombe, opportunities should be taken to enhance their quality and attractiveness to visitors.

Planting interest should be developed within the constraints of a Victorian flower gardening style.

Conserve and enhance the Arboretum as part of the Nesfield/Miller landscape by developing a solid framework and plan for future planting based on historical analysis. Exploit the potential of such a collection with seasonal highlights, preserve ornamental character of the collections based on Victorian planting linked to Lady Cornelia Craven /American theme.

Improve visitor access through improved footpaths.

Management proposals

Improve seasonal and botanical interest.

Investigate restoration of wisteria ring.

Rationalise hedge height and restore to the designs shown in 1909 design photos.

Reintroduce where feasible the Victorian design as per the 1909 design photos.

Reintroduce topiary on yew features to the rear of the hotel, introduce holly and laurel topiary as per comments of Charles H Curtis 1904.

The survival and nature of medieval archaeological remains should be evaluated prior to any major ground disturbance.

Restore hard landscaping feature sandstone pathway. Improve quality of grass in the parterre

Investigate alternative funding methods to assist with this restoration project.1a

Area 5: Top Pool

Character

Period of greatest influence

18thC, part of Brown's water management scheme for the park.

Design intent

It is presumed that this is a feeder lake to the main pool, who's upper weirs diverted water to a wind pump currently off site, filling the reservoir at East Lodge

Historic components

Sluice.

Lost features

2009 Top Pool Lodge suffered from arson and burnt down.

Other artefacts.

Top Pool Lodge, toilets, kiosk and classroom. Opportunity to pump water supply to moat. Timber revetment to southern end of the lake. Post and rail fence by lodge. Park furniture, timber planters outside lodge, lucy pillar. Heron sculpture. Signage. Orienteering posts

Habitat

Open water, reedbed, reed fringe, small area of grassland.

Visitors

Accessible to visitors who pass by the western end of the pool.

Significance

Part of Brown's scheme to manage water in the park.

Issues

Divided ownership of the land surrounding the pool. Organic and mineral silt build up. Area in front of the lodge requires improvement. Lack of a trash screen to the culvert and penstock. Regular flooding over winter months. The dam wall may fall with in new reservoir legislation and become subject to inspection.

Management objectives

Maintain nature conservation interest of the Pool including retention of some of the fringing reeds, and reed bed.

Manage water quality and flow.

Management proposals

The nature conservation and the historic integrity of this area is threatened by rapid siltation. If silt is allowed to build up ecological succession with associated reed swamp and shrub invasion is inevitable. A specialist report on hydrology commissioned in 2009 to facilitate good management emphasised the critical nature of this issue. Should finances allow this area should be dredged. However, steps should be taken to manage the organic silt. Mineral deposits can only be managed by some method of dredging.

Manage reedbeds to prevent succession to swamp/scrub.

Negotiate with the hotel to improve the visual appearance of the moat pump.

Monitor biodiversity interest.

Manage and maintain water management features --- weir and penstock .

Maintain footpaths to ensure equality of access.

Maintain high standard of maintenance.

Improve water quality.

Landscape lodge and approach.

Area 6: The Decoy Spinney

Character

Period of greatest influence.

19thC.

Design intent

A pool designed to catch ducks, a source of fresh meat for the main house and offered for sale.

Historic components

The shape of the pool with four arms / pipes. Separate pool formerly one of the pipes. Remnants of hoops over water. 2 weirs and flanking walls. Canalised and edged sections of the Smite brook. Bridge and bridge abutments. 2 Deer Park fence posts.

Lost features

. Hoops and ancillary screens associated with decoy management.

Other artefacts

3 pond dipping platforms on the decoy and 1 on Smite brook. Interpretation board. Pond life identification board. Perch posts. Concrete fence posts form former mini zoo. Municipal metal railing to brick bridge. Bison bridge installed 2023 replacing railway sleeper bridge. Orienteering posts

Habitat.

Mixed woodland with rich ground flora, freshwater ponds.

Visitors

Fully accessible, recreational restrictions –dogs on leads.

Significance

Decoy a common feature of 19thC estate but few exist in good condition. Rarely accessible to the public

Issues

Lack of water flow in summer. Weirs and associated areas in need of repair and refurbishment. Inappropriate bridge railings. Shading of Smite brook. Algae and duck weed in ponds. Dilapidation of decoy arms/pipes. Many ash trees have been subject to die back leaving gaps in the woodland canopy.

Objectives

Maintain and enhance the rich woodland habitat. Improve the quality of Smite Brook. Restore what remains of the decoy pond to working condition. Maintain and enhance visitor understanding of the decoy and its workings. Restore brick bridge and weir area, creating a grassy glade around it.

Management proposals

Within the Decoy Spinney, the emphasis must be on management operations which will sustain the ecological and historical interest of the woodland, this will be done by selective felling, encouragement of desirable self-sown saplings, replanting only if necessary. Coppicing of the alder on the western side of the decoy, will improve the overall structure and provide education and interpretation opportunities. Some areas need to be left for non/low intervention management, to support shade and damp-loving invertebrate fauna.

Improve quality of Smite Brook, by selective felling of sycamore along the brook this will improve the quality of light reaching the water and reduce leaf litter falling into the water system and onto the woodland floor where the flora is less rich than to the south of the path. Stumps should be carefully treated rather than being removed which may affect bank stability.

Retain the remaining concrete fence posts to allow interpretation in the future.

Remove the path crossing the NE arm/pipe

Ensure signage and interpretation is coordinated.

Implement the recommendations of the structural assessment undertaken in 2023 to repair and restore the brick bridge including a plain redbrick parapet wall with curved sandstone copping stones. Clear felling of trees is recommended to create a glade in the area where a weir has been put across Smite Brook to sustain water levels in the Decoy Pond. The brickwork retaining the weir should be restored.

Retain London Planes in the vicinity of the bridge and weir. Brown often planted Plane trees close to water features.

Maintain high standard of maintenance.

Improve water quality.

Maintain footpaths to ensure equality of access.

Area 7: Northern Woodland

Character

Period of greatest influence

18thC.

Design intent

Extensive section of boundary woodland enclosing north of the park.

Historic components

Footprint consistent with plan of 1778. Shallow bank and ditch on the southern edge consistent with boundary of woodland on plan of 1778. Remnant of sweet chestnut and hazel coppice. Victorian bottle/rubbish dump. Brick culverts and bridges. Remains of coal gas works cottages.

Lost features

Unknown.

Other artefacts

Entrance to Centenary Way. Timber foot bridge, storage yard, stone path to yard. Unsurfaced paths through woodland. Boundary fence to farmland. Memorial carving.

Habitat

Broad leaved woodland, with limited understory. Small remnant of sweet chestnut and hazel coppice. Newly established plantations.

Visitors

Fully accessible.

Significance

Evidence of earth works, and woodland management suggest pre-Brown landscape, possibly part of the 16th/17thC landscape.

Issues

Past management practice – dumping of leaf collections encouraging degradation of woodland structure and destroying native habitat, and a disjointed method of managing the woodlands in general. Lack of appreciation of historical significance. Level of public use and wear on light soil. Anti-social behavior linked to Centenary Way access/uncontrolled public access.

Objectives

Maintain, perpetuate and enhance the woodlands for recreation and nature conservation.

Manage invasive species to facilitate the above.

Maintain and perpetuate Brown's shelter belt.

Make woodland character management part of the visitor experience, particularly traditional woodland crafts such as coppicing.

Minimise the impact of the yard and its activities on the landscape and visitors.

Management proposals

Manage the woodland and associated pathway's ways to improve biodiversity, particularly targeted LBAP species.

Develop a woodland management plan to include area 7

Upgrade path system to the yard.

Improve signage to facilitate effective flow /access for visitors away from the maintenance yard.

Maintain footpaths to ensure equality of access.

Maintain high standard of maintenance.

Manage invasive species.

Area 8: Heath Woodland

Character Period of greatest influence

18thC although not entirely clear in this area.

Design intent

Part of the extensive boundary woodland enclosing the north of the park.

Historic components

Shallow bank and ditch marking the boundary of woodland consistent with the 1778 plan 3 x old hornbeam on the bank. Deer fence gate posts. Yews near site boundary indicative of Brown.

Lost features

Several large stumps would suggest large specimen parkland trees. Deer fencing.

Other artefacts

Natural sand and gravel path. Perch posts. Memorial carving

Habitat

Acid grassland/heath relict of the Dunsmore heath character area.

Visitors

Fully accessible.

Significance

Evidence of earthworks and woodland management suggest could be pre-Brown landscape, possibly part of the 16th/17thC park. Yew planting by Brown. View from top of bank to the two spires of Coventry. Scarce regional habitat of heathland.

Issues

Bracken control. Erosion on light soils. Invasive species. Steep slope on path.

Objectives

Preserve and extend this rare fragment of surviving heathland, in line with lowland acid grassland LBAP. Interpret area for visitors. Keep areas of exposed sand for mining bees. Keep invasive species under control.

Management proposals

Improve path access on the steep slope and to the stream crossing

Manage pathway sympathetically to the habitat, ensure banked edges are available for mining bees.

Manage all invasive species, in this area this includes all tree species.

Interpret this area, ensuring interpretation is coordinated.

Maintain high standard of maintenance.

Area 9: Woodland south of Wrautum

Character

Period of greatest influence

20thC.

Design intent

None.

Historic components

Principal view line through this area from Wrautums hill to menagerie attributed to Brown and now a private residence.

Lost features

None known.

Other artefacts

Natural spring in fenced off area. Road stone path topped with quarry waste. Ditch system to lake.

Habitat

Wet woodland/willow and alder carr. Native broadleaved woodland. Tall herb – invasive Indian balsam. Young mixed broadleaved hedge along footpath boundary to sludge pit/spring.

Visitors

Path access only, public access discouraged for Health and Safety reasons in the sludge pit and for nature conservation in the wet woodland.

Significance

Historically part of Wrautum hill and online of vista to and from the Menagerie.

Issues

Silt pit still hazardous for public access a sympathetic and a sustainable landscape boundary is required, that doesn't detract from the landscape views to the Menagerie. Secondary tree growth now obscures the designed view. Invasive pest species.

Objectives

Re-establish view lines and interpret historical significance. Low key management in wet woodland. Protect the badger sett. Restrict public access.

Management proposals

Interpret this area, ensuring interpretation is coordinated.

Create a sustainable low-level barrier to restrict public access along the W/NW edge of the sludge pit, whilst not hindering view lines.

Maintain grassland sward and uninterrupted view line from Wrautums to lake edge to the east of this section.

Maintain view line from Wrautums hill to the Menagerie through the scrub woodland in this area by regular coppicing and/or felling as required.

Reinstate Brownian style edge to the lake along this stretch. Manage as short rotation tall herb, remove encroaching willows. Maintain new boundary hedge and dead hedge to the sludge pit. Encourage heathland species on upper lighter soils.

Maintain footpaths to ensure equality of access.
Maintain high standard of maintenance.
Manage invasive species as per pest control policy.

Area 10 Woodland east of Wrautum

Character

Period of greatest influence

20thC.

Design intent

Parkland pasture with views from house to Wrautum Hill

Historic components

Ancient oak sweet chestnut and cedar of Lebanon.

Lost features

North end of lake approx. 10 acres. Browns terminal island. Course of Smite Brook.

Other artefacts

Purpose built maintenance block. Go Ape high ropes course. Hermits Hollow play area.

Habitat

Mixed woodland pine /oak dominate with Sycamore succession.

Visitors

Fully accessible.

Significance

Formerly part of open parkland associated with Wrautum Hill.

Issues

Ancient trees lost within 20thC plantation style woodland. Loss of views between Wrautums Hill and Abbey. Lack of woodland management. Main path from bridge to Wrautums Hill badly shaded and eroded giving poor impression of a once impressive view.

Objectives

Recreate historical parkland character of this area.

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Define and improve pathways.

Management proposals

Identify and manage ancient trees in line with nationally recognised best practice. Select other specimen trees for long term retention, including pollarded specimens.

Gradually thin and remove selected plantation trees and secondary growth to create a character of wood pasture.

Maintain footpaths to ensure equality of access.

Maintain high standard of maintenance.

Manage invasive species as per pest control policy.

Area 11 The Wrautum

Character

Period of greatest influence

18thC.

Design intent

A large open parkland space whose elevation was accentuated by the boundary tree belt set back from the summit of the hill. The hill would have provided extensive views over the estate.

Historic components

Ancient sweet chestnut stool on eastern boundary, remains of sewage works.

Lost features

19thC pheasantry. Park pail fence shown in 1778 plan.

Other artefacts

Base to former play area. Climbing forest play area. Picnic benches. Foot paths on eastern and northern edges. Orienteering posts

Habitat

Semi improved Acid grassland. Predominantly coniferous plantation style woodland, with some oak dominant areas and young mixed plantations.

Visitors

Fully accessible.

Significance

Hill offers vantage point from which to survey the park.

Issues

Loss of views and links with the water's edge.

Objectives

Maintain and improve long view to the Menagerie. Restore a lowland heath habitat to the acid soils.

Management proposals

Maintain the acid grassland in line with the LBAP during the development of a heathland restoration plan. Adding bare earth scrapes for mining bees and natural regeneration.

Gradually thin pine plantations to allow a more open parkland pasture character style to develop.

Maintain footpaths to ensure equality of access.

Maintain high standard of maintenance.

Manage invasive species.

Area 12 Coombe Pool including lake bank south of Wrautum

Character

Period of greatest influence

18thC.

Design intent

A huge lake enhancing the park and the prospect of the house.

Historic components

Dam wall. Bell mouth weir. Eel trap.

Lost features

Medieval Binley Pool. Medieval channel from abbey to Smite. Browns penstocks and brick bridge over stream.

Other artefacts

Modern reservoir sluice. Fishing pegs on west bank, and deer park. Timber foot bridge. Gravel pathway. Fish refuges. Habitat raft, sunken dredging barge, islands made from 1970's dredging.

Habitat

Freshwater lake, island heronry, reed bed, reed fringe, scrub margin.

Visitors

Full public access limited to a length of the north shore terminating by the bird hide/conservation area, permit access to the west and part of the deer park banks.

Significance

nd
2 largest water body in Warwickshire. Visual impact and scale of the lake in the landscape. Major feat of 18thC engineering with associated artefacts. Nationally significant heronry. Part of SSSI. Renowned fishery.

Issues

Buildup of silt. Significance of the heronry.

Cormorant numbers. Algal blooms and aquatic weed build ups. Desertion of heronry by herons. Changing market trends within fisheries management. Condition of historic artefacts. Numbers of Canada geese. Sustainability of fish stocks. Poaching,

Objectives

Maintain the lake at its central position in the designed landscape. Conserve, reinstate and enhance views.

Meet legal obligations under Reservoirs Act, Wildlife and Countryside Act and Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act.

Maintain/restore Reservoir artefacts. Maintain fishery as a traditional estate fishery, with an emphasis towards pleasure and specimen angling. Maintain the nature conservation interest of the lake, with particular emphasis on the heronry.

Management proposals

The nature conservation interest, fishery and water flow are threatened by siltation. If silt is allowed to build up ecological succession with associated reed swamp and shrub invasion is inevitable. The specialist measures suggested in the hydrology report commissioned in March 2009 should be carried out should finances allow.

Implement recommendations from the site management agreement between the City Council and Natural England.

Implement agreed recommendations from annual Reservoir inspections.

Balance the need of fishery and nature conservation measures against the visual intrusion on the landscape and where possible minimise the impact.

Area 13 SSSI Woodland

Character

Period of greatest influence

18thC.

Design intent

Boundary woodland enclosing estate, clothing dam and enhancing the lake setting.

Historic components

Former boundary ride and ride along dam wall. Line of Deodar cedar along northern boundary edge. Ancient trees, mounds ditches and remnants of yew and bastion planting by Brown.

Lost features

Unknown.

Other artefacts

Boundary fencing, Conservation area fencing, Bird hide. Perch posts.

Habitat

Mixed deciduous broadleaf woodland. Part of SSSI. Used as foraging location by Barbastelle bats.

Visitors

Full public access in the eastern section up to the bird hide. Permit/ticket holders only along the fishery banks, and no official access for the rest of the section.

Significance

Woodland with historic, visual and some habitat significance. Contains elements of Brown planting and design. Significant in scale to Coombe, adjacent green belt and Coventry's urban sprawl. Visual significance heightened with the construction of A46 bypass and neighboring industrial estate expansion.

Issues

Contaminated land at south-eastern boundary. Unauthorised access. Lack of public access. Brown bastion bisected by conservation area fence.

Objectives

Meet legal obligations under Reservoirs Act, Wildlife and Countryside Act – site management agreement. Conserve, enhance and perpetuate the full extent of Brown's shelter belt. Protect heronry and badger sett.

Management proposals

Maintain and enhance the Brown shelter belt, enhancing the nature conservation interest of the site, where possible, retain a significant amount of deadwood habitat, as hulks and deadwood piles

Investigate alternative access routes using south-east woodland belt and southern woodland belt and deer park. (area 14)

Maintain and enhance the bird hide facility.

Maintain the no access zone/conservation area to protect the heronry and improve this area for woodland biodiversity.

Undertake works highlighted in the contaminated land study, thereafter, maintain as required.

Maintain dam wall trees. Propagate Black Poplars to provide providence stock for

future replacements.

Maintain ticket only access along dam wall and woodland.

Maintain footpaths to ensure equality of access.

Maintain high standard of maintenance.

Manage invasive species as per pest control policy.

Interpret this area, ensuring interpretation is coordinated.

Area 14 The Deer Park

Character Period of greatest influence

18thC work of Lancelot Brown 1771--6.

Design intent

To create a generous sweep of parkland as an integral part of the visual relationship between the Menagerie and the main house, including a woodland boundary belt, imposing entrance and new drive to the house.

Historic components

West Lodge, 1771--6 listed grade II, . Boat house, 1771--6 listed grade II, Old gravel pit shown on baker survey of 1778. Two seasonal ponds probably clay pits, 1811 plan and 1887 OS. 2 clay pits, southern one shown on 1778 plan. Group of quarry pits and two small ponds, largest on 1778 plan, others 1887 OS. Large oval clay pit. Ridge and furrow between trees and track where there has been no ploughing. Hollow on line of former road to Abbey and park pale. Remains of 17thC park ride aligned on Old Lodge Farm. Remains of another 17thC park ride. Remnants of 2 tree lines from 17thC 18thC Brownian tree group near lake. Late 19thC copses.

Lost features

Line of 18thC drive from West Lodge to house. Line of 18thC ride beside lake from house to Menagerie. Line of 17thC ride – house to Old lodge Farm. 2 tree lines from 17thC estate landscape 18thC boundary belt east of West lodge. 4 Brownian clumps.

Other artefacts

Highfield House a 1930's detached house. Tarmac drive to the Menagerie. Subdivided stock fencing and water troughs, cattle grid, veteran tree fencing, interpretation panels and signs, Electricity lines.

Habitat

Greatest diversity of grassland habitat within the park boundary. These include, semi-improved neutral, tall herb/ruderal, acid, semi-improved acid, Neutral, Marshy grassland communities. This area also includes the heronry standing ground. The recently restored grassland, known as the wildflower meadow, is described in the 2011 Habitat Audit as good example of MG5 grassland, which is now increasingly scarce in the region. This area also is home to most of the park's veteran trees, all of which are now covered by a separate plan.

The Birchley Brook runs to the south of the area, and an open water ditch to the north of the reed bed.

In addition to the grassland there are areas of willow scrub, unmanaged poor-quality hedgerow, specimen parkland trees and copses of mixed broadleaf groups.

Visitors

This part of the park is available to the public on a zoned basis to take into consideration the sensitive nature of the area.

Significance

Important component of Brownian landscape, area remains almost intact. Listed 18thC entrance lodge and approach. Listed 18thC boathouse. Documentary, site and archaeological evidence for estate landscape from 1150--2005. Scale and space important to public perception, providing link between Coventry and Coombe.

Issues

Loss of historic features/landscape and built. Position of Highfield. Lack hedgerow management. Areas of sensitive and locally important habitat. Integration of people with stock.

Objectives

Manage and where possible enhance biodiversity. Any future use of the site must allow for the recreation of the essential characteristics of the Brownian Park. Accommodate protection measures for the heronry standing ground, in any future site use. Extend balanced public access to allow appreciation of the historic landscape.

Management proposals

Maintain a Brownian landscape that can be interpreted with view lines, parkland trees and avenues.

Maintain boat house.

Manage lake edge to provide an effective balance between habitat conservation, historic landscape, and visitor management.

Manage and monitor the conservation grazing process to ensure grazing meets the sites needs.

Improve management of ditches and water features for biodiversity within the area.

Continue to develop the new access routes, whilst maintaining a balance between conservation, heritage management, agricultural use and recreational use.

Protect and enhance heronry standing ground.

Protect and manage veteran trees.

Manage, maintain and where possible enhance grassland communities to improve biodiversity through reduced grazing.

Restore quarry pit faces to enable interpretation and to provide mining bee habitat.

Maintain a high standard of maintenance.

Appendix 4 - Historical Landscape Significance

Development of the Coombe Landscape

Early Settlement 2000BC – 1150AD

The historic Coombe estate lies 6km due east of the centre of Coventry in the modern parish of Coombe Fields. A round barrow or prehistoric burial mound situated immediately northwest of the visitor centre suggests the earliest evidence of settlement in the area. The site of a similar barrow 1km to the north lies outside the current park boundary and within the Rolls Royce works. Both barrows are located on elevated ground but below the crest of shallow ridges. Both lie adjacent to east west routes known in medieval times but possibly of earlier origin.

Romano-British finds made at two locations in the parish, one in the parkland and one near Peter Hall to the northeast, suggest that occupation of the area has been continuous since the Roman period. The Roman settlement in Peter Hall led to the emergence of an Anglo-Saxon manor and then a small medieval village. There is evidence of pre-Roman field systems in the landscape flanking the Fosse Way, 4km east of Coombe and it is possible that early track-ways along the higher land were used increasingly as routes to the Fosse Way.

The Cistercian Monastery 1150 – 1539

Richard de Camville, owner of the manor of Smite, founded the Cistercian Abbey in 1150. The first Cistercian Abbey in England had been founded at Waverley in Surrey in 1128. The Cistercians were noted for choosing sites in isolated rural locations, often perched on the side of sheltered river valleys where there was a fresh water supply and space for the large-scale sheep farming they practiced. At Coombe the Smite Brook provided the water supply and the local villages of Upper and Lower Smith became depopulated by monastic land management towards extensive sheep pasture. On the slopes below Peter Hall running down to the Smite Brook were the earthwork remains of a deserted village until they were destroyed by deep ploughing in the 20th century. Peter Hall became an outlying grange belonging to the Abbey.

Other earthworks indicate the development of a series of monastic fishponds by the course of the Smite above the Abbey, outside the boundary of the Country Park. There would have been a water channel from the brook to serve the Abbey itself. Research suggests a channel from a sluice 1km east of the abbey with a channel leaving the abbey and rejoining the Smith 1km to the west. The Abbey set in the shallow valley would have been surrounded by a generally open landscape devoted to grazing or arable cultivation with field systems, stock enclosures and some woodland, Burchlei (Birchley Wood) and New Close woods having been recorded from at least the 12th century.

During the 12th century the Abbey established a number of outlying granges including ones at Binley, Coton, Ernesford and Wolvey. Rabbits were introduced in about 1100 and by the 13th century commercial warrens were widely established, especially by monks. In 1290 Edward I granted the abbot free warren over seven manors, including Coombe, which gave them the right to control the smaller game on their land. It is likely that a warren established south of the Smite as a result of the charter gave rise to the Warren field recorded in 1652.

In the 13th century the Abbey was endowed with other land in Warwickshire. Through the sale of wool, the sale of surplus produce in local towns and the income from tenanted land the monastery became the wealthiest in Warwickshire. However, in the 14th and 15th centuries there was a period of decline resulting from Royal demands for 'loans' partly to fund wars in France, poor management leading to financial instability and debt, and lack of moral leadership.

Conversion to a Residence and the Harrington Era 1539 – 1622

The dissolution of the monasteries during the reign of Henry VIII led to the closure of the Cistercian Abbey at Coombe in 1539. The large monastic estates had several owners before it came into the possession of Sir Robert Kelway in 1557. Records of 1556–7 indicate the existence of Swynsty, Brinklowe Copies and Fryth Wood in addition to Birchley and New Close Woods, all sizeable blocks of woodland approximately 1km from the Abbey. Much of the land would have been managed by tenant farmers. It is likely that conversion of the Abbey to a residence began during Sir Robert's residence, 1557–81.

On Sir Robert Kelway's death in 1581, the property passed via his daughter to her husband John Harrington. Knighted by Elizabeth I in 1583, Sir John Harrington undertook major rebuilding at Coombe creating a two-storey residence around 3 sides of the monastic cloister. It is not known whether he undertook demolition of the church on the south side or simply completed what had begun during the dissolution. The outline of the church remained as a walled court with an arched entrance to the former cloister and house. Upon the accession of James I in 1603, Sir John was made Lord Harrington, 1st Baron of Exton and shortly afterwards entrusted with guardianship of 7-year-old Princess Elizabeth. The Princess came to live at Coombe. For the Princess's interest and entertainment, and that of her junior court, Lord Harrington developed a landscape of delight whose pleasures were recounted by a Lady in Waiting:

"The house stood rather low, as most old ones do, but had a pleasing though not very extensive Prospect, and under the Windows of the Princess's Apartment, was a Parterre filled with the greatest Variety of Flowers that ever I saw; beyond which a lawn of a beautiful Verdure; peculiar to that County, relieved the Eye, which otherwise, would have been fatigued with the dazzling colours of the Flowers; The Prospect was terminated by a Cascade, falling into a Canal that looked like a River, and seemed to lose itself in a fine Wood on the right Hand which Wood came right round from the other Side of the House, and one could go through it in the Shade, all the Way to the Park, which was a very fine one; through it there were many Gravel Paths, that made Walking agreeable in Winter, when the Greasiness of the Soil, would not admit of it on Grass...

but nothing took the Princess's Fancy so much, as a little Wilderness at the end of the Park, on the Banks of a large Brook which ran winding along, and formed in one Place, a large irregular Basin, or rather a small Lake, in which there was an Island covered with Underwood, and flowering Trees and Plant.... This Place and the adjoining thicket, my young Mistress, begged to have the Disposal of, during her stay....

Her Garden and Greenhouse were as well stored with Curiosities, and exotic Plants, as her Menagerie, with Creatures....

She was delighted with her Island, as I told you before, and first Orders she gave about it were, to have a little thatched Building, which was in it, rendered commodious within for the Dwelling of a poor Widow and her children....and who, she intended should live in it, and take care of the different sort of Fowls that were to be kept there; the Out-side of this House was to have some alteration made in it, to give the Appearance of an Hermitage, and near it a Grotto, the Adorning of which with Shells and Moss, was the Amusement of many of her leisure Hours....In the Wood, which I told you was on the other side of the Brook, she had an Aviary made...the Top of this was round with coloured glass, that looked at a little Distance, like rough Emeralds and Rubies....which formed the Back and roof of the Aviary; the rest was enclosed with a Net of gilt Wire....Near this, a Cottage was repaired for an old man, who had care of the Birds....

Adorned the little Wooden Buildings which were dispersed about, in all the different Orders of Architecture...."

The extract is quoted in full because it is a rare account of an early Jacobean garden and provides an insight into the first designed landscape developed around Coombe at the beginning of the 17th century. The royal apartments were located in the east wing of the house with an elaborately carved first-floor stone porch at the southwest corner leading to the raised

walks surrounding the Great Garden. The porch was demolished in 1863, but some of the carved stones were subsequently incorporated in retaining walls to the northwest of the house. The outer garden wall was constructed from medieval masonry salvaged from the abbey and the parterre described above lay within the wall and raised ground where the walks lay remain (2002). The cascade and canal may have been developed from the monastic watercourse to the Abbey and the wood may be that depicted in the background of Knyff and Kip's engraving c1690. It is thought that the Park was situated north of the house and the brook described is almost certainly the Smite.

A portrait of Elizabeth by Robert Peake in 1603 possibly set in the grounds at Coombe, portrays an early example of a Royal portrait in a naturalistic setting. Peake's portrait shows Elizabeth standing on rising ground; there is a park pale in the background, together with a stream, bridges, paths and an intriguing pleached arbour with turf seat set on a mount.

The Craven Era 1622 – 1925 The 17th Century Landscape The role of guardian to Princess Elizabeth with all its attendant expenses brought Lord Harrington close to ruin. After his death in 1613 Coombe had to be sold to pay debts and in 1622 was acquired by the Craven family. The development of formal gardens around the house begun in the late 16th century continued under the Craven family. The extent of formal gardens in the late 17th century is recorded by Knyff and Kip c1690. The engraving shows the great garden divided into four grass plats with borders and topiary surrounded by the raised walk. To the north of the house is an elaborate parterre de broderie and to the west a rectangular garden with an oval pool. Around 1680 Lord Craven commissioned Captain William Winde, a distinguished London architect responsible for alterations to the Craven's seat at Hampstead Marshall, to build a new suite of state and private rooms on the west and north sides of the house. The plan and position of the north and west gardens depicted by Knyff and Kip do not align with Winde's extension suggesting that the gardens may be of an earlier date. Gate piers at Coombe are also attributed to William Winde. North of the house a dovecote and two pools are shown. To the southwest of the house a sequence of parterres were probably the last addition to the formal gardens and are thought to have been designed by George London, Royal Gardener, introduced to the Cravens by Captain Winde. The parterres extend and fill the space as far as the public highway, a route established in medieval times, and possibly earlier, to serve the Abbey and providing a link between Coventry and the Fosse Way. In 1634 Lord Craven obtained a licence for emparkment from Charles I to enclose 650 acres of demesne land, the park from which Coombe gets its name. The enclosure is significant because it gave Lord Craven complete control over a single coherent block of land to do with as he wished. Enclosure enabled him to plant trees and control grazing to ensure the trees survived. Emparkment enabled the extension of the designed landscape from the house and formal gardens via avenues radiating to the wider landscape and to the boundaries of the park. Double avenues extending from the south from the main approach to the house across the public highway are shown by Knyff and Kip. Southwest of the house was another ride leading to the Lodge, the central point from which a series of avenues radiated across the park. A letter written by Sir William Craven, dated December 4th 1683, request the keeper to send a brace of does to London for the remainder of the season and records that: "the last months of October and November having proved verie seasonable weather, I have planted a fine nurserie of some thousand setts Abeeles, Elms, limes and Beeches, beside an orchard of fower acres of ground and some Walnut trees, to avoid the charge and trouble of buying these severall sorts elsewhere; I have alsoe got some workmen that are good Artists in cutting and plathing of hedges in the severall grounds which were never done since first planted and shall I hope by degrees bring all to good order." The letter suggests that the development of the estate continued through the century. Hedge laying was recognised as an art practised by skilled artisans, the tree planting needs of a large estate were most prudently met and planned for by the establishment of an estate tree nursery and home-grown orchard fruits were part of the country estate economy.

The 18th Century Landscape It is uncertain when Coombe began to change from a landscape of regular avenues and formal gardens in the 18th century landscape whose imprint remains today. Change was evidently taking place in the 1740s as the Craven estate accounts for 1743 included payment for digging a ha ha and making a terrace but do not seem to include for construction of a wall at the same time. The measurement for the excavation, 1290 yards, appears to correspond with that of the ha ha around the kitchen garden constructed northeast of the house in the 18th century, although this ha ha has a wall.

The new kitchen garden may have been created as preparatory works prior to the construction of new service buildings in the 1760s. However, the records could also be consistent with the construction of a ditch, bank and terrace north of the Wrautum.

In 1755 an Act was passed for repairing and widening the road from Market Harborough to Coventry. As a result of the Act, and influenced by Lord Craven, a section of the road by Coombe was diverted on a new alignment south so that it no longer passed close to the house. The new road seems to have been a catalyst for further change in the estate as the land to the south ceased to be part of the park. The lodge from which avenues radiated across the park was converted and extended to become a farm and two hundred perches of fencing were purchased to create new fields. By 1769 the Coombe Abbey estate totaled about 7000 acres, most of it tenanted to agricultural use.

In 1770 Capability Brown was engaged to undertake work at Coombe. An undated letter from Lord Craven, perhaps of late August 1770, urges Brown to go to Coombe saying "I desire you to exert yr. Utmost abilities to improve the place and shall leave everything else to you. I hope you will not leave Combe till you have made a plan and estimate and that you will get the man you mentioned to me and begin directly." Work had started by 1771, the year that Brown formed a partnership with his son in law Henry Holland, and by May 1774 Brown records payment of £7,150.

Lord Craven sounds anxious to start improvements perhaps conscious that the house, low lying in an unremarkable landscape containing formal elements from the previous century, was not the best starting point for the creation of a fashionable 18th century park. Possibly, Lord Craven had set about improvements and Brown was called in to sort them out. None of Brown's original drawings seem to have survived, but a plan of 1778 provides a record of the park shortly after the completion of Brown's commission. Though many elements shown on the plan indicate the hand of Brown, there is no record of the site prior to his visit making it possible that some of the work shown was carried out at an earlier date.

Notwithstanding any uncertainties it is clear that the work instigated by Brown had a more durable impact on the estate than any scheme before or since. Brown sought to make the most of limited variations in level through the disposition of planting and the siting of buildings. He enhanced the setting of the house and provided the park with a generous sense of scale by creating a huge lake. This involved construction of a dam 750m long and up to 3m high flooding the shallow valley of the Smite and creating an apparently endless sweep of water whose extremities were hidden from major vantage points. Weirs and sluices controlled the flow of water that was either diverted to an upper pool, Top Pool, or flowed through a newly cut channel into the great lake. Woodland belts followed the park boundaries and two new entrances provided approaches to the house from the southwest and south east. Some old trees and parts of earlier avenues were retained, or the trees transplanted and regrouped. Circular clumps flanked the new western approach across the park but any hedgerows and whatever remained of the formal gardens were removed allowing parkland to sweep up to the front of the house. The kitchen garden was contained within an oval ha ha to the northwest of the house.

Brown and Holland designed several buildings around the park as part of their commission. These comprised West Lodge designed as a classical arch, set at an angle to the road facing the Coventry approach but not visible from the house or the wider park. Also, East Lodge, an octagonal gothic gatehouse with prospects in a number of directions but also out of sight of the house. There were kennels like a castle folly beside the former southern approach to the house and a boathouse in the local vernacular style. Accounts and other records suggest that Brown was responsible for alterations to the drawing room at the house, stable yard and a pavilion now called Pump Cottage and Dove Cottage. Brown was also responsible for laying out a menagerie prominently situated in the crook of the lake at the west end of the park. The design inspiration of the menagerie pavilion, a two story domed octagon reminiscent of an observatory, is thought to have been the Versailles Menagerie of the 1660s, probable known to Henry Holland through his architectural studies in France.

The pavilion was placed in the centre of a high wall enclosing a portion of land sloping down to the lake. The area incorporated the site of a former quarry and part of the medieval warren. The menagerie was intended to accommodate a collection of exotic animals that could be observed in safety from the pavilion. It is uncertain whether the menagerie was ever stocked with animals as intended.

All the buildings were in different styles adding local interest, but the menagerie pavilion was intended as an eye catcher and focal point in the parkland crowning elevated ground above the lake. Its octagonal form enabled a prospect in several directions, points from which there were complementary views back to the building: across the lake from the west, from the

ridge in the deer park to the east and from the elevation of the open Wrautum to the northeast. The pavilion provided contrast to the house in its valley setting, a point of interest, a destination in the park for rides and banquets and a fashionable adjunct to the Craven's domain. Circular rides around the park or a boat across the lake provided the Cravens with alternative approaches to the menagerie.

Apart from laying out tree groups in the deer park, Brown was responsible for considerable areas of woodland planting to the dam, north of the lake and around the Wrautum where the trees were set back below the brow of the hill. On the plan of 1778 a loose group of trees is shown on the slopes from the Wrautum to the lake. North of the Wrautum there is some evidence to suggest that Brown's planting added to an area of existing woodland. To the northwest of the Wrautum there is evidence of

Brown's planting in the line of yews towards the boundary and in the bastion shape of plantings shown on the plan of 1778 and the first edition Ordnance Survey. The layout, earthworks and planting of the bastions suggest that they may have been added to an earlier earthwork boundary, perhaps that accounted for in 1743. Parallel to the north boundary is a flat area or terrace, much of it set below the field to the north, the location of the circular drive.

The first edition Ordnance Survey records that established woodlands beyond the 18th century park were divided by straight rides, one through the Grove appearing to be a continuation of the 17th century avenue south from the house. John Phipps provides evidence to support the view that the division of the woods is typical of 18th century fox hunting woods, allowing huntsmen to move rapidly between fields and woodland with good visibility along the rides. The elevated nature of many of the established Coombe woodlands would have been advantageous to hunting parties and added to the pleasure to be gained from hunting and driving along the ridings in such a landscape.

A series of watercolors executed by Maria Johnson in 1796 record the establishing landscape twenty years after the completion of Brown's commission. A view of the West Lodge and another of the menagerie from across the lake illustrate the inclusion of groups of coniferous trees in the planting. Her painting of the dog kennel shows evidence of apparently immature trees in rows. One of the houses from the southwest confirms the parkland flowing up to the house depicted by Brandard in 1780, although Brandard's view includes hurdles or fencing around the building, probably to prevent close access by sheep. Maria Johnson's view of the lake shows post and rail fencing in the deer park, a measure to control sheep rather than deer, and a group of fastigate trees, possibly poplars, on the north bank. The woodland in the background is limited in height, unsurprising given its immaturity, and above it the spires of two Coventry churches.

The 19th Century

Reductions in the Brownian park took place early in the 19th century with 28 acres in the east being converted to agricultural fields and another 27 acres to pasture by 1811. With the development of a track across the park to the village of Ansty the eastern third of the park was effectively severed and was no longer designated 'deer park' but termed 'cow pasture'.

Some alternations were undertaken to the house and in the park a duck decoy was created between Top Pool and the Smite Brook. William Skelton, son of George Skelton the head of a family of famous decoy--men who came from Friskney in Lincolnshire, created the decoy in 1843 and stayed on as decoy--man for Lord Craven until his death in 1867, aged 78.

The decoy was reckoned to have been first class with four pipes and "surrounded by several acres of osiers and reeds with a mixture of spruce and other trees". It consisted of a star shaped pond with four points from which angled channels extended, narrowing and terminating at some distance from the main body of water. The channels or ditches were covered with netted iron hoops of descending size with panels of reed fencing to the side. The idea was that wild ducks arriving at the pool would be induced to enter the pipe netting and swim up the ditch such a distance that their retreat could be cut off back to the pond. Success was achieved through a combination of decoy--man's skill, that of his dog and the attraction of food. The ducks curiosity would lead them to follow the decoyman's dog apparently retreating beside the pipes, hopping about, appearing and disappearing between the reed screens. The pipes set in scrub and then open grassland towards the end of the channel would be light and non-threatening. Once the ducks had entered the pipe the decoy--man could encourage them

to continue their course by cutting off their retreat to the open water of the pond. The ducks frightened up the pipe would find themselves trapped and be caught at the narrow end of the pipe. The ducks provided food for the estate table, particularly valuable in winter, and gifts for guests. The largest take in one year was 1500 birds. Emily Craven records the excitement at the first ducks being caught in a letter to her sister.

The first edition Ordnance Survey of 1887 records the presence of a large pheasantry sited on the northern edge of the Wrautum.

It is uncertain when this was established but the scale of the pheasantry suggests that pheasant rearing to supply the shoot was significant on the estate.

The next major phase of work at Coombe occurred in the 1860s, funded by agricultural profits from the Craven estates in Berkshire and Warwickshire. Changes included work at the menagerie and to the house and garden. Although the menagerie may have been used as a house by this time, the estate accounts for 1864 record replacing the water engine, repairing pumps and sinking a well. Also work involving bricks, lime and haulage took place that may relate to the construction of the adjacent farm buildings.

In 1861 the architect William Eden Nesfield was commissioned to undertake a survey and subsequently carried out major alterations to the house, extensions to the stable block and built the coach house. His work to the house expressed a blend of architectural styles with French 'chateau' influence, English Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance detailing all evident. The alterations that commenced with the east wing were to have encompassed the whole building but were never completed. At the same time Nesfield's father, William Nesfield was engaged to work on the gardens and between them they produced an ingenious design that linked the house with the lake and created the framework for a new garden area. This involved the excavation of a moat along the south side of the house with a Watergate beneath the east wing and access to the cloister courtyard via a medieval style bridge. A culvert from the Smite brook above Top Pool supplied water by gravity to a cascade at the east end of the moat. At the west end the moat appeared to return around the corner of the building but led to a straight canal linking the moat with the lake. Excavations from the moat and canal were used to build a new terrace in the west garden with steps to the moat and an axial path down to the canal.

The planting design appears to have been the responsibility of William Miller, a gardener appointed by Lord Craven from the Royal Horticultural Society, who developed the framework provided by Nesfield. He produced two alternative plans for elaborate garden layouts in high Victorian style, one within the area described by the ha ha and the other covering a large area extending as far as the Ansty Road, to Top Pool and to the northern extension of the lake. Neither scheme was followed exactly as the gardens developed and changed under Miller between 1864 and 1907. The layouts combined formal and informal elements, straight and sinuous gravel paths, circular beds with regular patterned layouts, amoebic borders, avenues, lawn specimens and scrollwork. Miller's colour washed plans suggest a richly varied composition with lots of colour and requiring high maintenance.

At least part of the garden had been laid out by 1869 with shrubberies on banks, specimen conifers and a fine croquet ground and ribbon border 700 feet long south of the kitchen garden, all sheltered by mature trees on the boundary. The well-ordered kitchen garden had huge vineries, peach and melon houses much admired for their good management and productivity. Miller planted a grove of Wellingtonia along with other exotics and rhododendrons and extended this planting in the park where Deodar cedars to the north ride are attributed to his hand. By 1874 the gardens were open daily to the public.

It seems that the elaborate nature of the flower gardens had passed their peak by 1889 and the area of intensively maintained garden had been reduced. The decline may have been caused in part by the death of the 3rd Earl in 1883 aged 43, leaving his son a minor to succeed. With the marriage of the 4th Earl to Cornelia, and American heiress, in 1893 there seems to have been fresh interest and investment in the garden. Between 1897 and 1907 Miller designed and planted a new parterre flower garden to the west front, the layout a stylised tree growing from a vase. A few years previous, the northern extension of the lake had become silted up. Miller cast the silt up into ridges that could be planted and effectively reclaimed

this section of the lake.

Photographs by Country Life record the elegance and elaboration of the gardens in the early 20th century before the First World War. Cornelia Craven records the building of new terrace walls with abbey stone from the lake and the success of 'the Italian Garden'. The gardens were embellished with stone ornaments – vases, urns, sundials and statuary. At the end of Acacia Avenue, a temple was built from pink marble pillars taken from an old monastery in Verona and a renaissance marble fountain from Rome was placed opposite. A line of pink chestnut trees was planted to the south of the canal and swags of planting decorated the canal banks. The Main Entrance Avenue was replanted with lime and chestnut.

The 20th Century

The estate totaled 6,952 acres when it was sold in 1923 following the death of the 4th Earl Craven. The park comprised five of the total 166 sale lots. The house was sold with 180 acres of ornamental gardens, parkland and woodland. The deer park together with Coombe Pool, the menagerie and west lodge formed another lot and the 'seed park' of 117 acres, plantation and reservoir totaling 32 acres and the East Lodge comprised the remaining 3 plots. The sale divided the parkland, split most of the ornamental gardens from the kitchen garden and left the estate buildings by Capability Brown in a number of different ownerships.

John Gray, a Coventry builder, acquired the house and associated land. He proceeded to sell many of the garden ornaments together with architectural items from the house such as the main staircase sold to a North America customer, after which he demolished much of what remained. The garden layout was retained, and continued to be maintained by the then head gardener Mr Hitchcock. John Gray owned a herd of Red Poll cattle which won many prizes under the stewardship of the herdsman Alfred Becket. The property was leased to GEC in the 1950s to house foreign exchange students. During GEC's tenancy a swimming pool and tennis court were laid out within the lawns in the middle of the garden. These were removed after Coventry City Council purchased the site. When the area became a regional park in 1966 access to the gardens and land north of the lake was via the house and parking along the main drive. The present access, car park and country park visitor centre date from the restoration and development of the house as a hotel in 1994.

A new detached house called Highfield was built in the deer park in the 1930s by Mr Lindley who lived in and owned menagerie renamed it to the Woodlands, it remained in use as a house with a well-tended garden until the mid-1980s. The deer park remained in agricultural use, part of it being ploughed up for potatoes and corn which resulted in the loss of some parkland trees. In the 1990s plans for a golf course on the deer park received planning permission, but the development did not proceed, and the permission has now elapsed.

Detailed Site Chronology

The following chronology shows in detail the key developmental stages, influences and issues arising on the site, impacting on Coombe since 1150AD.

Chronology

Craven Era

Date	Event
1150	Cistercian abbey founded by Richard de Camville, colonised from Waverley, the first h Cistercian order founded in England in 1128
12thC	Royal charter granted to monks at Coombe giving them privileges of free Warren
1539	Abbey dissolved. Granted to John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland
1557	Reversion to Crown following Duke's death on the scaffold in 1553. Acquired by Sir Ro Surveyor of Court of Wards and Liveries
1550's	Start of conversion to residence
1581	Sir John Harrington purchases Coombe
1580's	Major rebuilding programme
1603--8	Princess Elizabeth (later Queen of Bohemia) resides at Combe. 1603 Portrait by Rober
1622	Craven family purchase Coombe for £36,000 1634 Park enclosed – 650 acres 1652 Parliamentary Survey of Abbey 1656 Daniel King's view of Coombe – earliest illustration 1667 Isacc Gibson rebuilds SW wing
c.1680	William Winde surveys Coombe
1682--84	Winde's alterations: west range and

	Great Hall rebuilt
1680's	George London extends formal gardens
1683	Dec. 4th William Craven letter records deer at Coombe, planting a nursery of native trees, a 4-acre orchard and walnut trees and laying of hedges
c.1690	Knyff's perspective view of house and gardens
1691	Wind's designs for Griffin gate
1729	South view with part of formal garden in foreground. Drawn and engraved by S. and N. Buck
1740's	Estate records in Bodleian Library
1746	Map of Binley, incl. Part of Coombe Park
1750's	New Lodge rebuilt as Lodge Farm
1770	Lancelot Brown surveys gardens
1771--73	Binley parish church build, probably by Henry Holland Jnr
1771--77	Brown remodels gardens and park and constructs the lake and ha ha. Gate Lodges, Menagerie, dog kennels, boar house and stable block built
1778	Mathias Baker surveys Combe

	Abbey estates and Park
1796	Watercolors by Maria Johnson 7 no. HAGAM
c.1800	Indoor tennis court built
1810	SSE view by Davis, Eng. J. Storer, Pub. 1810
1811	A Survey of Com Park

Date	Event
1823	Estate survey
1820	Major alterations to Abbey
1842	Edward Blore surveys Combe
1843	Emily Craven refers to duck decoy and taking part in catching 1st ducks
1849	Estate survey plan by Bland Hood and Galland
1861	W. Eden Nesfield surveys Combe
1862--5	Nesfield's alterations to the house and Father Andrew Nesfield creates canal terraces.
1864	William Miller designs garden layout
1864	"Replace water engine, repairing pumps and sinking well at Menagerie" and at menagerie involving bricks, lime and haulage
1865	SE view, watercolour?, J. Macpherson HAGAM
1869	Gardeners Chronicle article refers to fine croquet ground and extols virtues of garden, particularly the vinerie
1871	Bricklayers work to Watergate
1872	Works to moat including waterwheel pump
1872	Gardeners Chronicle article refers to park marred by wooden fencing, a fine water, decries the moat and acclaims the ride lined by Deodar cedars.

1873	Gardeners Chronicle article's author approaches from Brandon station to sou remarks on grass sweeping down to water, waterfall sides planted with Pam and furze and mounds from soil out of lake planted with rhododendrons and other evergreens. Also mentioned are Wellingtonias clothed to the gr numbers of Cupressus Lawsoniana raised from seed, an Araucaria Avenue description of flower beds east of the Wellingtonia bank
1874	White's Directory records abbey and gardens thrown open to public daily
1887	1st edition OS
1897	Gardeners Chronicle article describes 2 mile approach from south, half the plantation and half through park feeding hundreds of deer. The lake, hero aquatic/marginal plants are all admired. Records Miller's work to plant silt lake in previous year and creation of parterre garden 2--3 years previously
1904	Country Life Photographs
c.1905	Entrance avenue replanted with common lime and horse chestnut
1907 – 8	New drains, terrace beside moat and garden temple built
1908	Cornelia Craven records building walls in the garden using old abbey stone
1909	Country Life photographs

Modern era 1923 --- 2023

1923 Craven family auction historic contents and Abbey sold to John Gray for £38,000

1925 Architectural stripping and sales, demolition of east and part of north ranges 1925--

30 Interior roof of west range remodeled, attics removed, flat roves created 1930's

Updated survey plan.

Date	Event
1952	GEC lease Coombe as training centre
1950's	Ruins of east range reroofed: hard tennis court laid out
1958	Coventry Corporation purchase Combe Pool and woodland
1959	Swimming pool constructed at Abbey
1960	Abbey listed Grade I, other buildings Grade II
1960's	Wrought iron gates removed to Coventry; pillars moved to present entrance
1964	Coventry City Council purchases Combe Abbey and 150 acres for £35,000
1966	Coombe Abbey Regional Park opened to public.
1965--71	Abbey empty and disused
1970	Designated a Country Park
1970	Coombe Pool in the news as the 1st site in the country where Zander introduced.
1971	Abbey leased to Historic Productions, until 1992
1973	William Lindley, owner of the Menagerie/Woodlands dies. "He loved gardening and his garden was reputed to be one of the best in Warwickshire".
1976	Various repairs undertaken up to 1988.
1981	Second line of limes added to main avenue to commemorate Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's 80th birthday.
1982/3	Coventry Wildlife Survey records over 650 species at Coombe

Date	Event
1989	Coombe Abbey offered publicly for expressions of interest in developing the property.
1992	No Ordinary Hotel opens to the public.
1992	Visitor Centre and new flow patterns open to the public.
1995	Country Park regional award winner – BT Countryside for all

- 2001 2nd Oct. initial survey of trees on dam identifies 100 trees of significance requiring attention in the next 5 years.
- 2001 Coombe team win SSSI Award for outstanding achievement for nature conservation.
- 2003 Site is assessed and is awarded certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme ---English Tourist Council
- 2004 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme --- English Tourist Council
- 2005 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme --- English Tourist Council and Green Flag Award
- 2007 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme --- English Tourist Council and Green Flag Award
- 2007--2013 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme --- English Tourist Council and Green Flag Award
- 2014 Higher Level Stewardship Agreement entered.
- 2014--2017 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme --- English Tourist Council and Green Flag Award. Continue working under Higher Level Stewardship.
- 2017 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme --- English Tourist Council and Green Flag Award. Continue working under Higher Level Stewardship. Enter Dunsmore Living Landscape Project with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
- 2018 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme --- English Tourist Council and Green Flag Award. Continue working under Higher Level Stewardship. Continue working in Dunsmore Living Landscape Project with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. Develop new commercial strategy for site.

- 2019 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme ---
English Tourist Council and Green Flag Award. Continue working under Higher Level Stewardship. Continue working in Dunsmore Living Landscape Project with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

Go Ape high ropes course opens.

Continue to develop commercial strategy for site.
- 2020 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme ---
English Tourist Council and Green Flag Award. Continue working under Higher Level Stewardship. Continue working in Dunsmore Living Landscape Project with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

Continue to develop commercial strategy for site.
- 2021 - 2022 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme ---
English Tourist Council, Green Flag Award, and Green Flag Heritage Award. Continue working under Higher Level Stewardship.

Continue working in Dunsmore Living Landscape Project with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

Continue to develop commercial strategy for site
- 2022 New play area at the Visitor Centre opens.
- 2023 New pay and play facility “Hermit’s Hollow” opens.
- 2023 Retain certificate of Visitor Assured Quality Assessment Scheme ---
English Tourist Council, Green Flag Award, and Green Flag Heritage Award. Continue working under Higher Level Stewardship.

Continue working in Dunsmore Living Landscape Project with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.
- 2023 Higher Level Stewardship Agreement extended to 2028.

Knyff and Kip engraving c. 1690 of Coombe Abbey showing the walled Renaissance Garden and later Jacobean Gardens surrounding the House.
Source - Warwick Rodwells survey 1991

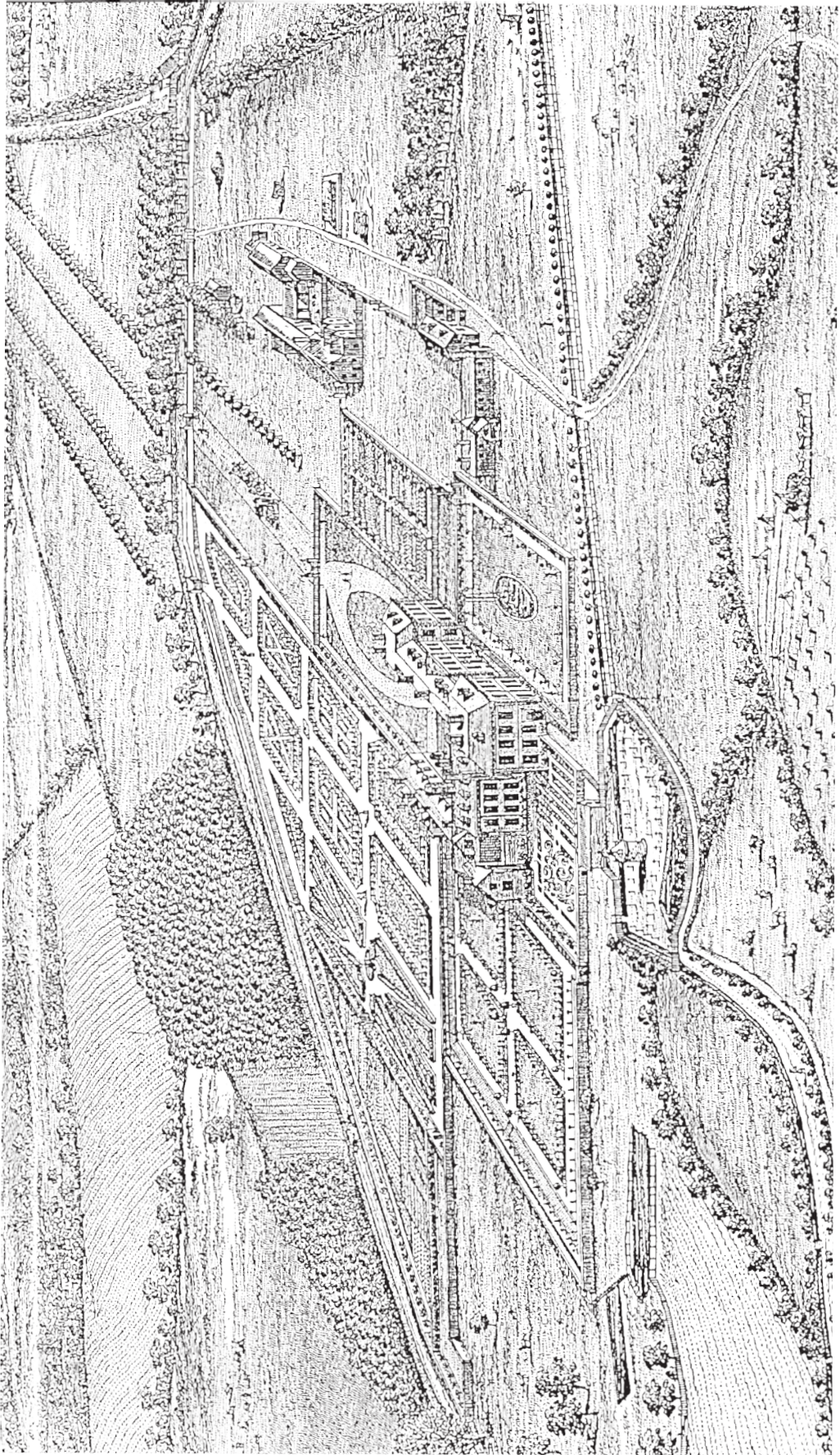
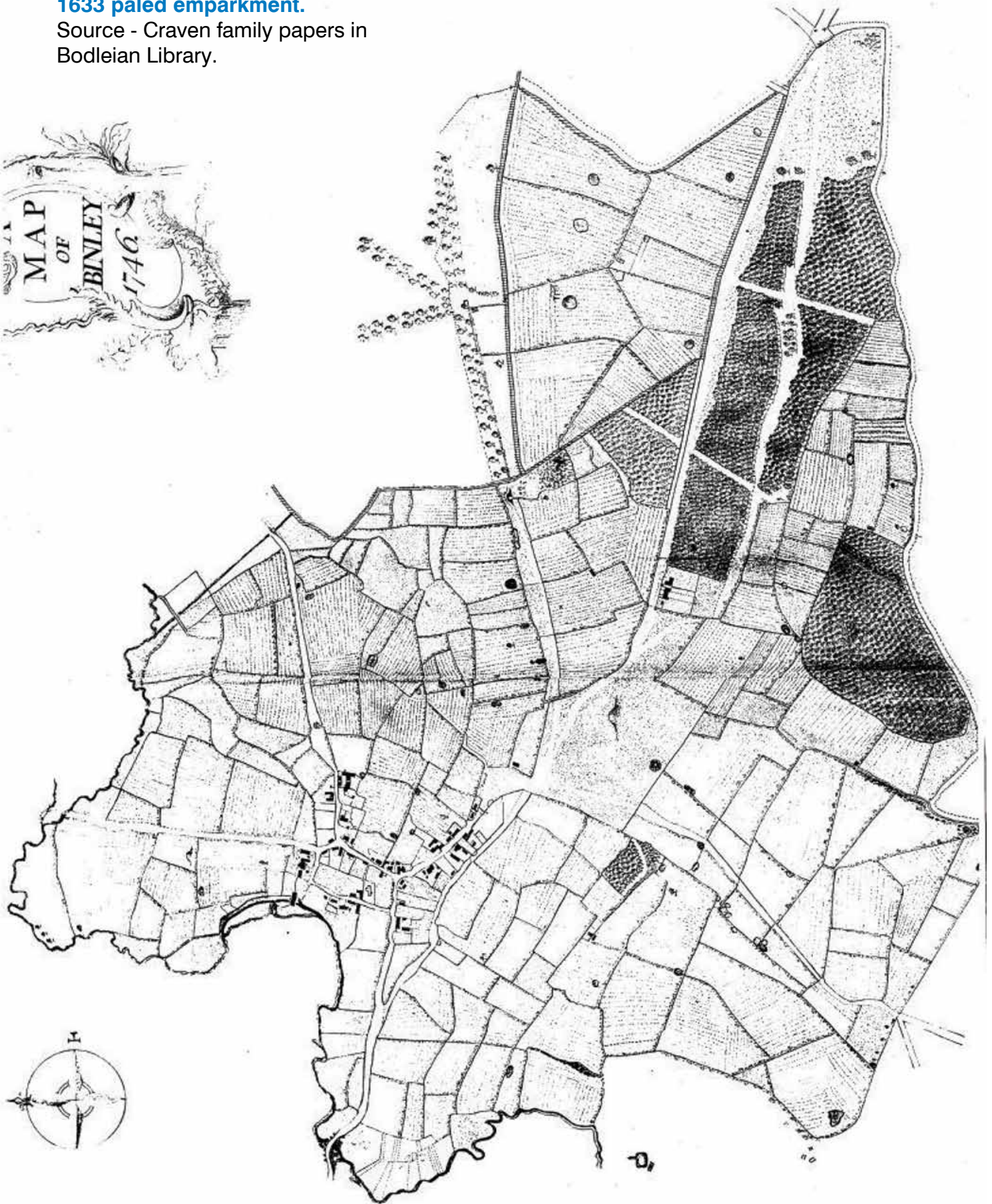
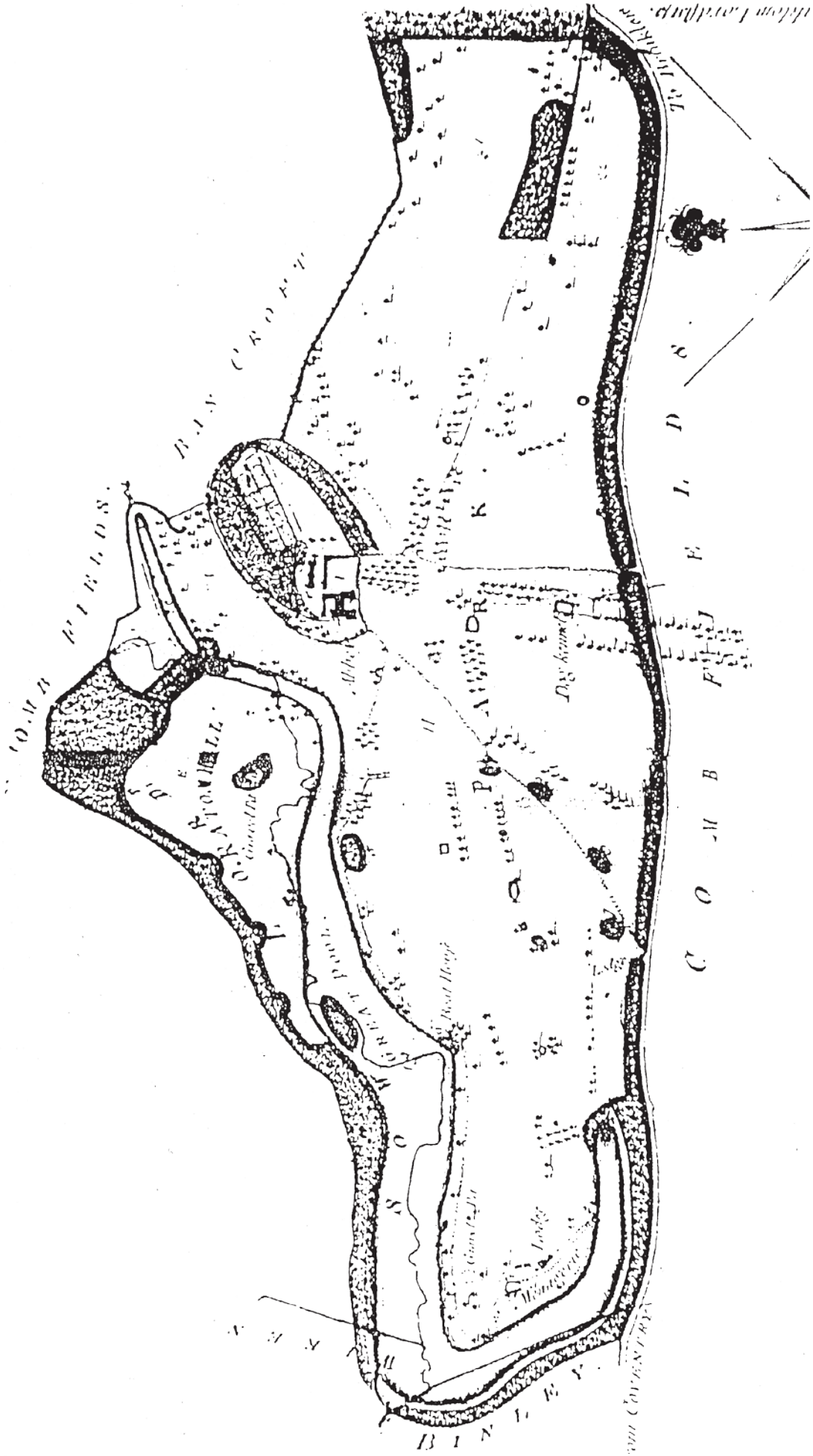


Figure 8

1746 Map of Binley Lordship showing southernmost extent of the 1633 paled emparkment.

Source - Craven family papers in Bodleian Library.





1778 Coombe Park plan by Mathius Baker.
 Source - Craven Estate Survey book in WRCO.

Figure 10



Coombe Abbey East Lodge c.1797

Source - Maria Johnson Watercolour Collection, The Herbert, Coventry.

Figure 14



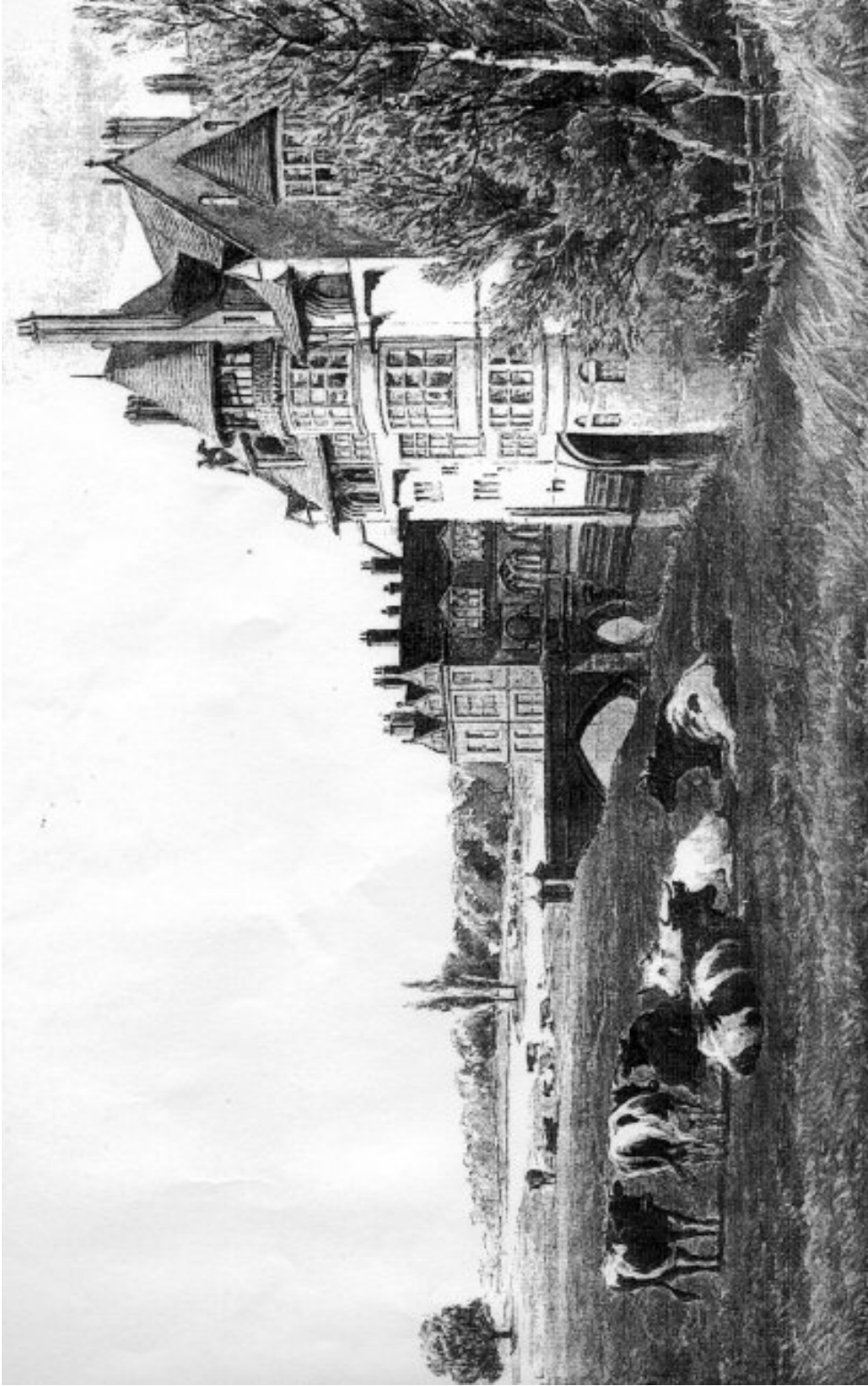
Coombe Abbey West Lodge. The principal entrance to Brown's Parkland.
Source - Maria Johnson Watercolour Collection, The Herbert, Coventry.

Figure 14a



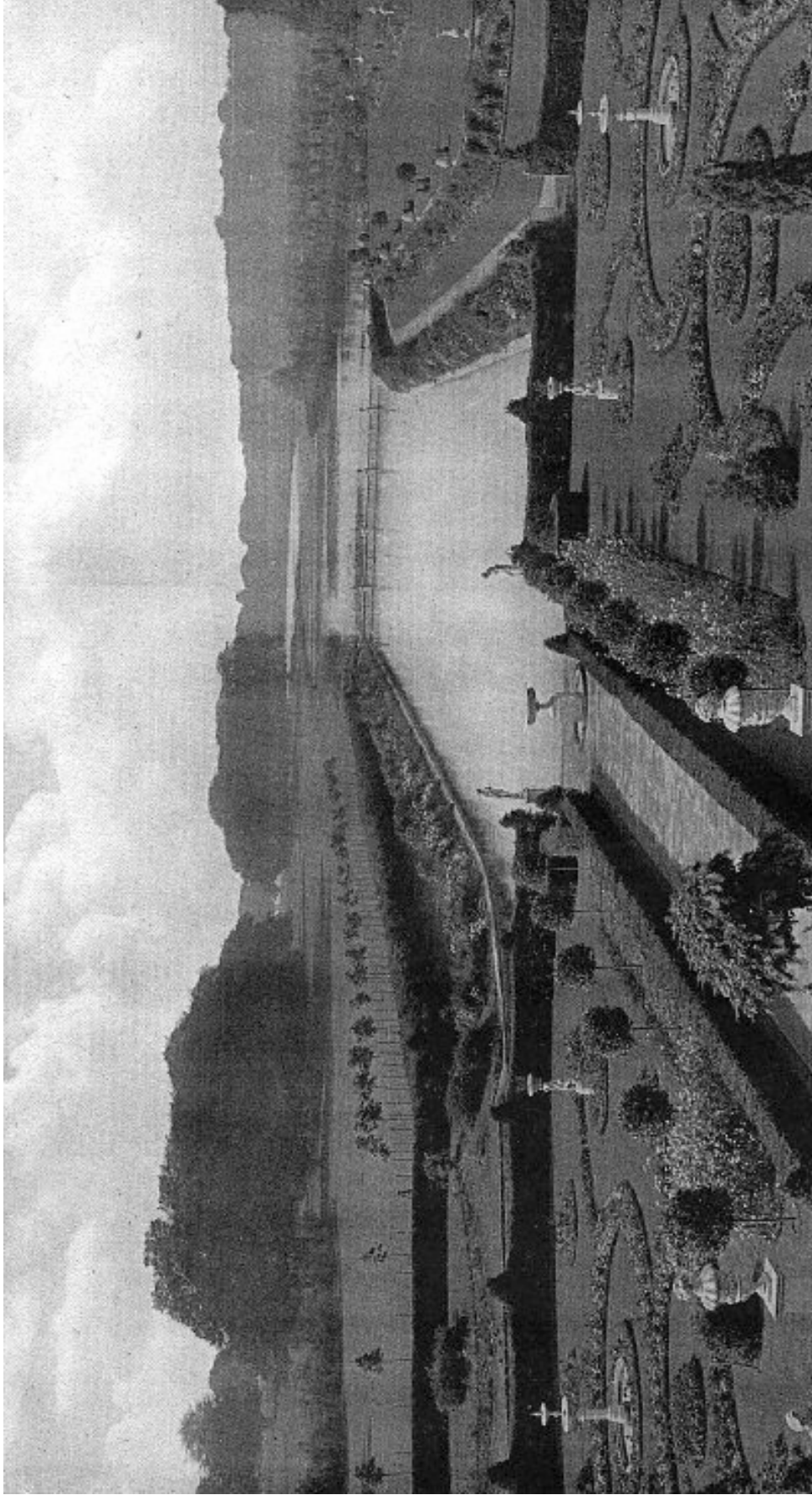
Coombe Abbey Menagerie Lodge
Source - Maria Johnson Watercolour Collection, The Herbert, Coventry.

Figure 15



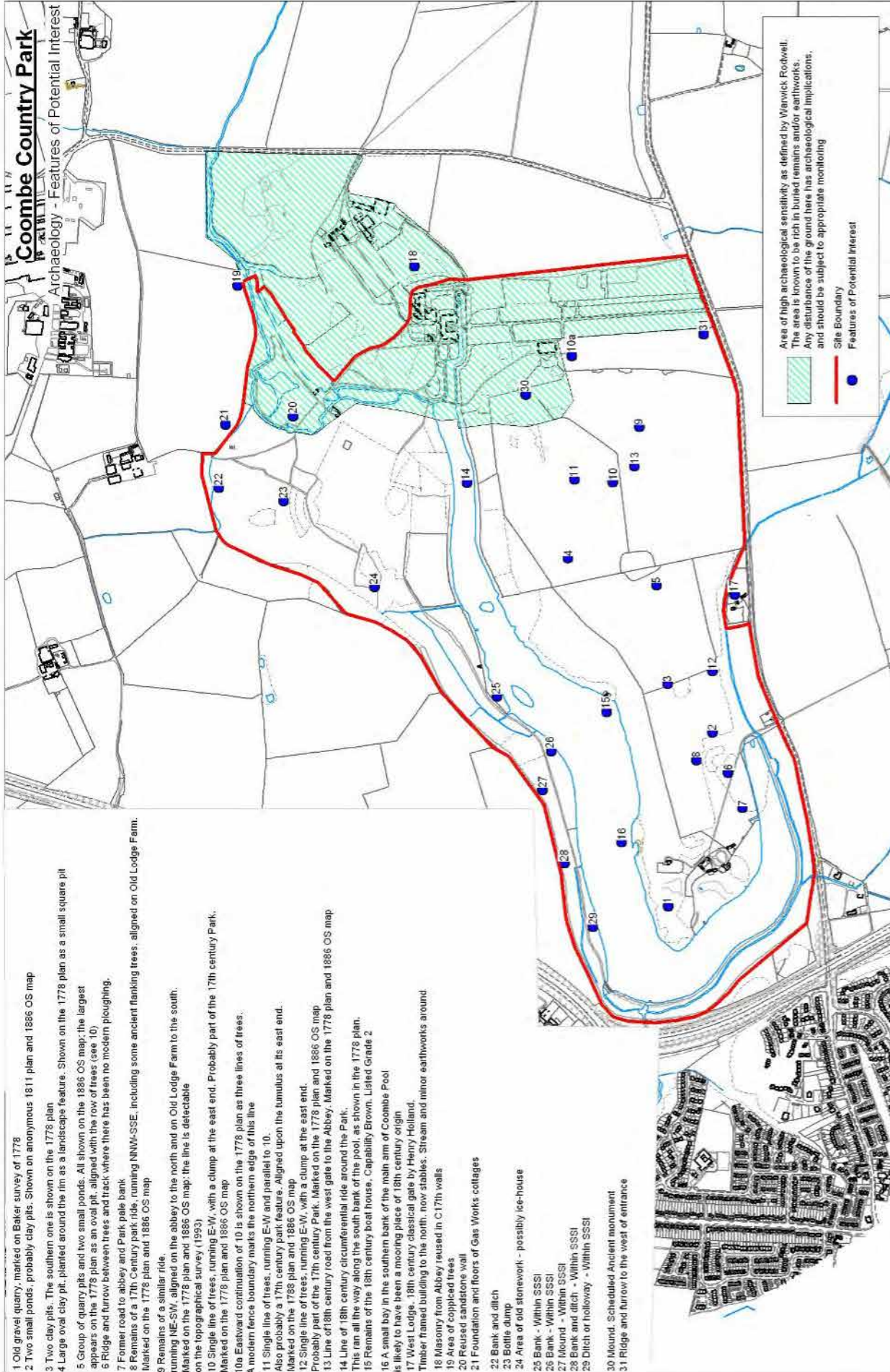
Macpherson painting of Eden Nesfields east wing and surrounding landscape c.1865.
Source - The Herbert, Coventry

Figure 17



West Garden and Canal c. 1909
Source - Country Life Magazine

Figure 18



Date : Dec 2011 Scale : NTS
 Status: Final Figure 20

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Coombe Abbey Park, Formal Garden Restoration and Maintenance Plan

Update 2023

1. Introduction

It has previously been identified that there is a need to lay out specific plans and standards of maintenance for the Formal Gardens laid to the west of Coombe Abbey which are under management by Coventry City Council. This updated issue of the plan builds upon the original plan drawn up in 2012, with the aim of becoming a working document to guide decision making at all levels. This plan reviews existing features and makes recommendations for current and best practice.

2. Historic development

Although gardens would have been an integral part of the Cistercian life within the Abbey the real horticultural journey starts in the late C16 when the Abbey was turned into a private residence. Formal gardens were laid out on four sides of the house, during the C17, these were formal gardens with parterres, pools and fountains, and appear to have been linked to rebuilding on the main house undertaken by Sir Isaac Gibson and William Winde. In keeping with this trend following the completion of the rebuilding of the east wing circa 1871-5 to the designs of William Eden Nesfield, further water features were added to this area, following his medieval styling of the building he created a bridge, canal and moat, with a water cascade at the eastern end of the moat. Using spoil from the moat excavations the West Gardens were recognised today where formed. The West Gardens were reached by central flight of steps through the parterre lawns, which linked the canal and moat. The soft landscaping was designed and implemented by the then Head Gardener, William Miller from his 1864 plan. This was done in an Italianate design which was the style of the day. The culmination of which was the vase style parterre on the west terrace. Miller added other themed planting which included the American garden, including Rhododendrons and fine American trees, such as the Redwood. Around 1900 the south side of the Moat was planted with shrubs backed by a yew hedge and a line of red chestnuts. After the opening of the Visitor Centre in 1992 access to the West Gardens was created via a causeway alongside the balustrade and weir constructed in the late C19. The visiting public have access to the majority of the West Garden.

3. Current condition overview

The hard landscaping structures added by Eden Nesfield remain substantial unaltered although the weir feed system to the moat has fallen into disrepair due to problems with the pump unit in Top Pool, and the drainage route being outside the ownership of the Council. The north shore of the moat is showing considerable dilapidation, as are the garden walls on the terraces of which the upper moat has been fenced off for safety.

The planting design of the Italianate Garden has gradually lost its former delicacy and today it is impossible to interpret the original design, this decline started in John Grays ownership when much of the statuary was sold off, and although the gardens have had annual maintenance over the years, there has been little thought given to historical horticultural integrity. Several layers of municipal style planting particularly around the canal north shore have gradually reduced the connectivity between the house and the broader landscape, this was always intended to be an integral theme.

The American garden has not suffered quite as badly as the basic structure is still intact, but well-intentioned municipal additions detract from the intended design, especially around the redwood bank and pinetum. Little attention has been paid to rotational /secondary planting, linked to the original design with the resulting loss of key feature trees.

The historical integrity of the garden buildings is debatable as there is little evidence to suggest their presence prior to John Gray's ownership.

The wisteria ring has suffered from storm damage and requires restoration.

The listed garden wall has suffered the same unsympathetic style of management with re-pointing being carried out with a cement mortar instead of lime.

Coombe Abbey Park recognises these issues and is now taking steps to ensure management of the formal gardens reflects its historical past whilst also ensuring it fits its current purpose as a countryside recreation attraction.

4. Significance

The 19C west gardens are the only remaining formal garden setting around the house providing drama and direct links to the intended design of 1864.

The formal gardens and associated water provide an impressive foreground to the extensive view of Coombe Pool to the west of the main house.

The bridge, which now forms the entrance to the hotel, provides a sense of place and historical drama which was the design intent of William. E. Nesfield.

If restored and maintained sensitively the West Gardens will provide a significant local attraction to add to the commercial appeal of both the park and the hotel.

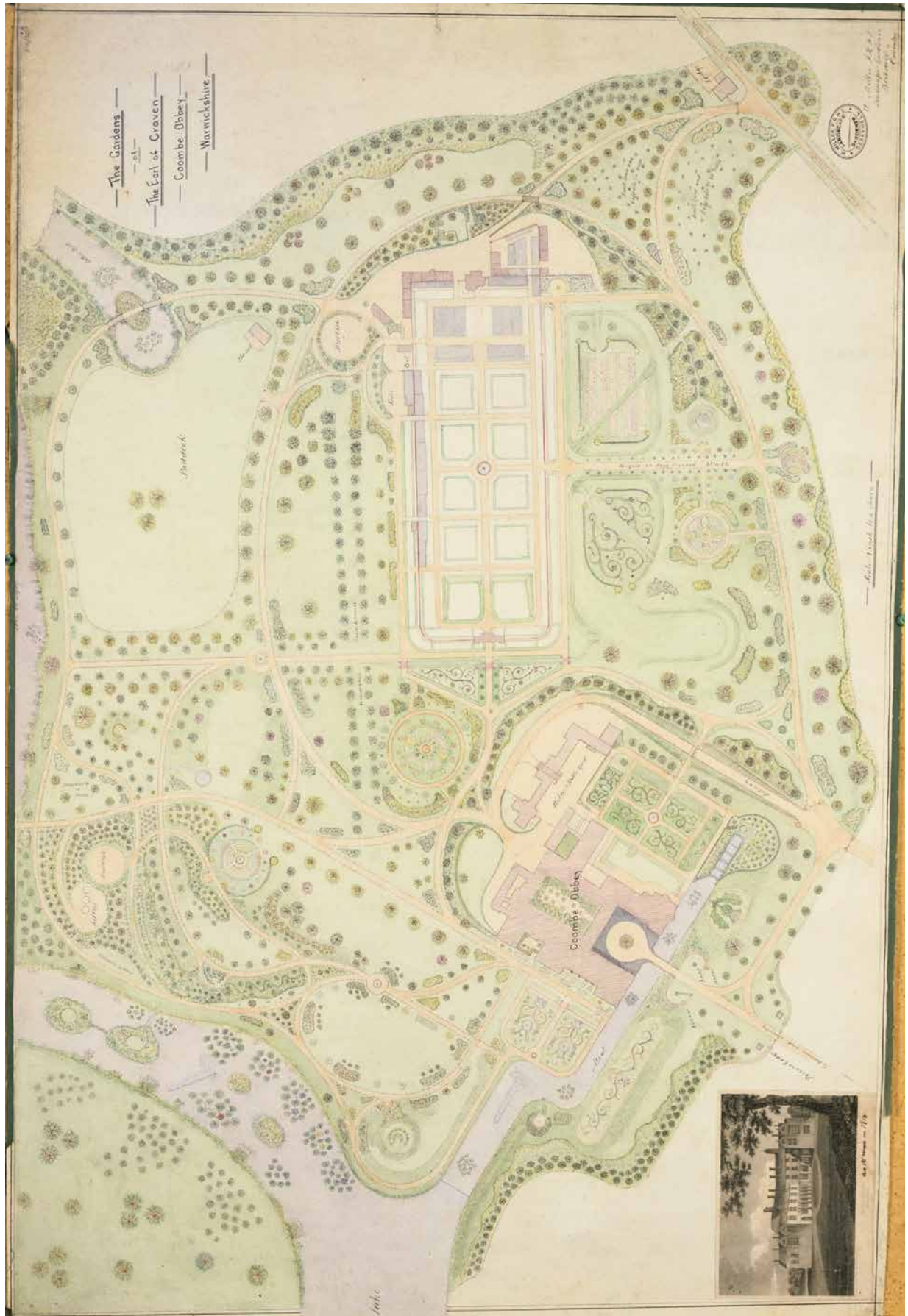


Figure 1 - Miller plan 1864 - Original extent of gardens

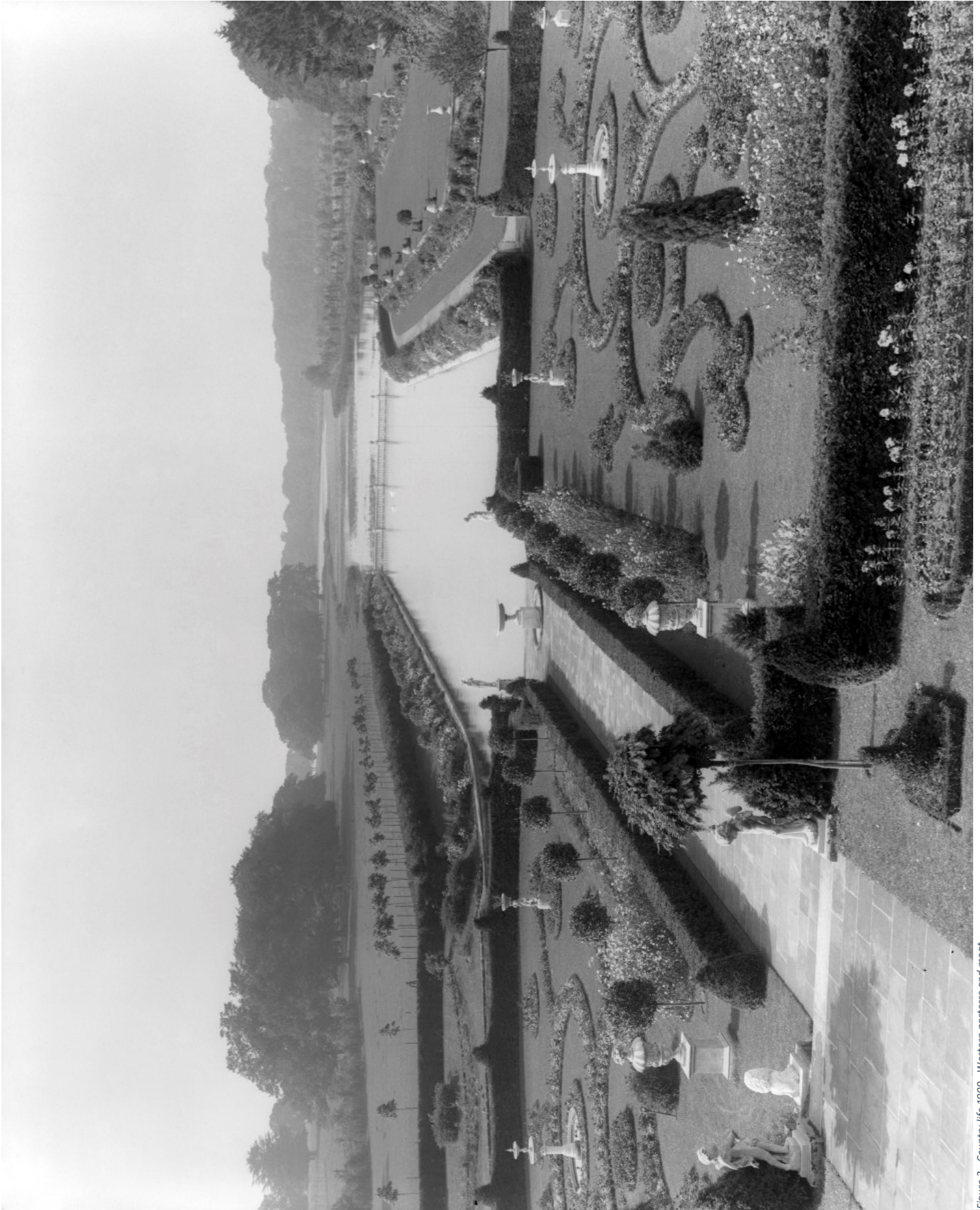


Figure 2 - Country life 1909 - Western parterre and moat

A) The Parterre				
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives	Completed works
Box hedge parterre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The box hedging is recovering well from its earlier reduction, the gravel infill whilst good in practice is historically inaccurate. The definition of the centre lines has become lost. Some gaps are present from damaged and missing plants. Localised flooding of hedge on the south side is impacting growth. The area covered by box hedge is approx. 190m² per design. The perimeter each design is approx. 210m long. Soil test 01/08/21 - PH 5, N - High, P - Low, K - Trace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dimensions would traditionally have been as narrow as 10cm. Gravels should be coloured stone such as yellow spar boarders with red, white and blue infill of crushed glass, tile and brick. Replanting spacing should be at 30 - 40cm The box hedges should be cut times per year in April, June and September. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To further improve the definition of centre lines with phased reduction over the life of the plan. To finalise to outer perimeter size/location of box hedging before turfing up to the design. Propagate replacement box plants onsite. To infill gaps in planting with site propagated plants to avoid transmission of box blight. Top Boxus fertiliser should be added to the box hedges annually to improve the health of the plants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fertilised sept 2021
Perimeter hedges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Castellation works have been completed and the yew hedging has recovered well. Work has already started to castellate the hotels hedges on the west terrace as these where out of keeping with the hedges managed by Coombe Abbey Park. Interpretation has been written for the parterre and the wider gardens, this will be located to the north of parterre and forms part of the Coombe rebranding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The yew hedges currently stand at 1m high with 2 m high castellations and approximately 1 wide. Yew hedges should be cut annually in late summer/early autumn. Yew hedge restoration should be carried out in early autumn and late Feb. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install interpretation with golden amber base. Maintain the hedges surround the parterre with annual cutting in late summer. Continue to restore the hedges of the west terrace with the continued co-operation of the hotel in mid spring including the hedges at the steps to the moat. A box hedge should be planted at the moat steps on the upper level and Yew hedge on the lower level to replace the current self-set species. To improve ease of maintenance the outer edge of the southern yew hedge should be reduced to expose the moat banks and stonework. All other species should be removed to prevent further damage to the moat bank stonework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretation installed summer 2021. Cotoneaster has been removed from moat side exposing yew hedge and hedge width reduced 27/09/22
Lawns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lawns surrounding the parterre possess a great deal of moss and recent badger damage is evident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scarification should be carried out annually in March or September and moss treated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further improve the condition of the parterre lawns as an example of fine turf management. Biannually the lawns should be aerated with a pedestrian hollow tine aerator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hollow tine aeration and scarification carried out 04/22.
Walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The walls of the west terrace are currently home to several rabbit warrens and working with CCC pest control is proving ineffective at present. The wall appears to be stable and in a serviceable condition. The obelisk shaped ornaments are being subject to ground heave and are starting to lean out from the wall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The walls should continue to remain safe and secure. The walls should be free from vegetation growth between stones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the condition of the walls annually and record within this document. Vegetation including ivy on and between stones should be removed annually. Roses along southern wall should be removed and seeded with grass. 	
Pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built in 1908 called the stone walk (Cornelia Craven photo albums) The sandstone flag stones which make up the pathway are in a very poor condition and require restoration imminently. This work has been costed up by Croft Conservation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pathway should be maintained in a safe condition. Gaps between stones should be free from vegetation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the condition of the path and record findings in this document. Annual weeding of pathway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal green railings at the end of the pathway have been removed and deep water signs displayed. 04/22
Long seasonal beds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The long beds have been victim to a great deal of rabbit damage particularly over the winter months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A replacement yew hedge should be planted in the position of the once removed hedge running parallel to the pathway. Pompom trees should be planted in the positions shown in figure 2. Metal lawn edging should be installed along the new yew hedges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yew hedge has been planted 12/04/22 Pompom Ligustrum jonandrum planted 04/22
Ornaments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original garden ornaments have been lost and the remaining Griffins are in a poor condition and in need of restoration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ornaments should remain in a safe condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate cost of Griffin restoration. Partially remove soil from tazza base to reveal if the basin might be watertight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tazza basin appears to have been broken up and removed 06/22.

Gates and barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The later tazza now in place looks to be situated on the original pedestal and should remain. The water feature at its base is currently planted with seasonal bedding. The gate to the west terrace managed by the hotel is in serviceable condition however quite unsympathetic to the period of the gardens. The gate to the north of the west terrace has recently been revealed during hedge restoration and is in a good condition whilst remaining locked. A chestnut pail fence has been erected at the top of the northern steps to the west terrace preventing access to the west terrace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The original ornaments were carved from Portland stone, a list of ornaments sold at auction found in fig. 13 Gates should remain in a safe condition. Any replacement gates should be sympathetic to the period of the gardens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate cost effective alternatives for the lost ornaments such as lions for the hotel steps. Monitor the condition of the ornaments annually and record findings in this document. Monitor the condition of the gates annually and record findings in this document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 pedestals have been installed in the position of these shown in fig. 2.
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B) Moat				
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives	Completed works
South bank trees, hedges and planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeping willows are reaching the end of their life span and as a result the nearest tree to the hotel failed in 2020. Amenity conifers are gradually being thinned to reinstate the views of the wider estate from the hotel in retaining the view over the Brownian landscape. Hotel management have been very agreeable for us to carry out tree and restoration works at our cost. Yew hedges have been successfully reduced and are in a good health. There are inconsistencies in spacing between plants. Inconsistencies in the maintenance of the hotels portion of hedge show a lack continuity in style as such in 2019 we started to undertake hedge restoration and reduction on behalf of the hotel. Narcisi are well established amongst willows. A fence of half rounds and scalloped posts is beginning to rot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The intended plan for this area included swags/ribbons of roses and shrub/herbaceous planting free from trees as in <i>figure 8</i>. No trees should be replanted on the south bank. Grasses should be strimmed annually in late summer. Yew hedges should be cut back late summer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to remove conifers on the south bank, gradually over the life span of this plan. Willows should be retained until failure then removed. Consideration should be given to retaining the good specimen cedar once surrounding trees have been removed. Monitor the growth of digitalis and record findings in this document. Continue to communicate clearly with hotel management to maintain good relationships. Continue to reduce the size of the yew hedges managed by the hotel when plants have recovered sufficiently with the aim of removing castellations and improving the view and appearance of the hotel. The continuing the planting of narcissi until the moat bridge should be considered, however this would impact any future planting schemes. Consideration on the replacement of the rotten fence with ornate railings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Castellations and hedge width reductions have been carried out south of the hotel 08/02/22 2 conifers removed from moat side 02/22
South bank stonework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stone copings of the moat bank are in a state of dilapidation principally caused by un-regulated tree growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise further dilapidation of stonework with ongoing removal of self-set trees growing in stonework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove all self-set trees and treat stumps to prevent re-growth. 	
North bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stone copings of the north bank are not original features however they are in keeping somewhat with the style of the south bank. These copings are in a good condition with expansion gaps. The incense cedars shown in <i>figure 12</i> have been lost quite some time ago (circa 1980) and a formal lawn now exists in good condition. The path adjacent to the moat has significant puddles during wet spells. Memorial park benches line the path set on golden amber bases. Species roses are growing well at the base of the lower terrace wall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stonework should be maintained in a safe condition. No trees should be planted due to the significant popularity of this area and the potential damaged caused by tree roots to the moat copings. The formal lawn should be maintained to a high standard with frequent mowing during the growing season. Benches should be maintained to a high standard. Roses should in favourable condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the condition of the copings annually and record findings in this document. Improve drainage of the path with the use of small stone channel. Benches should be surveyed annually for condition and maintenance carried out as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small channel installed to drain foot path 09/22
Water and aquatic planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The moat is used occasionally to grow on specimen fish to stock Coombe Pool. Native yellow lillies grow on the northern bank Fisherman and nymph ornament is in good condition showing no signs of deterioration. Organic sedimentation is present though not deemed an issue at present. Barley straw is placed in water every 6 months to reduce the growth of algae. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The growing on of fish stocks should continue where required. 6 monthly change of barley straw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of lilies should be increased with species available in the 1900's such as N.pumila, N.lutea and N.advena (north American) 	
Balustrade and weir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The balustrade is in a fair condition although some capping stones (reinforced cast cement) are starting to crack and some of the stone pediments are also showing signs of weathering. Quotes for repairs to the balustrade have been sought and should be combined with a larger bid to rebuild the upper terrace walls and parterre pavement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The balustrade and weir should remain in a safe and functioning condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The repairs to the capping stones and pediments should be completed by the end of this plan. 	

<p>Cascade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cascade at the easterly end of the moat is in a state of neglect being largely overgrown by laurel and self-set trees. • Water only flows down the cascade during flood events. • The cascade is home to fine harts tongue ferns quite in keeping with the grotto style of its time. • The cascade is currently managed by the hotel. • Hotel contractors dump leaves and grass cuttings in this area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible and working with hotel, management of this area should be improved. • Historical references suggest that the following were planted in this area: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cortaderia jubata – Pink pampas 2) Gynerium argenteum – white pampas 3) Ulex europaeus – Gorse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce the impact of self-set trees and shrubs on the view of the cascade. • Liaise with the hotel to encourage the repair the pump mechanism powering the cascade. 	
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C) Terrace walls				
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives	Completed works
Lower terrace wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built circa 1907 (Cornelia Craven photo albums) This wall is in a safe and stable condition though capping stones are missing and can be found at the stockade. The wall is suffering from weathering at the rear where red brick is exposed. Adjacent to Dutch bridge an area of wall has fallen away resulting in excessive erosion to the lawn behind. At the top of the flight of steps adjacent to the causeway excessive erosion has been caused by foot fall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wall should be maintained in a safe condition. Any weeds should be removed from the wall annually. The gully to the rear of the wall is sprayed with pesticide annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The condition should be monitored annually, and findings recorded in this document. Re-pointing from the bend until the steps should be planned within the next 10 years. Following the repair of the upper walls the lawn should be levelled and reseeded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor levelling and reseeded of lawn around base of wall. Landing pad completed on the middle lawn at the top of steps 2023
Upper terrace wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This wall is unsafe and requires immediate attention as it is at risk of collapse. A portion of the upper terrace wall has previously been rebuilt following collapse circa 2002. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wall should be fenced off to prevent injury. Weeds should be removed from the wall annually. The gully to the rear of the wall is pesticide sprayed annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The condition should be monitored annually, and findings recorded in this document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> William Parratt and R&R construction commenced work to dismantle and rebuild the upper terrace wall on 23/05/22 circa 150K. Wall has 2 cracks and several loose copping stones 23/11/23. Rose bed added to top of upper terrace wall to discourage climbing and to act as a backdrop to the herbaceous bed below.
Steps – ramp wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The copping stone of this wall are being pushed by ivy growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wall should be maintained in a safe condition. Any weeds should be removed from the wall annually. The top of the wall is sprayed with pesticide annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The condition should be monitored annually, and findings recorded in this document. Consideration to the lifting of copping stone to remove ivy and re-seat the stones. 	
Griffin beds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst not featured on the Miller plan the Griffin beds frame the staircase well and should be retained to limit climbing on the Griffin ornaments. The Griffin beds are subject to trampling from children jumping from surrounding walls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The flower beds should be maintained and enhanced in an historically appropriate style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install metal edging to Griffin beds. The edge of the Griffin beds should be altered to form a continuous circle centred from the top step. 	
Lawns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lawn to the east of the Griffin steps is in a good condition with some undulations and light shading from the large beech on the main lawn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scarification should be carried out annually in March or September and moss treated. Topdressing and seeding should be carried out as required in March/September. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further improve the condition of the lawn as an example of fine turf management. This lawn is a good lawn for novice staff to take ownership of and practice their skills. 	Lawns were aerated 04/22
Ornaments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Griffin ornaments are in a stable condition although one has a broken wing. The Griffins are often subject to being climbed on by children. As per figure 12 the Griffins are not original features but should be retained in position. The Griffins are in fact from the apex of the eastern roof. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ornaments should remain in a safe condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate cost effective alternatives for the lost ornaments. Monitor the condition of the ornaments annually and record findings in this document. 	
Griffin steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The steps are in good condition although are subject to puddling of the path at the bottom step making them impassable in wet weather. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steps should remain in a safe condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The path at the base of the steps should be raised to aid drainage. 	
Steps at Dutch bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The steps located to the west of the walls opposite Dutch bridge are in a poor condition with stones missing and being uneven. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steps should remain in a safe condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The steps should be lifted and reset to ensure an even surface and missing stones replaced with stone from site. 	

D) Lower terrace			
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives
			Completed works
Benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The benches of the lower terrace/moat side are in very good condition being surveyed annually and timber treated as required. Bases to the benches are topped up when the bench is removed for treatment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benches should be maintained to a high standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resin bound bases should be introduced over time when benches are replaced, or new benches sold. Resin bound bases offer improved drainage and significantly reduced maintenance.
Path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tarmac and resin bound ravel path is in fair condition with %50 of bonded gravel now missing. The path is edged up annually. The stand stone path adjacent to the Griffin steps is subject to puddling and a small trench has been made to effectively drain this puddling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The path should remain in a safe and well-maintained condition edged up annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the draining of the sandstone segment of path.
Roses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2014 David Austin Roses (Old English Roses) are in a good condition and label plaques have been refurbished in 2021. Rose beds are back filled with seasonal bedding which is subject to light rabbit and pigeon damage. Rose beds are edged up annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roses should be maintained in a good condition with annual pruning in Jan/Feb when first growth is starting to show. Granular rose feed should be applied in March/April and immediately mulched after. Dead heading of roses should be carried out throughout the flowering season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain in good health selection of old English roses. Rabbit resistant companion planting should be considered such as Muscari, Narcissi. Seasonal bedding should be continued in the rose beds.
Lawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lawns of the lower terrace are in good condition with only minor trampling from the puddled path. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scaification should be carried out annually in March or September and moss treated. Topdressing and seeding should be carried out as required in March/September. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further improve the condition of the lawns as an example of fine turf management.
Heart bed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The heart bed currently contains a boarder of lavender, 3 metal obelisks with climbing roses (The generous Gardener, St Swithun and Strawberry Hill) and 3 Buddleia to the centre. Gaps are back filled with seasonal bedding are in several small groupings which also suffers from rabbit damage. Cyclamen, herbaceous geranium, dahlia, narcissi rapture forms some perennial planting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The heart bed should be maintained in good condition. Annual pruning of roses should be carried out in early spring. Lavender to be cut back in late August but not into old wood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider species to back fill bed and improve overall appearance. Review planting of heart bed 2021 Consideration of replanting lavender in the coming years given the woody nature of the stems in order to keep plants compact. A replacement climbing rose should be planted. Dome tops should be added to the obelisks.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lawns were aerated 04/22
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strawberry Hill climbing rose planted 07/22

E) Middle terrace				
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives	Completed works
Herbaceous bed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The herbaceous bed is in fair condition but in need of back filling to fill gaps from plant failures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herbaceous planting should be reviewed and divided where required every 3-5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Herbaceous bed will be monitored through 2021 and redesigned in winter 2021 for planting in 2022. The size of the bed should be reduced during the re planting in 2022. 	
Summer house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The summer house was relocated in 2016 and is somewhat out of place when viewed from the west terrace blocking views of the terraces. Whilst Millers plan shows no flower bed in this area <i>figure 12</i> clearly shows bedding at the base of the wall. The summer house is booked by the hotel for outdoor wedding ceremonies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The summer house should be maintained in a safe condition. Pyracantha to the rear of the summer house should be pruned mid spring. An Italianate rotunda style pergola has been lost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2 remaining Lawson cypress 'columnaris' have grown to such an extent that the lawn is in accessible from the ramp to the rear. These trees are not shown on the miller plan or country life photographs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The conifers should not be replaced following failure due to potential root damage to walls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with CCC tree officer regarding the removal of these trees. 	
Lawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lawns of the middle terrace are in fair condition showing undulations and depressions with occasional bare patches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scarification should be carried out annually in March or September and moss treated as required. Topdressing and seeding should be carried out as required in March/September. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further improve the condition of the lawns as an example of fine turf management. Board edge and lawn up to lower wall. 	Lawns were aerated 04/22

F) Upper terrace			
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Completed works
Erica bed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Erica bed was stripped out in 2012 and remains empty in the anticipation of the upper terrace wall being rebuilt. The Erica bed should not be reinstated once the walls have been reinstated as it not shown on either the miller plan or Country life photographs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This bed should be set to lawn following the rebuilding of the walls. 	Bed removal and lawn work completed 2022.
Pepper pot bed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pepper pot bed is also stripped out minus the large Yew pepper pot, again this bed has not been planted in anticipation of the wall being rebuilt. The yew pepper pot is in a state of recovery following a significant reduction but is showing signs of good growth. This bed is shown on the miller plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This bed should be retained. 	Peris and azalea did not survive transplanting.
Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The beech, conifer and cedar are in good condition. The Conifers location is shown on the miller plan as being the location of what looks to be a viewing area to look down the lake. Mature holly to the rear of the aviary is shading out one side of a larger cedar and crowns are touching with the atlas cedar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trees should be monitored both by onsite staff and CCC tree team for safety and form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A vision to reinstate the wider view of the lake from the upper terrace with the removal of the middle terrace trees is desirable. Mature holly should be removed to reveal the Atlas cedar behind. Old holly stump requires grinding.
Lawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lawns of the upper terrace are in fair condition showing undulations and depressions with occasional bare patches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scarification should be carried out annually in March or September and moss treated as required. Topdressing and seeding should be carried out as required in March/September. Summer cuts should not be boxed off to allow nutrients to remain in the lawn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further improve the condition of the lawns as an example of fine turf management.
Temple (FKA Aviary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Temple is referred to by Lady Craven in the early 1900's and in photographs from country life. In a stable but dilapidated condition with no roof or pillars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temple should at a minimum be retained as a dilapidated folly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of a large semi-circular steel bench should be given.
Aviary shrub bed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The shrub bed surrounding the aviary is somewhat neglected, with a large central gap. The shrub bed contains a variety of well-established shrubs which have previously been reduced to 1m high. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This bed should be retained and improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw up and implement a bedding design sympathetic to the early 1900's. The size of the bed should be reduced slightly to prevent joining with the neighbouring bed.

G) Central lawn			
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives
Rhododendron beds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rhododendron beds have been significantly reduced following years of neglect whereby the plants have spread beyond their designed locations. The miller plan shows beds in the current positions of the Rhododendron beds and banks are visible so it can be assumed that the beds should be confined to the banks. Lost rhododendron bed should be reinstated under giant redwoods. Remains damaged following storm damage. The ring's location is questionable and not shown on the miller plan however a circular feature is shown directly opposite the Griffin steps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rhododendrons should be allowed to reach its full form. Yellow Azalia – Rhododendron lutium may have been planted in these beds however due to its invasive status should not be used. The ring should be maintained in its current condition. Wisteria should be pruned in July/August to leave 6 leaves (30cm) and again in Feb to reduce to 3 buds. The trees should be monitored both by onsite staff and CCC tree team for safety and form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further reduction of beds and re-turf exposed soil. A wider diversity of Rhododendrons should be introduced. Under planting of woodruff – <i>Galium odoratum</i>, saxifrage and soloman's seal - <i>Polygonatum</i> should be introduced.
Wisteria ring		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a new ring/circular feature to be placed directly opposite the Griffin steps. 	
Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yews are in good condition. Ash are not shown in position on the miller plan. Newly planted trees have been unsuccessful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ash should be felled and not replaced when signs of die back are present. Remove failed trees and plant with more appropriate trees from 1900 and positions relative to the miller plan. 	
Lawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lawn is in a fair condition and under planted with Tete A Tete daffodils adjacent to black mulberry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This lawn should be mown with a ride on mower and maintained as amenity turf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should time permit the position of original paths can be box mown into the lawn and interpreted.

H) Pet cemetery				
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives	Completed works
Pet head stones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nigger head stone has been removed and put into safe storage at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Culture Coventry, City Archives, White Friars. A stone base has been laid in front of the head stones but has not been maintained for many years. The current location of the pet cemetery is not thought to be in its original position however the earlier Kip and Nynyff engraving of the estate shows a chapel and graveyard in this approximate location. Known pets from Cornelia Craven photo albums are Polly (parrot), Peter (dog), Zizi (dog). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All headstones should remain in their current position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider improvement of surface around the head stones with grasses of better wear resistance or fencing off with low chestnut paling or picket fence. 	
Bank planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pampas in fair condition and mentioned in the journal of horticulture article. Aconites are thriving on the bank as are tete-a-tete narcissi Crocus are suffering rabbit and squirrel damage and have been all but killed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iris Histriodes (trial 100 plants) should be planted in swaths for early spring colour. Further narcissus planting should be carried out on the bank with successional varieties. Consideration should be given to the addition of a further pampas grass of different shades planted in April. <i>Cortaderia selloana Rosea</i> should be considered. 	
Yew hedges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is recovering well from its reduction 2016. Some holly remains in the hedge. This hedge is managed by the park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The height of the hedge is roughly in keeping with the hedge on the right of the pump cottage. Yew hedges should be cut annually in late summer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain consistently sized hedges throughout the gardens. 	
Yew topiary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Largely pepper pot in shape and in good over all condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yew topiary should be cut annually in late summer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider starting to add variety to topiary shapes where trees are overgrown and require reduction. 	
Paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very poor and needs immediate attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The path should remain in a safe and well-maintained condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This path should be widened by 50cm and resurfaced to better accommodate the rise in foot fall. 	
Benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good over all condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benches should be maintained to a high standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resin bound bases should be introduced over time when benches are replaced, or new benches sold. Resin bound bases offer improved drainage and significantly reduced maintenance. 	
Shrubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Prunus lusitanica</i> Portuguese laurel at junction to path in good condition following reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be planted in groups of 3 or 6 and allowed to reach full form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be thinned and allowed to reach full form. There is an opportunity to replace lost Cherry trees by their addition to this shrub bed. 	
Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Robinia avenue is not shown on the miller plan. Oak secondary planting has failed. Weeping ash are suffering from ash die back. Cherry looks to out of place amenity planting inconsistent with miller plan. White beams and cherries should not be replaced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trees should be monitored both by onsite staff and CCC tree team for safety and form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The short Robinia avenue should be successional planted with Araucaria, monkey puzzle as per the miller plan. Cherry trees should be removed and not replaced when diseased or damaged. 	
Lawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lawn is mostly in good condition but impacted around pet cemetery Snow drops planted in pockets for seasonal interest but are not thriving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider more trample tolerant species such as ryegrass around head stones. 	

I) Red wood bank and dell				
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives	Completed works
Pinetum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slopes are suffering from some erosion from children playing on banks. Slopes are strimmed to ground level annually. Elms are coppiced periodically when growth restricts the view of specimen tree behind. Last coppiced winter 2020. Mostly in good condition though somewhat overcrowded at southern end. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trees should be monitored both by onsite staff and CCC tree team for safety and form. Municipal planting should be gradually removed. Secondary planting should be consistent with the Miller plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove defective trees Investigate further suitable planting for slopes. Overgrown holly should be removed. 	
Ferns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planted spring 2021 Bracken, <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> male fern, <i>Athyrium filix-ferina</i> lady fern and <i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i> hearts tongue fern to start the fernery shown in the miller plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cutting back damaged fronds in March. New planting should be carried out in May and well-watered in the first year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fernery should be further enhanced once we are successful at fern cultivation and then under planted with a variety of narasisi. Ferns for further planting should include hard fern, broad buckler fern, common polypody and shield fern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft shield fern <i>polystichum</i> x 15 planted May 2022 with male fern from woodlands
Bank planting / shrubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Rhododendron calendulaceum</i>, flame azalea is struggling to thrive in its current location on the southern bank. <i>Mahonia</i> thriving in various locations. Laurels have been reduced circa 2015 <i>Viburnum</i> is in fair condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any future shrub planting should be consistent with the Miller plan and be historically accurate. <i>R. calendulaceum</i> requires an annual mulching, dead heading and should be planted in acidic soil with full – partial sun. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain shrubs currently present and allow them to reach full form with a rotation on reductions. <i>Cornus florida</i> – Florida dogwood should be considered for areas of the banks with partial sun. The top of the bank should remain relatively free from planting to properly view the sequoia. <i>Kalmia latifolia</i> – Mountain laurel Carpets of anemone nemerosa, narasissus and galanthus should be planted for seasonal interest and early pollinators. <i>Tree peonies</i> – could be a later consideration <i>Viburnum dentatum</i> – could be a later consideration 	
Paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing paths are in good condition. Steppingstone steps are somewhat overgrown. Historical paths are missing from this area and should not be reinstated for the life of this plan due to a wider park focus on path renovation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The path should remain in a safe and well-maintained condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steppingstone steps may form part of the Miller path network. Investigations should be carried out into their context and restoration should be carried out. 	
Benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benches should be maintained to a high standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resin bound bases should be introduced over time when benches are replaced, or new benches sold. Resin bound bases offer improved drainage and significantly reduced maintenance. 	

J) North west corner (Top pool corner)				
Feature	Condition and review 2021	Standards and plans	Aims and objectives	Completed works
Paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fair condition requiring regular pothole maintenance as a result of frequent traffic use. Historical paths are missing from this area and should not be reinstated for the life of this plan due to a wider park focus on path renovation. Good condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The path should remain in a safe and well-maintained condition. Benches should be maintained to a high standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should time permit historical paths should be box mown into the grass. Resin bound bases should be introduced over time when benches are replaced, or new benches sold. Resin bound bases offer improved drainage and significantly reduced maintenance. 	
Benches			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narcissi to be planted in swaths under trees in this area. Thin out trees through the removal of poor specimens. Improve ground cover of grasses following tree removal. London planes should be kept as this is a terminal point of Browns lake where Planes would be expected. Secondary planting of historical planting should be considered. This area could become a portion of the pinetum and include America old growth forest species such as western hemlock, lodge pole pine, red fir, pinus longaeva. 	
Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somewhat crowded and occasional poor specimens lacking diversity and interest. Consideration should be given to reducing the number of trees in this area allowing more light to the ground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trees should be monitored both by onsite staff and CCC tree team for safety and form. 		<p>Horse chestnut in poor condition removed and ground out 01/22</p>
Lawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the tree canopy is shaded and compacted with small group of snow drops in fair condition Miller plan shows tree grouping and nearby daffodils in grass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant swaths of narcissus under trees and along the length of the smith path turning Coombe into a daffodil attraction with great diversity. This fits with the Miller plan <i>figure 6</i> showing daffodils in grass. 	<p>Hard wearing grass seeded under trees spring 2023 has been slow to grow but has established.</p>

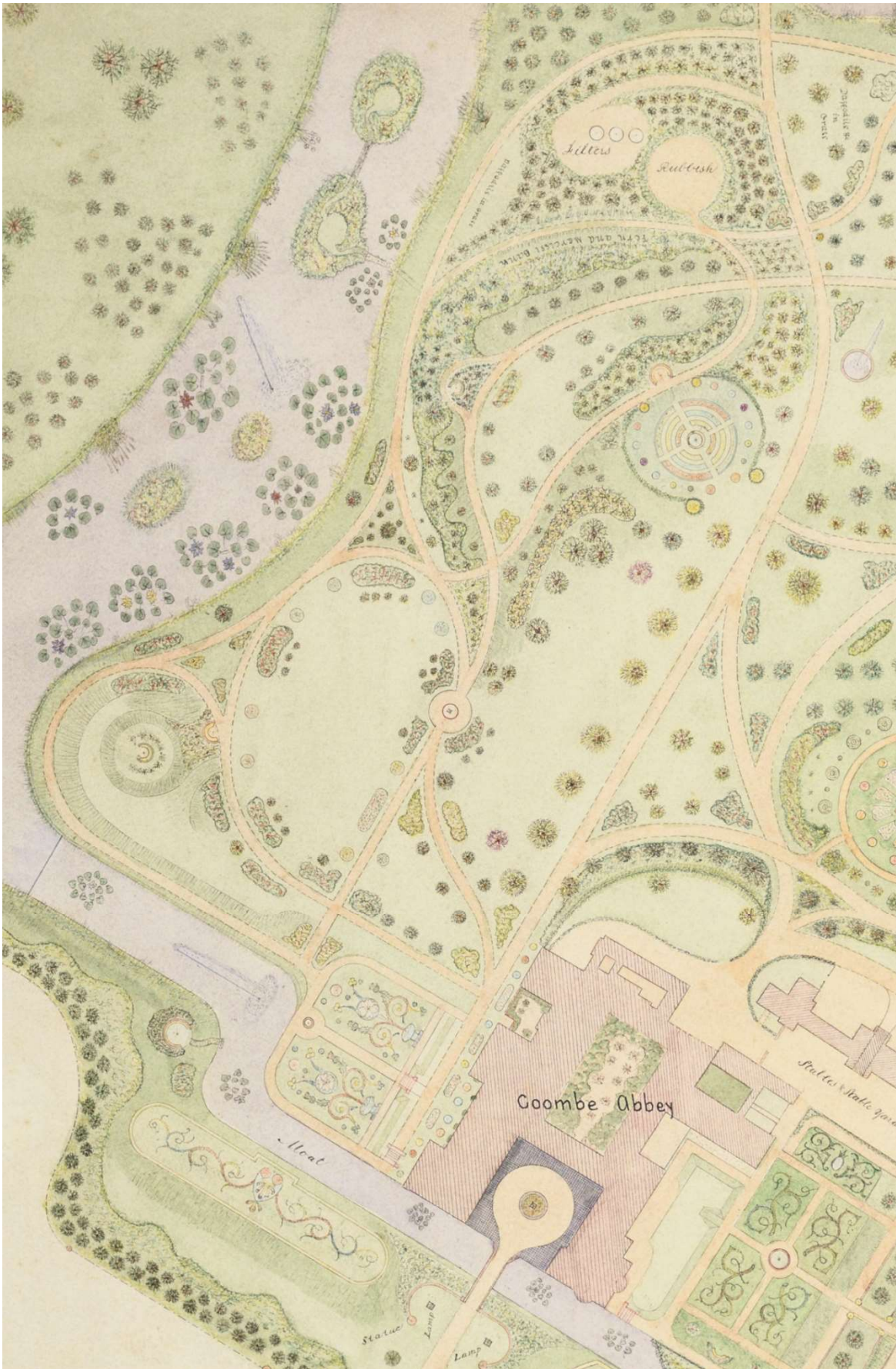


Figure 3 - Miller plan - Extent of Park ownership

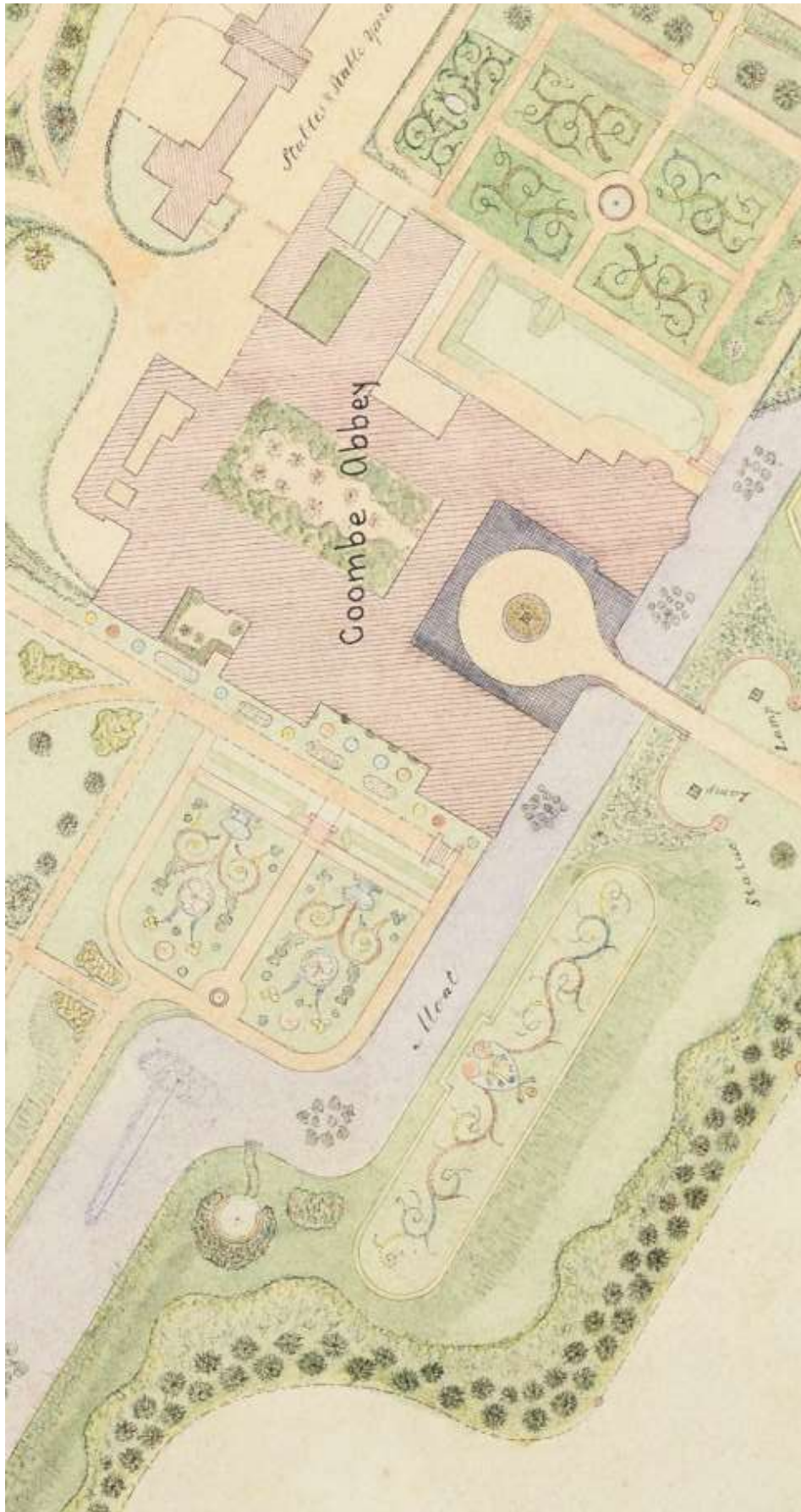


Figure 4 - Miller plan - Porterie detail



Figure 5 – Miller plan - Terrace and lawn detail

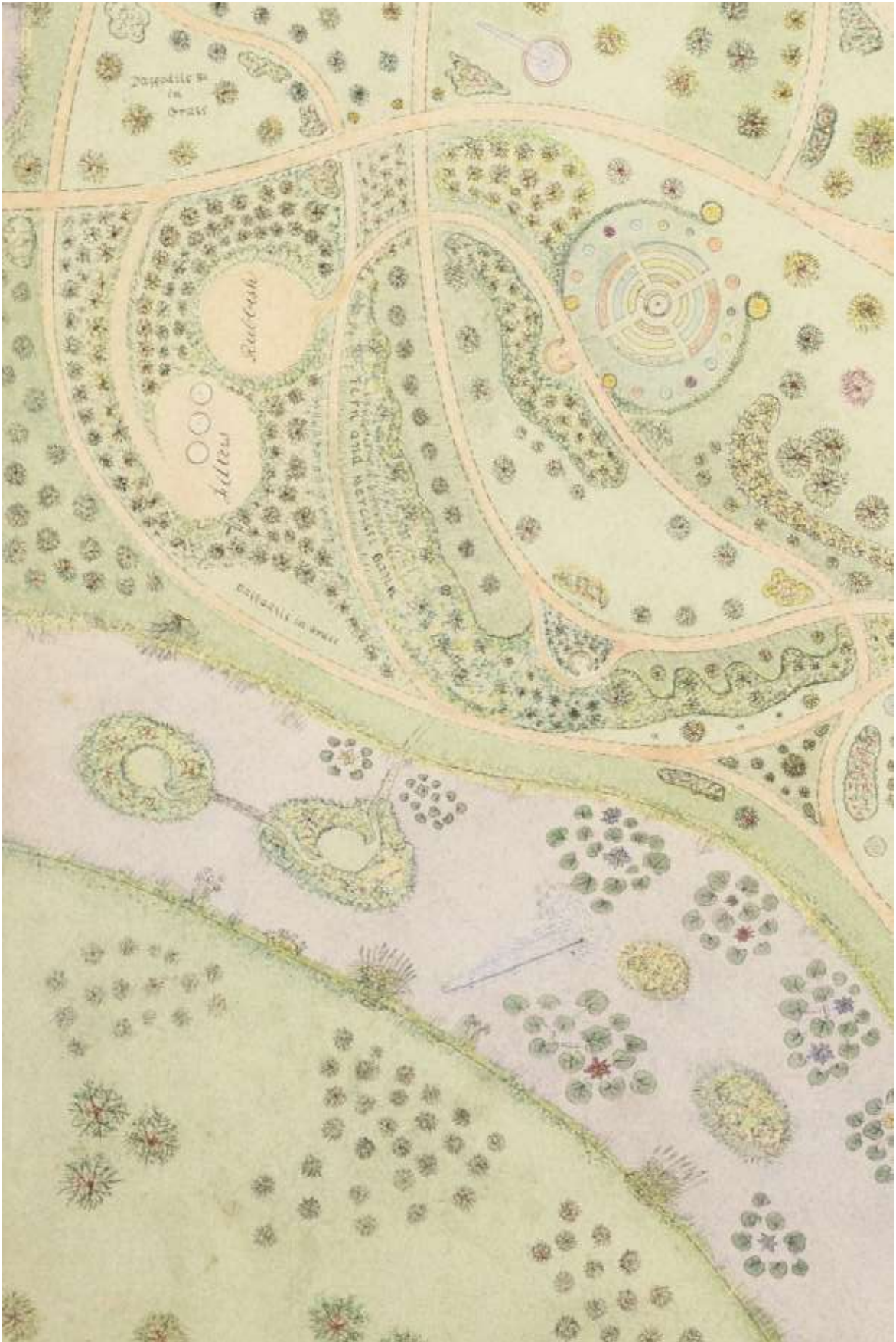


Figure 6 - Miller plan - Redwood bank detail

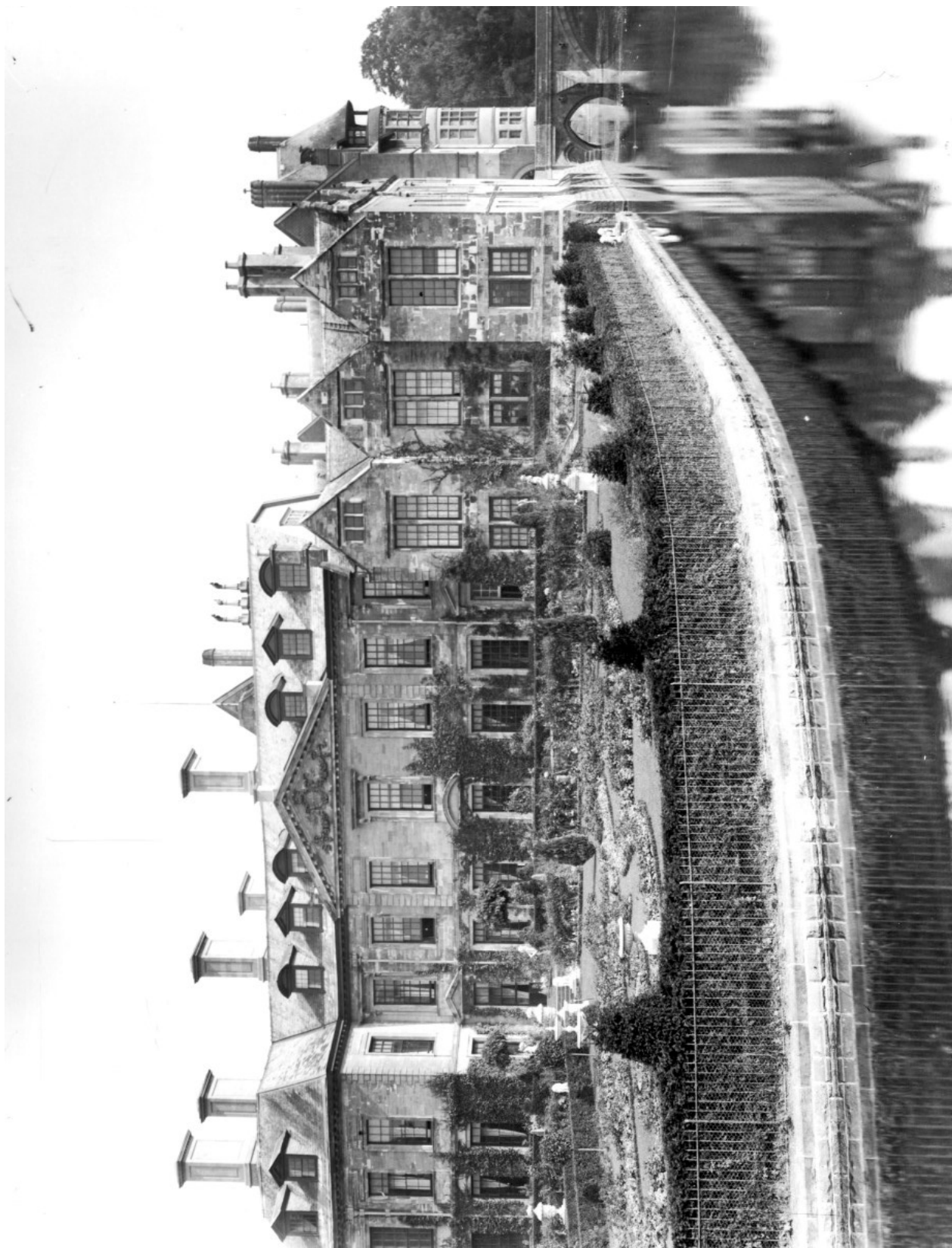


Figure 7 - Country life 1909 - West parterre and moat



Figure 8 - Country life 1909 - Moat and yew hedges

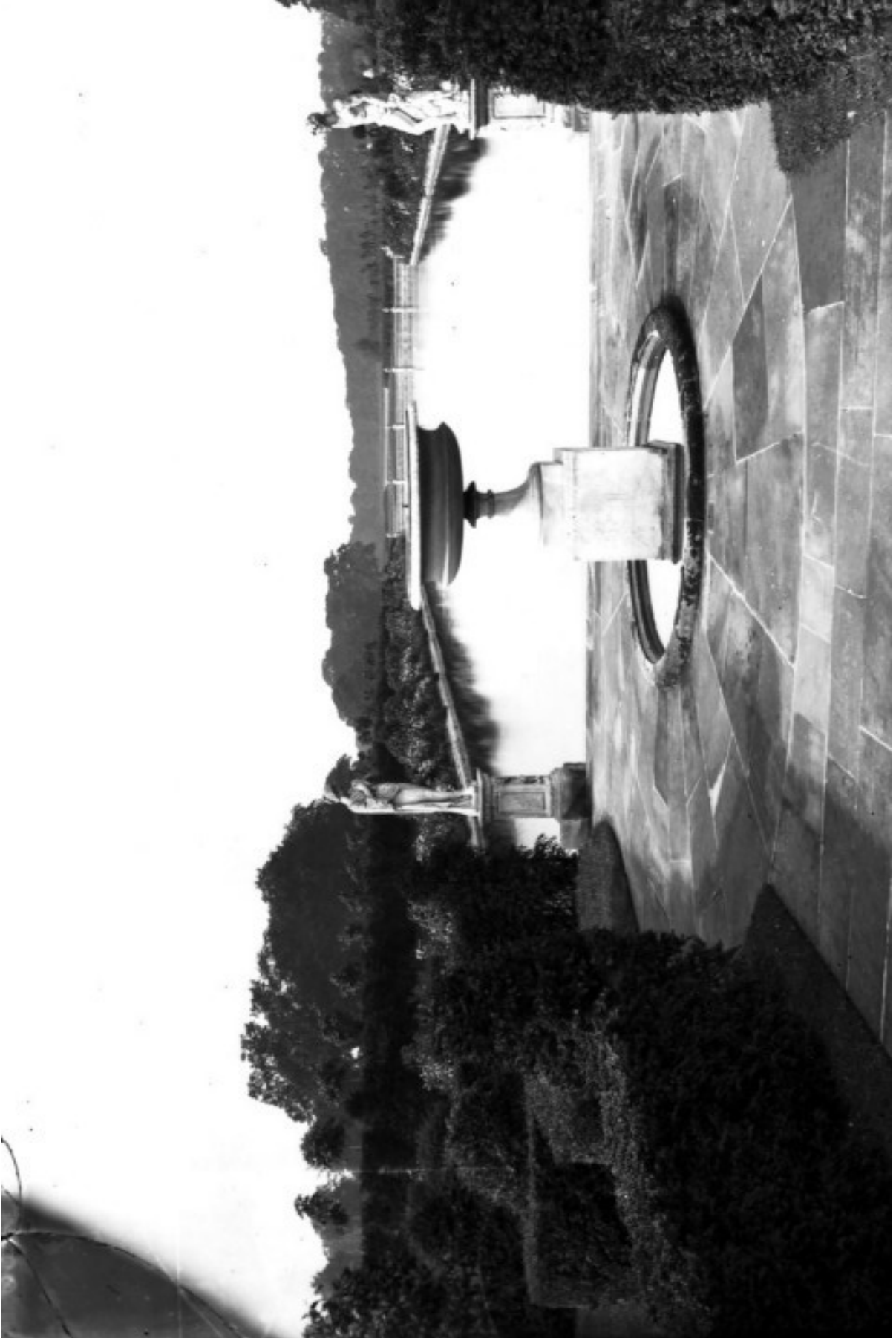


Figure 9 - Country life 1909 - Western moor



Figure 10 - Country life 1909 - Moat and bridge



Figure 11 - Country life 1909 - West lawn and steps

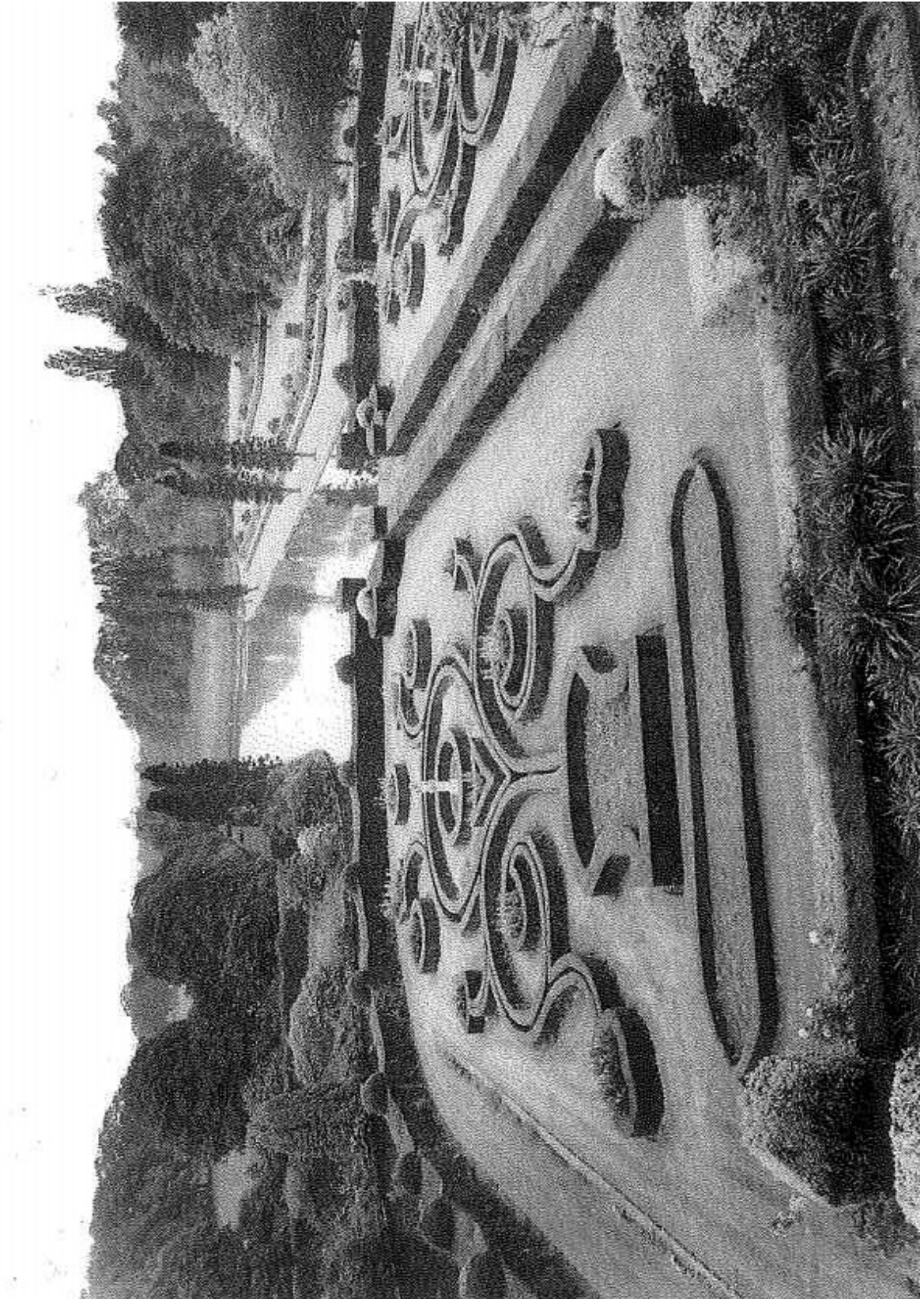


Figure 12 - Unknown 1954 - West porterie

Coombe Abbey.

- 177 The iron fireplace with wood surround, marble jambs and frieze, total width 3ft. 9in., opening 3ft. 1½in.
 178 Three deal overdoors
 179
 180

BATHROOM.

- 181 The pedestal W.C. in chair frame, with cane seat and back and marble base, excluding all lead pipes
 182 A 12in. 2-light rassel design electric wall bracket
 183

LOBBY.

10ft. 6in. by 4ft. 6in. by 10ft.

- 184 THE PINE PANELLING, dado and cornice as planned to lobby
 185 A pair of cupboard doors
 186 A single ditto
 187 Panelled door to bathroom
 188 A glass drop 13-light ceiling electric fitting, with ormolu frame
 189
 190

IN GARDENS.

Outside.

- 1 A PAIR OF WROUGHT IRON CARRIAGE GATES, 11ft. 8in. wide and the wooden gate posts. (At entrance to Italian garden)
 2 A pair of Stucco urns, decorated in relief with flowers, on pedestals, total height about 7ft. 2in.
 3 A pair of ditto, with acorn tops on ditto, height about 6ft. 9in.
 4 A pair of ditto on ditto, height about 3ft. 6in.
 5 A pair of ditto, with Cherub and Goat supports, on pedestals, height about 5ft. 10in.
 6 A WROUGHT IRON ORNAMENTAL GATE, width 4ft. 9in., and the wooden supports
 7 A flight of 5 stone stairs, complete with stone balustrading and pedestals, with red brick and stone approach, greatest width 16ft. 8in.
 8 The companion staircase
 9 A PAIR OF VERY FINELY WROUGHT IRON CARRIAGE GATES and pediment, width 10ft., total height 13ft.

16

Coombe Abbey.

- 10 Two stone ornamental pineapples
 11 Ditto
 12 Ditto
 13 Ditto
 14 Ditto
 15 A Stucco figure of Mercury on Globe, forming fountain
 16 Four Stucco figures of females in classic garb on pedestals
 17 A CARVED MARBLE FOUNTAIN, REPRESENTING CHILDREN PLAYING WITH SWAN.
 18 Four stone sea horses on pedestals, fitted as fountains
 19 The stone edging to Lily Pond (29 pieces of stone), diameter of pond outside 30ft.
 20 A Stucco figure of Cupid on pedestal, height 4ft. 11in.
 21 A pair of Stucco urns, with goat mask handles, height about 4ft. 4in.
 22 A CARVED STONE ITALIAN WELL-HEAD on base, surmounted by ornamental wrought iron frame pulley and chain

23
 24

End of First Day's Sale.



17

6

Figure 13 - Auction advert for garden ornaments

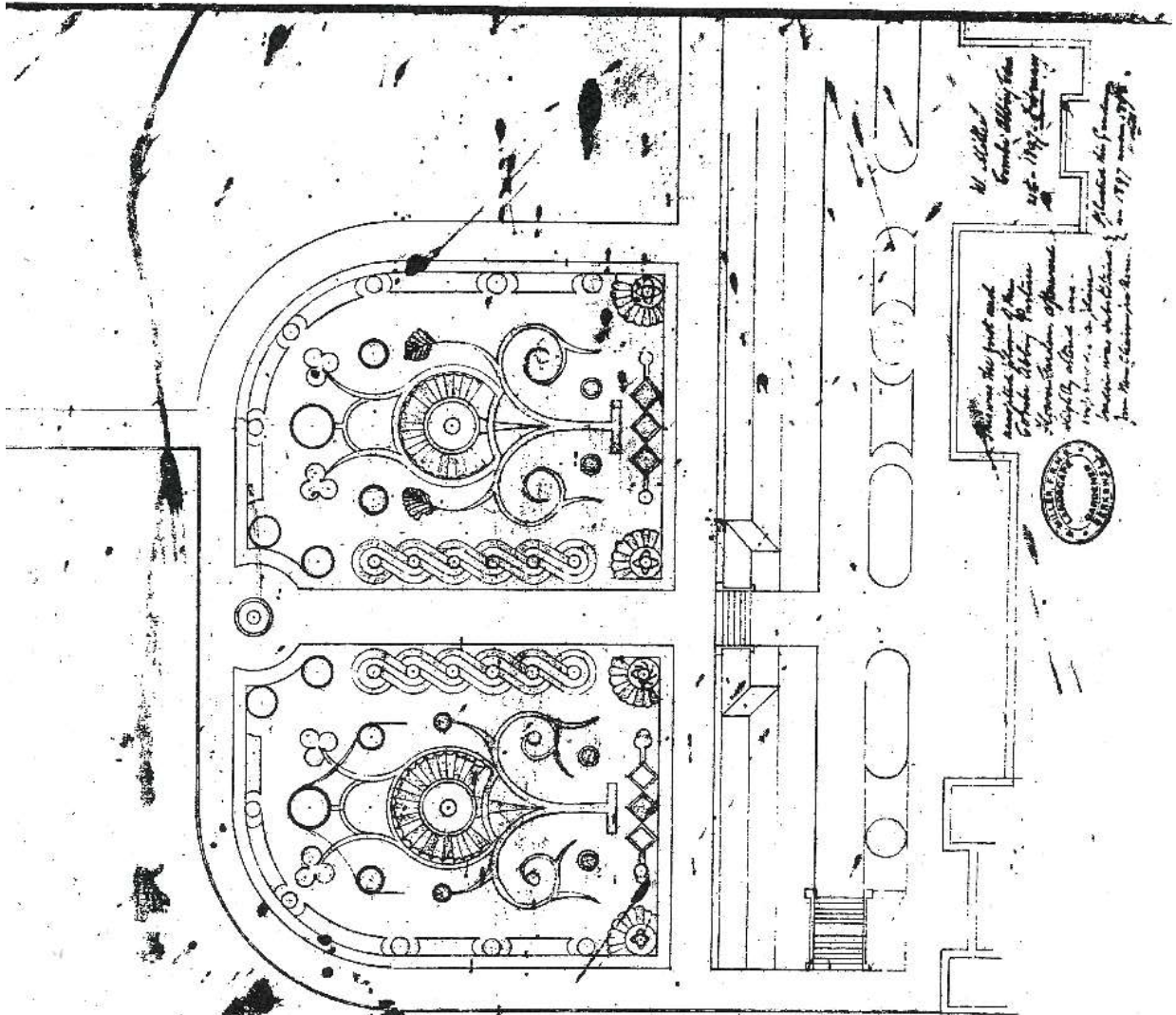


Figure 14 - Miller parterre design



Figure 16 - Parterre 2021

Coombe Country Park - Action Plan Form.

Task Title: There should be no surface disturbance of the tumulus																																																				
Character area: 03.07																																																				
Task Objective:																																																				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain awareness by training staff to have an understanding of the historical significance of this landscape 																																																				
First Year of Plan: 2012 - 2017																																																				
Years Active: 1 2 3 4 5																																																				
File: <i>Link to electronic or hard copy file ref.</i>																																																				
Duration of Plan: 5 years																																																				
Priority:																																																				
Photo:																																																				
Months:	All	Any	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec																																						
Weeks:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
Staff: <i>Lead /responsible officer</i> Supervisor:																																																				
Expenditure Code: 10029 + Subjective.																																																				
Income Code:																																																				

Information		Diary Date	Projected Time	Actual Time
<i>(Include all relevant information, activities, planning timescale, actual work undertaken, contact details – contractors, suppliers, costs etc. Successes and failures should be written up to improve future management. Use this section as your works diary that will inform future decision making.)</i>				

<p>Currently this feature is protected by maintaining the area as tall herb, dominated by nettles. Maintenance should be minimal, and the area left undisturbed. Maintain path edge only. Monitor disturbance.</p> <p>2018- 2017- Path Edge failed, rank vegetation removed from tumulus by reciprocating mower & raking + removal (Minimal surface disturbance). Also coppicing of Elder Bushes & other Scrub starting to develop- As per Planned Preventative Maintenance Schedules.</p>	<p>Jan/Feb 17</p>	<p>2-3 Days</p>	<p>2-3 days</p>
<p>2016 - Path edge failed 05/07/2016</p>			
<p>2015 – Path edge failed – 07/2015</p>			
<p>2014- Path edge failed – 07/2014</p>			
<p>2013 –Path edge failed – 08/2013</p>			
<p>2012 –Path edge failed – 08/2012</p>			

Coombe Country Park - Action Plan Form.

Task Title: Maintain high standard of maintenance												
Character area: 08.05												
Task Objective:												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain all facilities to a high standard and monitor via the estate quality process checks 												
First Year of Plan: 2012 - 2017												
Years Active: 1 2 3 4 5												
File:												
Duration of Plan: 5 years												
Priority: 1b												
Photo: Parks- Coombe Country Park – Estate – Photos to be filed – Paul’s Folder												
Months: All Any Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec												
Weeks: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52												
Staff: Paul Hodges Wendy Muir and Michael Thackwray Supervisor: JT > Michelle T > Ann Akerman & Anthony Molloy > Michelle Tytania												
Expenditure Code: 10029												
Income Code:												

Information		
Diary Date	Projected Time	Actual Time
Dec 2017	Dec 2017	18/12/17
Work on Slubbing out the leaf debris & blocking branches in the ditch-line & clearing the pipe under the concrete bridge.		

<p>Survey & Monitoring of Acid Grassland Flora – 2017 –Including Bioblitz 13/05/2017- Potentially some monitoring from Warwickshire Wildlife Trusts-Survey Force Vols as part of Princethrope Woodlands Living Landscape Partnership Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birdsfoot Colonies – Colonies increased from 20 to 30 • Heath Bestraw – Galium saxitale – Colonies increasing as result of Management • Sheeps Sorrel –Rumex atosella –Dense patches present in suitable conditions • Heath Speedwell – Veronica officinalis • Parsley Piert – Aphanes arvensis – Increasing colonies • Slender Parsley Piert- Aphanes microcarpa – restricted colonies • Sand Spurrey – Spergularia rubra –More restricted colonies • Early Hair Grass- Aria praecox – Increasing <p>INVERTEBRATE SURVEYS & MONITORING –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashy Mining Bee Colonies still on Warm sandy banks & Path edges & Areas Burrowed by Rabbits. • Ruby Tailed Wasp (Chrysis ignita) (Cuckoo Wasp) colonies • Butterflies = Meadow Browns (Maniola jurtina), Gatekeepers (Pyronia tithonus), Speckled Woods(Pararge aegeria), Large Whites(Pieris brassicae), Small Whites (Artogeia rapae), Large Skippers(Ochlodes venata), Ringlets (Aphantopus hyperantus), Small Tortoiseshells (Aglais urticae), Peacocks (Inachis io), Red Admirals (Vanessa atalanta), Small Heaths (Coenonypha pamphilus). Transect Undertaken by Butterfly Conservation-Warwickshire Branch. <p>ORNITHOLOGICAL SURVEY & MONITORING –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Woodpeckers (Pica viridis) –Feeding on Yellow Meadow Ant Nests. • Bullfinches – Feeding on Buds (RSPB/BTO Red Listed Species). • Kestrels- Falco tinnunculus(BTO/RSPB Amber Listed) – Feeding on Voles & Mice • Yellowhammers –Emberiza citronella (RSPB/BTO Red Listed) On Gorse. • Linnets – Carduelis canabina (RSPB/BTO Listed) • Redpolls- Carduelis flammea (RSPB/BTO Listed) Feeding on Birches 	<p>Apr/May/June/July/Aug</p>	<p>Bioblitz 13/05/17</p>	<p>2-3 hrs</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willow Warblers – <i>Phylloscopus trochilidis</i> – (RSPB/BTO Amber Listed). Chiff Chaffs – <i>Phylloscopus colybita</i> - Breeding 				
<p>Follow link for maintenance G:\Parks\Coombe_Country_Park\Estate 2012-2017\Annual Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey & Monitoring of Acid Grassland / Bryophyte Heathland by the Warwickshire Flora Group on 03/06/2016 – Found several New Species for the site including- Lady Fern <i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>, Hard Fern <i>Blechnum Spicant</i>, Early Hair Grass – Also Birdfoot Colonies were noted & parsley piert & Heath Speedwell & Thyme Leaved Speedwell & Heath Bedstraw (<i>Galium saxatile</i>) & Sheeps Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>) Also solitary Mining Bee Colonies were noted to be active with various parasitic wasps in attendance. 	03/06/2016	3-4 hours	3 ½ hrs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Princethorpe Woodlands Living Landscape Project – Funding Bid with Warwickshire Wildlife Representatives Chris Redstall & Charline Hue & Natural England Representative & Paul E Hodges CEnv, CMIEEM, PgDip, BSc(Hons), Ann Akerman. 2015 Survey & Monitoring of Acid Grassland / Bryophyte Heathland 2014 Survey & Monitoring of Acid Grassland /Bryophyte Heathland-Found Birdfoot as New Species for site 2013 Survey & Monitoring of Acid Grassland / Bryophyte Heathland 2012 Survey & Monitoring of Acid Grassland / Bryophyte Heathland 	02/06/2016	2- 3 hours	3hrs	
	05 & 06/2015	3 – 4 hrs		
	05 & 06 & 07 2014	3 – 4 Hrs		
	05 & 06 & 07 2013	3 – 4 Hrs		
	05 & 06 & 07 2012	3 – 4 Hrs		

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