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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Plymouth City Council have commissioned historic this landscape report on Central Park, Plymouth, from Alan Baxter & Associates. The study has been prepared by Chris Miele and Mark Hughes for ABA, with contributions from Floyd Conway.

The aim of this study has been to chronicle the history of the Park, and then to identify and evaluate its heritage interest by means of a statement of significance. Individual features are rated in terms of their historic and/or landscape importance.

The study then defines some of the ways in which this cultural significance is vulnerable and concludes with general recommendations on steps to preserve and enhance this significance. This process is based on the Conservation Plan methodology as defined by Kerr and advised in recent publications (Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage – see Sources at the end of the report).

At around 240 acres, Central Park is the largest public open space in Plymouth, and the most recent of any size to be created.

Land for the park was purchased between 1924 and 1929, when preliminary works needed to establish public access were commenced. Prior to this the area had been used for a variety of purposes, including:

- Residential, Pounds House and Higher Swilly;
- Agricultural;
- Recreation (Plymouth Argyll Football Club has been on the site since the turn of the last century)
- Public exhibitions and events (to the south near Pennycomequick, on land identified as ‘Exhibition Fields’ on late nineteenth-century maps;
- The Stonehouse Reservoir.

There are physical remnants of all these different phases of use and development, fragmentary in some cases (gate piers along the western verge of the park, for instance) but more substantial in others (Venn Lane).

The size and location of the Park reflects the growth of greater Plymouth. In 1914 Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse merged, with City status being conferred in 1928. The fast developing outer suburbs lacked leisure provision.

From the beginning it was intended that the Park should provide opportunities for passive leisure and active recreation, with the latter uses concentrated on the higher ground, to the west, which is located convenient to road infrastructure.

In 1927 the famous landscape architect Thomas Mawson was commissioned to prepare a plan for the park. It appears this was the work of his son, E Prentice Mawson (not E Reuben Mawson as noted in some sources, incorrectly). In the event this design was adopted and, it seems, developed by the Borough Engineer J Wibberley, who signed the plan published in the 1931 Souvenir Opening Programme.

The main elements of Mawson’s plan – key avenues – were executed, and a number of leisure developments built more or less in positions indicated in the original plan.

After the 1930s, there was a lull in development, which resumed in the early 1960s and has been more or less continuous ever since. All these works have been concentrated in and around the active recreational core along the western flank of the Park.

In 1981 the City Engineer prepared a comprehensive park study, in response to local peoples’ concerns at the loss of open space. This was the first plan to consider ways of enhancing the areas used for passive recreation, and suggested the extension of the woodland treatment south, through Pennycomequick, and, additionally, the joining together of the Park with Ford Park Cemetery. However well intentioned this document might have been, none of its recommendations were implemented. Generally these eastern areas of the Park have been overlooked since the 1930s, and suffer from a lack of maintenance and no considered planting regime or scheme. In 2002 Plymouth Council prepared a draft masterplan which began to address some of these considerations. As part of this a Central Park Action Plan was published in November 2001, which called for, amongst other things, an assessment of the heritage interest of the park.

These eastern areas of the Park have some very fine features, relicts of the earlier agricultural landscape and the pleasure grounds of Pounds House, in addition to the Venn. Each of these areas has some heritage value, quite apart from their landscape interest.

This report maps these areas, indicating their importance, in addition to identifying hard landscape features and structures of note. On the basis of our survey work and research, we have made a number of policy recommendations and proposals that take into account the heritage interest of the site.

Local Plan Policy Context

The City of Plymouth Local Plan (1995-2011) First Deposit makes a number of proposals in respect of Central Park (Proposal 64), including:

- The enhancement of sports and recreational facilities, including the replacement of the Mayflower Centre;
- The general environmental enhancement of the whole park;
- Rationalisation and improvement of allotment provision, including a new car park on land adjacent to Peverell Park corner;
- Improved transport links to the site.

Policy 69 concerns development in Greenscape Areas, and addresses some of the potential conflicts which are implied in the proposal summarised above, specifically the loss of visual quality, natural and historic features. The First Deposit has detailed policies on nature conservation, and other related areas. We reproduce the relevant extracts and proposals maps in the Appendix to this report.

Summary Statement of Heritage Significance

Central Park's heritage significance is regional, as the largest public park in Plymouth and possessing some historic value and interest locally.

This significance expresses itself in the following:

- **As an Example of Interwar, Municipal Park Design:** The combination of active, organised and commercial leisure facilities with more passive and traditional recreational space, including the allotments – the fundamental characteristic of Central Park – is typical of interwar park design in the United Kingdom.

- **As an Example of the Work of Thomas Mawson:** Although Mawson's scheme was not executed in detail, some of its main elements (avenues, for instance, the retention of the Venn as a natural landscape, the integration of Pounds House with the general parkland) were carried out.
- **Local Historical Note:** The landscape of the Park contains many 'relict' areas and features, which speak clearly about the pattern of land uses before the area came to be encapsulated by later suburban development.

It is envisaged that this report will be used:

- To support funding bids;
- To inform management of the Park
- To serve as the basis for a community history project to be taken forward by the Friends of Central Park.

Key:



- A** Plymouth Sports Club
- B** Parks Department
- C** Proposed BMX track, includes sit of old skate park, which it is proposed to excavate as an archaeological project. Former zoo, skateboard park.
- D** Car Park
- E** Events for Fields, Fairs, Circuses, Religious Revivals
- F** Demolition of Existing Leisure Facilities in part and Relocation to South/East (F').
- G & H** Emerging proposals for a youth park.
- I** Emerging proposals for an Adventure Playground
- J** Remove Playground to more overlooked situation, south of Pounds with new WC block.
- K** Scheduled for Gateway Improvement.
- L** Playground proposed to be moved.
- M** Scheduled for Gateway Improvements.



PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK
CENTRAL PARK LEISURE / ACTIVITY CORE.
CURRENT USS AND EMERGING PROPOSALS
FOR PARK AS A WHOLE.

We cannot stress enough the need for local people to build on the research undertaken for this study. The archival sources relating to the Park are not very extensive. For instance, we were surprised by the lack of historic images (photographs, paintings, engravings) of the Park, or indeed of the land before the Park was formed. This is one area where local people can contribute materially to the historical record, particularly as there will be many people who have recollections or souvenirs relating to the Park. The techniques of oral history would be particularly useful to apply to this further research. Another worthwhile local history project would be an examination of open spaces in Plymouth and Devonport.

This lack of recent, first-hand information and of a visual archive is addressed in the Recommendations section of the report.

The involvement of local people is also essential to establish definitively the community value of the Park, and of certain areas within the Park. Our judgments on these matters are of necessity limited.

The archival sources examined are:

- The Local and Naval Studies Collection of the City Library, and
- The archival sources held by the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office.
- The Mawson drawings for many of the structures in the Park (built and unexecuted) survive in the Cumbrian Record Office at Kendal, the repository for all the Firm's papers. These technical drawings are in a poor condition and cannot be reproduced. There is no associated correspondence relating to the Plymouth commission.

Other sources are listed in the final section of this report.

The survey work was carried out in February 2002 and again in August.

This draft has been prepared for public consultation.

2.0 CONTEXT: PLYMOUTH PARKS

The **Hoe** was Plymouth’s first public open space. Used as a parade ground, and in part owned by the military, it escaped development. Eighteenth-century travel writers left admiring accounts of the view, suggesting informal, recreational use dates back at least two and a half centuries. The City Corporation began to formalize public access arrangements after Waterloo. In 1816 and 1817 Mayor Lockyer (there is a street named for him on the west side of Hoe Park) engaged workhouse inmates to build carriageways and footways above the foreshore, and in 1836 a permanent Hoe Committee was established to oversee its enhancement.

This developed into the general Hoe and Parks Committee, the council committee that oversaw the expansion of Plymouth’s leisure facilities well into the 1930s, and was responsible for creating Central Park. Archival material relating to its work survives in the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office. This is a rich local history resource, and very little investigation has been done in the earliest manuscript sources. The work of Len Stephens and Christopher Rohinion has been most helpful.

The period immediately following the Napoleonic Wars marked the start of a wider culture of improvement in the town, notably the competition for public buildings promoted by Lockyer and won by John Foulston. He laid out Union Street, linking the three towns that comprise modern Plymouth, Stonehouse, Devonport and ancient Plymouth itself.

Returning to the Hoe, here there were steady improvements, intensifying in the 1860s, 1870s and 1880s, when a major scheme of was implemented to mark Victoria’s Jubilee (and the Tercentenary of the Armada). Then, in 1887, the War Department (the predecessor to the MOD) ceded a grant of land west and north of the Citadel, its outer ramparts essentially, enabling the formation of Hoe Park. Extensive paths were formed, many terracing down from the Esplanade to the Foreshore. In the 1890s the ‘municipal-ization’ of this fine open space was complete, the sequence of parks culminating in the Bull Ring and Promenade Pier. In the 1890s a comprehensive tram system was introduced, linking the pier to Plymouth’s now fast-growing industrial and middle-class suburbs, and promoting a burgeoning tourist trade.

But the Hoe, fine as it may have been, and rich in historical associations, was not sufficient to cater for the rapidly growing populations of the three towns, whose expansion was encouraged by the Navy’s presence at Devonport. The population nearly doubled between 1851 and 1901, from 114,091 to 211,177. By the start of the Second World War the residential areas near to Sutton Harbour and in parts of Devonport were as degraded and overcrowded as anywhere in the country.

Under this pressure of development ancient Plymouth and its hinterlands were transformed beyond recognition, as town expanded out over what had been open fields and the pleasure grounds of large houses. Foulston’s stucco-faced, Georgian classicism gave way to earnest, limestone-faced Victorian terraces, public buildings and large Gothic churches.

As in many other fast-growing towns the City Corporation took steps to secure more public open spaces during the second half of the nineteenth century. And as in other localities. These parks are memorials to the growth of the public health movement, and specifically Edwin Chadwick’s studies of sanitary conditions in crowded, working-class districts. The Public Health Act 1848 conferred upon local authorities a wide range of powers, including that of providing open spaces for the use of poor and working class people who did not have access to gardens.

One of the earliest of the open spaces was **Devonport Park**, although this was created not by the City Corporation but by the town of Devonport (formally constituted by regal patent in 1824). The new corporation let the site from the War Office – fortifications previously occupied it. The formal layout was complete in 1858, the work of a local architect of note, Alfred Norman. There is a handsome lodge (the so-called Swiss Lodge, because of its distinctive style) and former refreshment rooms, as well as a terracotta fountain commemorating Sir Charles Napier, a naval hero promoted to vice-admiral of the Fleet in 1853 and a war memorial.

The City Corporation purchased a private estate, **Beaumont House**, in 1890, opening the grounds to the public. The estate with its eighteenth-century house, which survives, was the seat of the Bewes family. **Mutley Park** is another example of a private estate converted to public park.

The formal layout of **Victoria Park** dates to this time, 1891, a joint project of Devonport and Plymouth formed in the old Mill Creek, Millbridge. **Freedom Park** is of the same year. The latter is notable as the site of a famous Civil War battle, in 1643, when the Parliamentary forces defeated the besieging Royalists. Prior to its formal creation as a park, this space had long been used by local people to celebrate the anniversary of the event and is said to have been enclosed by railing from an early date. There is a monument here, of granite, commemorating the battle. Improvements to this space have recently been achieved through a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The above list is not by any means comprehensive. Park Committee minutes from 1919 refer to nine other public recreation spaces and parks then open to the public.

- Thorn Park;
- Alexandra Park;
- Laira Marches & Tothill Recreation Grounds;
- Westwell Street Ground;
- St. Andrew’s Cross;
- Millbay Park and Recreation Ground;
- Stoke Churchyard;
- Mount Wise;
- Cumberland.

3.0 HISTORY: CENTRAL PARK

3.1 Introduction

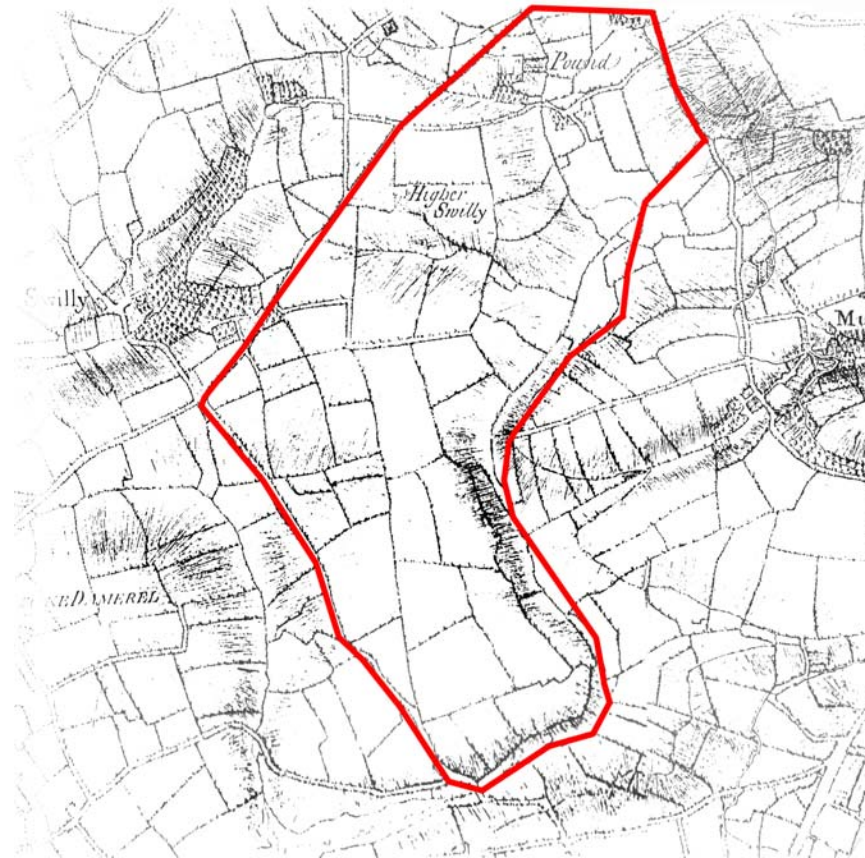
Central Park is the largest of Plymouth's public parks and also the most recent. Like Beaumont and Mutley Parks, it was formed from the estates of earlier houses that had escaped development, most notably Pounds House, which survives in the northern part of the Park. But in order to form the more than 200-acre park, agricultural land was purchased as well. The design commissioned in the late 1920s was the most ambitious of any undertaken by either Plymouth or Devonport, not least because of the range of uses. The higher western half of the park was laid out for formal recreation and commercial leisure activities and featured Plymouth Argyll's stadium, whose location here predates the creation of the Park. To the east the character and use profile is quite different, with the space given over to passive leisure, quiet contemplation and allotments. Ford Park Cemetery, just outside the Park to the east, contributes materially to this character.

3.2 The Park's 'Prehistory'

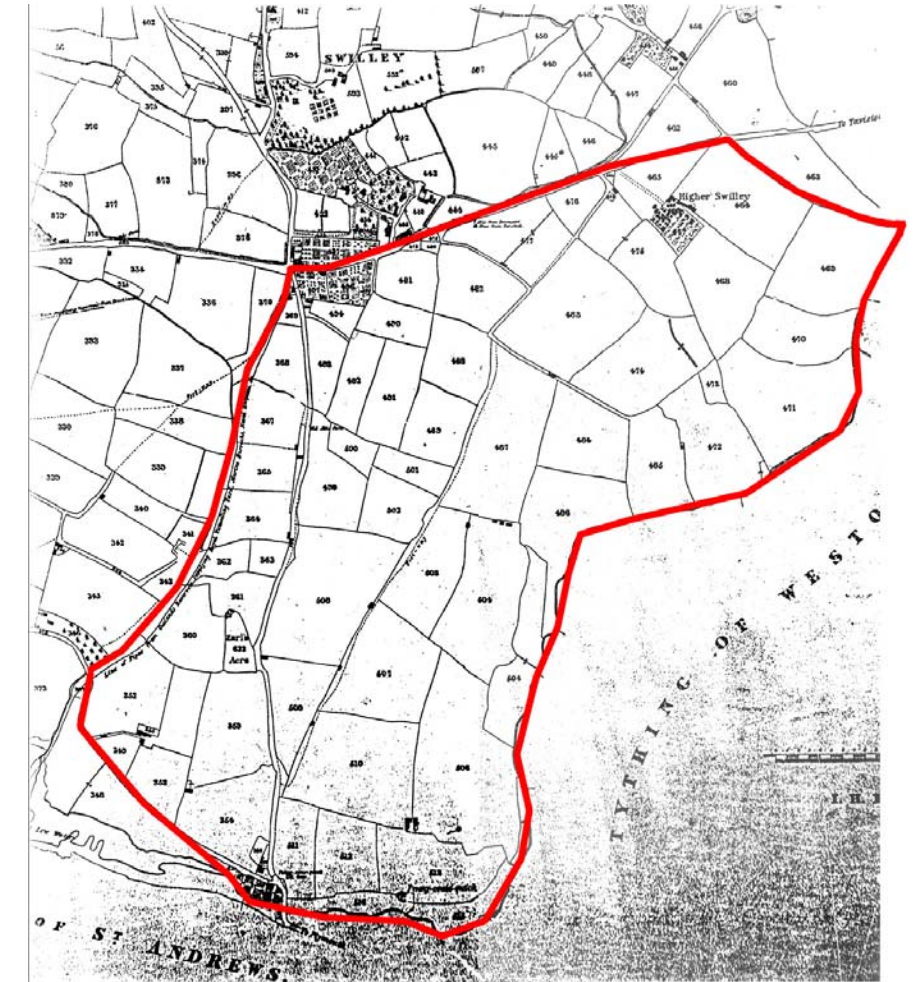
The 240-acre (??hectare) Park was developed in an eight-year period, from 1923 to 1931, when Mayor Clifford J Tozer formally opened the facility to the public. Prior to this the evidence relating to the site is contained mostly on historic maps which are reproduced in this report.

The earliest use was agricultural, not surprisingly since the site lies well outside the historic city boundaries. A late eighteenth-century map shows a typically Georgian field system, resulting from the enclosure (amalgamation and regularization) of earlier field, medieval strip field patterns. We encountered no evidence for earlier agricultural boundaries, but then our inspection took place in the wet, winter months. Oblique aerial photos made after a prolonged period of dry weather might perhaps reveal something of the older patterns.

Already, by the time of Gardiner's map (1784), the future form of the Park is suggested by certain features, notably the western boundary, comprised today by Outland and Alma Roads. The lower eastern boundary (including Inverdene Road) was suggested by a natural feature, a steep ridge and watercourse clearly marked on early maps. The southern boundaries, Jefferson Walk and Central Park Avenue, are on the lines of earlier field boundaries. By contrast Peverell Park Road, to the northeast, does not relate clearly to an earlier phase of development.



Gardiner's Map, 1784 - source: Plymouth Local and Naval Studies Library (PLHNSL)



Tithe map, 1842 - source: PLHNSL



Venn Lane: a relict of the earlier landscape

Gardiner shows the grounds of Pounds House and to the south what appears to have been a farm, Higher Swilly (as distinct from Swilly House, discussed below). These properties are shown on the 1894 Ordnance Survey, the most detailed and informative of the historic maps in the series.

Central Park retains one built remnant of its previous history, Pounds House, which was damaged by fire in 1991 and survives in an altered condition. Bounding the land that became the Park were three historic estates which have been documented in local history publications, and whose associations are part of the site's significance: these are Swill House, Belair House and Montpelier House.

3.3 Pounds House

The Pounds House estate was one of three parcels of land purchased by the City Corporation to form the future park. This late Georgian villa survives as a significant feature in the northern half of the Park. Pounds was built after 1825 when the estate was purchased by William Hodge. Then the property consisted of 60 acres of woodland in the parish of Pennycross, known as Pound and Higher Venn, with an earlier house called Springfields, which Hodge demolished.

Hodge is described in directories as a 'banker' and Pounds is a fine example of the sort of suburban villa favoured by merchants. Apparently Hodge was also involved in trade, and was in partnership with his father-in-law William Chapell, who had premises in Cumberland Street, Devonport. From here they traded hemp and timber, shipbuilding essentials. Hodge's banking business had started earlier, in 1804, partly financed by another merchant, William Glencross, who was a Navy victualler (the victualling depot then located in Sutton Harbour, not at Stonehouse as it would come to be in the 1820s, following the construction of the Royal William Yard).

Hodge expanded his business, developing interests in shipping during the 1820s with another partner, John Norman, who himself had a smart villa, Belmont House, in Stoke to the east. Len Stephens who has written about Pounds, surmises this example encouraged Hodge to rebuild.

In the fashion of the time, the principal rooms of the house were on the ground floor (something of an innovation of the early 1800s), with an arcaded porch overlooking a terrace to the south.



Victorian parkland on south of Pounds

Like many of the surrounding estates and agricultural land, Pounds became attractive to speculative builders. In 1898 Pounds was sold at public auction to Messrs Shellabear, Sheaks and Shellabear, builders, who around 1900 laid out the Pounds Freehold Building Estate. This focused on Peverell Park Road, and roughly encompassed the area from the Mutley Playing Field in Outlands Road to Outlands Road in the north.

Shellabear deliberately kept back Pounds House and its pleasure grounds from development and let it to Sir John Jackson, responsible for extending Devonport Dockyard. Jackson was later Conservation MP for Devonport. During the First World War, the grounds were thrown open for public use occasionally, whilst the house was vacant. Shellabear sold the property freehold to Plymouth Corporation in 1927 for £9,900. The house was briefly tenanted during the construction and early years of the Park (1928 to 1933). Afterwards it was left unoccupied. There have been various proposals for its reuse over the years.

In 1919 a local architectural practice, Thornley & Rooke (3 Sussex Terrace, Plymouth) prepared three alternative proposals for converting it into a secondary school for 400 girls. In 1939 the Council promoted a scheme for converting it into a dance hall and café. Since the Second World War the most popular of many uses has been as a public library but this ended on 7 March 1991, when there was a fire. The house and associated stable buildings are now used by the local authority.



1894 OS - source: PLHNSC

3.4 Swilly House

Shown on the 1784 Gardner map, Swilly House is thought to have been a sixteenth-century house, built by Walter Kempe who occupied it from 1563 to 1573. His son Robert succeeded him in the fifty-acre estate, and his son Tobias thereafter. One of Walter Kempe's sons, William, was headmaster of Plymouth Grammar School. The property passed to the Furneaux family of Buckfastleigh in 1652, and it remained with them until 1921.

Perhaps the most historically interesting person associated with the house was Tobias Furneaux (born 1735), one of three brothers who served in the Royal Navy. This may have been because of their mother's connections with the Wallis family, or possibly because Admiral Boscawen dined at Swilly when in Plymouth. Tobias Kempe Furneaux distinguished himself against the French, earning promotion to lieutenant in command of a sloop. His fame relies on two circumnavigations of the globe, first with Captain Wallis on the *Dolphin* (1766-68) charged with assaying New Zealand. Wallis and the First Lieutenant were taken ill and Tobias steered the ship to the north of the island, claiming the Society Islands and Tahiti for George III. Tobias Furneaux recuperated at Swilly.

Tobias was chosen specifically by James Cook for his second South Sea expedition (1772-74). The *Resolution* and the *Adventure* left Plymouth on 13th July 1772. He took the *Adventure* into the Antarctic Circle and arrived in Tasmania on 9 March 1773, known then as Van Diemen's Land. In honour of his home connections, Furneaux gave the names Eddystone Point, Mewstone and Swilly to three places. Promoted to Captain in the American War of Independence, Furneaux was taken prisoner in 1777. Illness overtook him en route home and he died in 1780. There are documents relating to his extraordinary adventures, log and letter books held in the British Library and Public Record Office in Kew.

Plymouth purchased the estate in 1920 for council housing, but the house and five-acre pleasure grounds were excluded from the sale.

3.5 Belair House and Montpelier House

These houses stood immediately south of the Park.

Belair House was built in the early nineteenth century as the residence of Captain Thomas Elphinstone, R.N. In 1815 the Admiralty held a Council of War here to decide the fate of the captured Napoleon, then secured aboard the *Bellerophon* in Plymouth Sound. From an order

agreed in this house the dictator was exiled to St. Helena. By the later nineteenth century, the house had been converted into a Methodist mission serving the recently developed Peverell areas. It was demolished in 1908. The modern 'Belair Road', immediately north of the Park, is the only tangible reminder of it.

Montpelier House was built in the late eighteenth century. During the time of the Napoleonic Wars it was home to Captain Sir Edward Pellew. He was rewarded for gallantry with a Baronetcy for saving the lives of the East Indiaman ship the *Dutton*, which ran aground near the Citadel (and whose wreck is commemorated in the name of 'Dutton's Café' at Fisher's Nose). Subsequently Pellew became Vice-Admiral in command of the Mediterranean fleet. The house was demolished in the early twentieth century, its site developed as Wisteria Terrace and Hawthorn Grove. Montpelier Road and Terrace take their name from the earlier property, as does a local primary school.

3.6 Early Leisure Uses: Cycle Track, Exhibition Fields and Home Park

Organised leisure facilities were first developed on the future site of the Park in 1892, when the St Aubyn Estate granted a 21-year lease on nine acres of land at 'Milehouse' (in the northwest corner of the later Park) to the Plymouth and Devonport Recreation Company. This was to build a cycle track, stables and grandstand, which are shown on the 1898 Ordnance Survey. A poster advertising the sale of the facility on 1 September 1898 indicates that the Company became insolvent (the premises were being sold 'under distress'). In the south of the Park a large enclosed field was already, then, being used for public exhibitions (identified as 'Exhibition Fields' on the 1894 plan) and general recreation.

The cycle track was converted for use of a rugby team, Devonport Albion, and named 'Home Park'. The work was completed in 1898, just as the team entered into a dispute with the owners, leaving the grounds unused for three years. In 1901 the Argyle Athletics Club obtained a long lease, and eventually built a new grandstand in 1930 on promotion to the second division. Remnants of this survived war damage and rebuilding during the 1950s.



1933 - After Mawson



Mawson's link to Pound's House Grounds

3.7 The Stonehouse Reservoirs and Ford Park Cemetery

The Stonehouse Leat is an old watercourse fed by a spring originating in Torr Park, to the north. The leat – which forms the eastern boundary of the Park to the south – was dammed in the second half of the nineteenth century to form Stonehouse Reservoir, shown on the 1894 Ordnance Survey. This occupied the corner of Central Park, just west of the junction of Barn Park and Peverell Park Roads. It was back filled with rubble in the mid twentieth century (it is shown on the 1935 Ordnance Survey). The area today is still quite boggy. Mawson wanted to convert the reservoir to a boating lake.

Although not part of the Park proper, Ford Park Cemetery is a significant landscape feature in the eastern half of the open space, with a contiguous boundary (enclosed by a rubble stone wall) and shared views. There is, in addition, a shared entrance by the main cemetery lodge, i.e. at the junction of Ford Park Road and Central Park Avenue (identified in historic places as the “Inspector’s Lodge” (which was purpose built as an access, named Cemetery Road).

The Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse Cemetery Company was empowered to purchase land and operated by means of primary legislation, An Act for Establishing a General Cemetery for the Internment of the Dead in the Neighbourhood of the towns of Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse’ (9 Vic CapXXVII). The site was suitable because it was well outside the then developed area of the three towns, and yet still convenient for all three. The Cemetery was extended in 1875 (another act, 38 Vic CLV), and as recently as a decade ago was handling around 200 burials a year, and still run by the private company, one of the oldest of the original private cemetery companies then in operation. The company went into liquidation in 1999 and the site has recently been acquired by the Ford Park Cemetery Trust, formed with the assistance of the City Council.

The buildings on the site (chapels, gate lodge and piers) are handsome, Gothic Revival buildings (listed). The lodge in Ford Park Road was for many years derelict but more than a decade ago was sold and restored as a private residence.



Ford Cemetery in 1872 (OS Survey) - source: PLHNSL 1894



Ford Park Cemetery is an important landscape and contiguous to the park

3.8 The Design of Central Park

The main impetus to park development in the inter-war period, and one of the main factors that distinguishes park design pre-1914 from that of the period 1918 –1939, is the emphasis on sport and the perceived link between public health and recreation. The Public Health Act, 1925, stressed the need to reserve land for recreation and the National Playing Fields Association was set up in the same year. The Open Spaces Standard promoted by the NPFA was 5 acres per 100 population. In 1926, the Institute of Public Administration was formed and throughout the 1930s, the Ministry of Health sanctioned loans to local authorities to buy and develop land for recreation and for unemployment relief. In 1936, the King George V Memorial Fund for the provision of playing fields was set up. The subscriptions to this fund were and still are administered by the King George’s Field Association and are carried out with the co-operation of the NPFA.

In the 1920s the City Council expanded its leisure provision significantly, pursuing capital projects to make the town more attractive as a holiday destination, quite apart from seeking to provide facilities for its fast increasing population. This activity focused on the Hoe – the masterplan that led to the construction of Tinside Pool was developed from 1926. This was a time of increasing leisure time and incomes, and a proliferation of leisure activities, some private (cinemas and pubs), others publicly funded (parks and lidos). This is the wider social context for Central Park.

In September 1924 (shortly after the new swimming baths at Mount Wise were opened), the Plymouth Town Clerk began to buy up land between Alma, Peverell and Cemetery Roads. This was in accordance with an early town planning scheme, the Plymouth Corporation Act 1923 (sheet 31 of which identified the area for purchase as a public park). A notice, required under the terms of the Act, was served on the then freeholders, Lord St Levan and Henry Hurrell (Shellabear's later partner). By June 1925 some progress had been made towards the land purchase for this 'central park', the earliest use of this name.

The land for the park was acquired through three transactions. The first was parcel was the largest, some 200 acres purchased freehold from John Townsend, Lord St Levan, for £87,000. A clay contour model of

this parcel was then commissioned, and the Parks Committee instructed that a landscape architect be commissioned. There was by this point a formally constituted Central Park Sub-Committee of the main Hoe and Parks Committee (however, neither its minutes nor any presented papers have been located). On 13 June 1927 22 acres was purchased from G and G G Shellabear and Henry Hurrell, for £312,356, and finally, on 31 July 1929, 18 acres from the same. This last purchase consisted of the Lower Venn and the Reservoir areas.

Thomas H Mawson's commission was confirmed on 27 March 1927. This was a progressive thing for the authority to do, since, generally, such schemes of improvement were worked out by Borough or City Surveyors, usually engineers, and, indeed, it would appear that there

was some tension between Mawson and Wibberley the Borough Engineer (who designed Tinside Pool, incidentally). In January 1928 the Parks Committee settled the matter, confirming that 'the landscape architect should do all the design work'.

This work included:

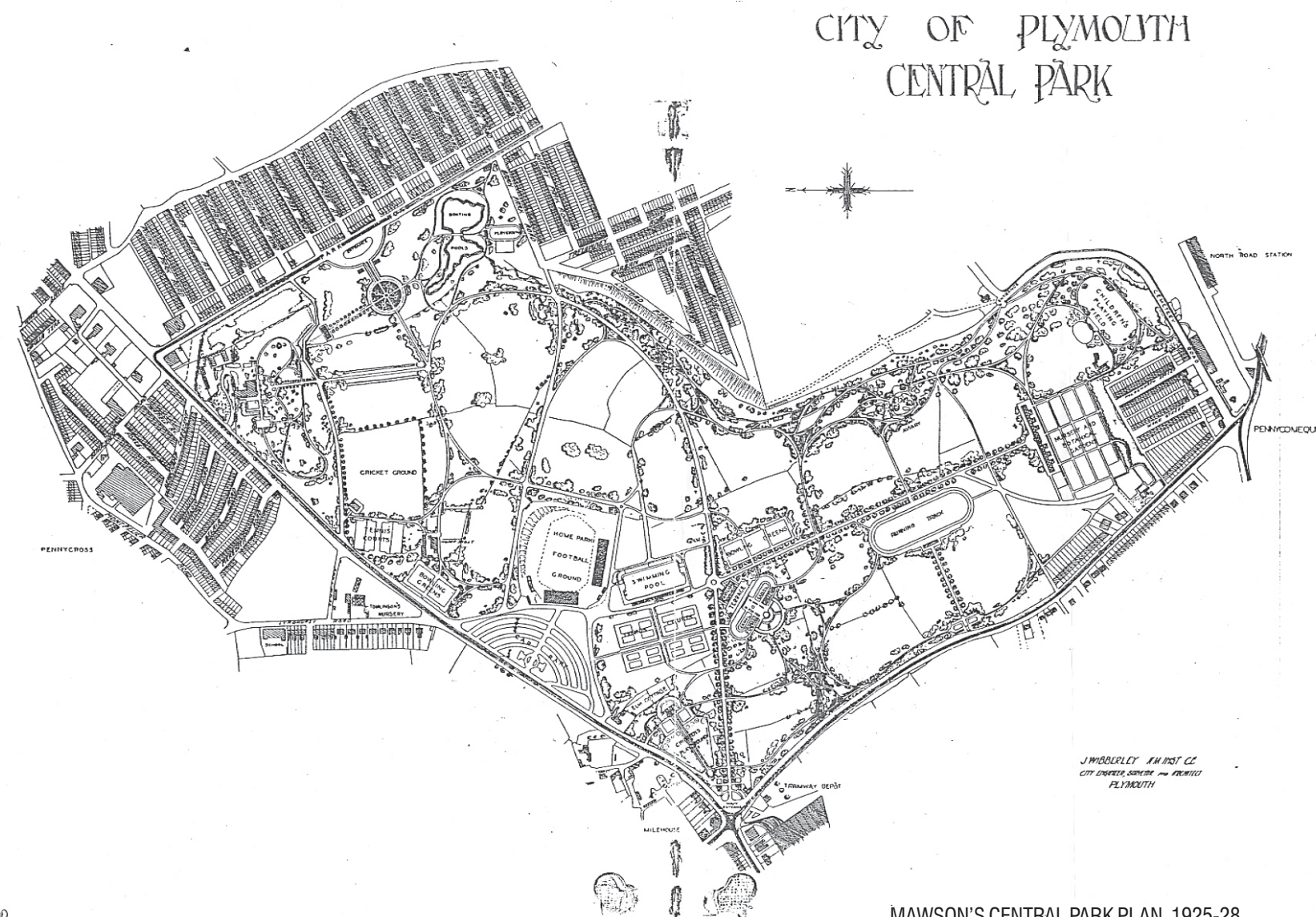
- A General layout of the Park (which was later published, and is the one reproduced in this report)
- Drawings of the main plantations
- Sectional drawings
- 1/8th scale drawings of any structures (these survive in the Cumbria Record Office in Kendall, which has the Mawson firm papers)
- Ideas on the layout of a golf course.

Mawson's later detailed designs for a number of built features survive in the Mawson Collection at the Cumbria Record Office in Kendall. These drawings are extremely fragile and cannot be reproduced. They are, in any case of limited use for our understanding of the Park as built.

All this was for a fee of £750, suggesting that design development and supervision of construction was going to be the work of the Borough Surveyor and his team. In fact the plan published in the programme marking the formal opening in 1931 bears the name of J Wibberley, the City 'Engineer, Surveyor and Architect'. The possibility cannot be ruled out that he changed the Mawson plan in some respects, though the final scheme is in the Mawson's 'house' style.

The architect's report was presented on 31 October 1928, signed, according to the Minutes of the Hoe and Parks Committee, by E Reuben Mawson.

This is almost certainly a misprint. The work must have been E Prentice Mawson, then principal partner at his father's firm T H Mawson & Sons. Hereafter that firm's involvement with the site appears to have ended.



MAWSON'S CENTRAL PARK PLAN, 1925-28

Thomas Mawson & Sons

The 1928 park design bears all the stylistic hallmarks of the T H Mawson Sons. Thomas Hayton Mawson (1861-1933) was a leading late Victorian and Edwardian landscape designer and town planner. Born in Lancashire, into a working class family, he would come to enjoy international celebrity with offices in London, Vancouver and Athens. At the age of 12 he entered the architectural office of an uncle practising in Lancaster, but had to leave because of a fear of heights. He moved to London and worked with a number of market gardeners, and returned to Cumbria in 1884 to set up his own nursery, Mawson Brothers Lakeland Nursery, which soon specialised in landscape design. By 1890 he had several large commissions in different parts of the country, all designed in his Windemere office.

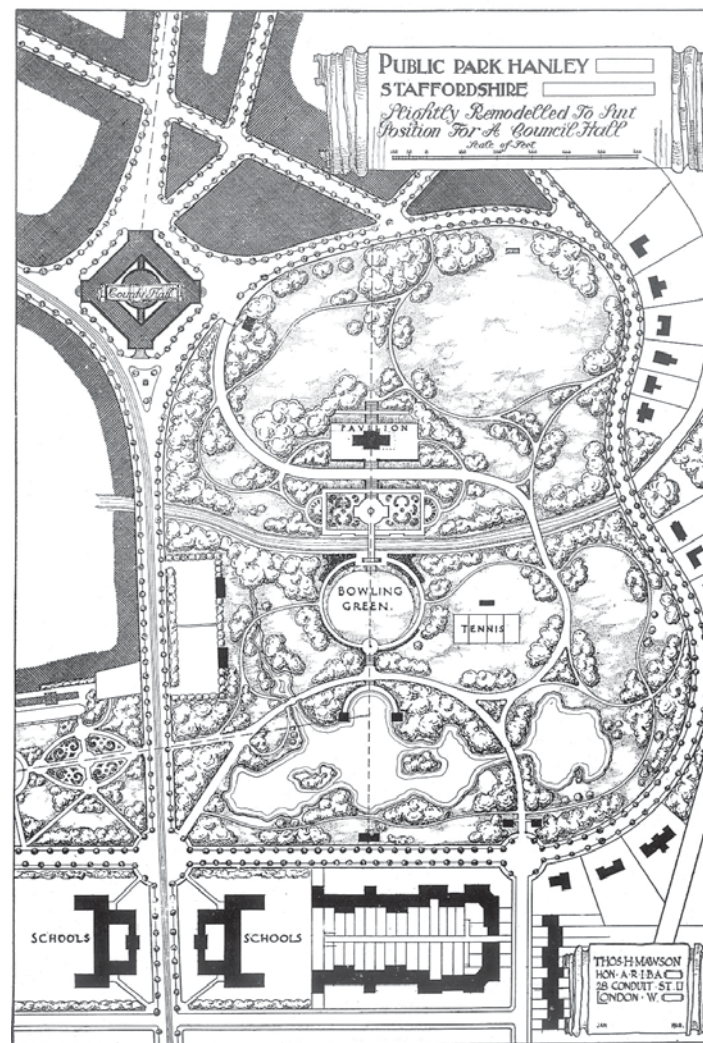
His style mixed formal and informal arrangements, and he was particularly interested in creating clear relationships between buildings and gardens. His first public commission was for a park at Hanley in Staffordshire, on land that was previously a pottery tip. This included the key features of his mature, civic style: formal terraces, pavilions, fountains, gardens, a boating lake and children's playground, all knit together in one tightly organised design. The plan of Hanley Park illustrates the subtle relationships between the formal and informal elements of the design. In the park itself the formal elements are even less apparent, due to the landforms and planting.

His commissions for local authorities led to involvement with the layout of town extensions, and from this he became interested in the budding town planning movement. Mawson was an early President of the Town Planning Institute (founded 1923, now the Royal Town Planning Institute) and joint founder of the Royal Fine Arts Commission (recently reconstituted as CABE). He took into partnership an architect, Dan Gibson, specifically to design the buildings in these early schemes and parks.

Mawson's office was small and he insisted on doing all the preliminary survey work himself before passing over sketch designs to trusted juniors. This entailed thousands of hours spent on railway journeys, which enabled him time to write. *The Art and Craft of Garden Making* (1900) was his first book. It sets out his particular concern, the relationship of architecture to gardens. His *Civic Art* of 1907 is more ambitious, and belongs more properly to the literature of the early town planning movement.

As more commissions in the south came in, the main office moved to Lancaster which had better rail connections than Windemere. In the years leading up to the First World War, Mawson was invited to lecture at the newly founded school of Civic Design in Liverpool, and even on the other side of the Atlantic, which in turn led to numerous consultancy commissions and a vast outpouring of concept sketches for north American public parks, particularly in Canada.

After the war his practice resumed its busy profile, benefitting from greatly increased spending on public works. The breakneck expansion of work led to nervous collapse in 1921/22 sadly. By the mid 1920s, he was also affected by Parkinson's disease, and spent the last eight years of his life (1925-1933) in a wheelchair, largely retired from his practice.



Mawson's plan for Hanley Park in Staffs. 1910

During this period he was honoured by being asked to act at the first president of the Institute of Landscape Architects (in 1929), but his illness prevented him from playing an active role. There is little doubt that in the first thirty years of the twentieth century, he was this country's leading exponent of landscape architecture, and one of its most celebrated practitioners and theorists and made a major contribution to park design in the UK. Among his designs are: East Park, Wolverhampton, 1896; Burslem Park, 1899; Broomfield Park, Southgate, London, 1903; Falinge Park, Rochdale, 1904; Sidney Park, Cleethorpes, 1905; Haslam Park, Preston, 1912; Stanley Park, Blackpool, 1922 – 6, etc.

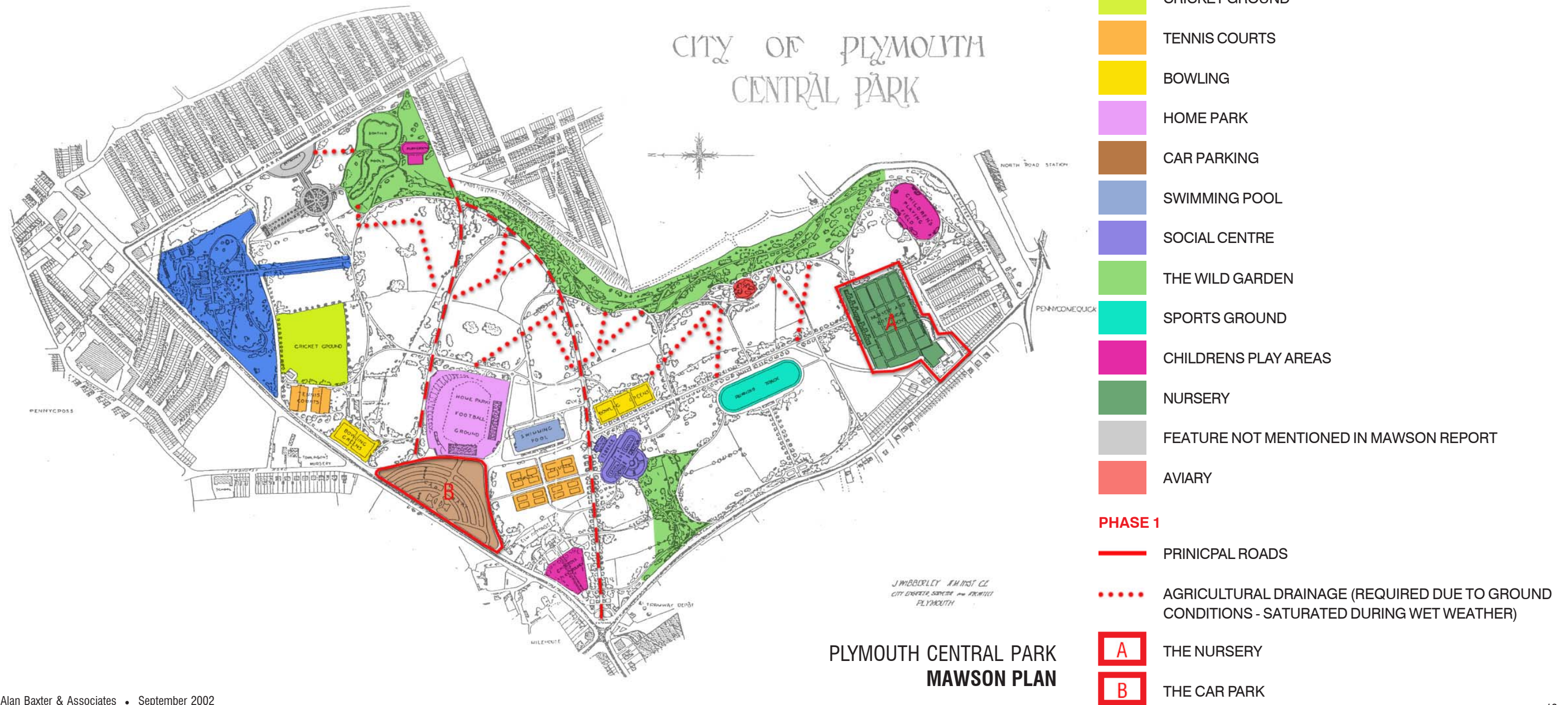


Mawson's Vancouver Coal Harbour plan 1913-14

There can also be little doubt, in view of Mawson's personal circumstances, that the design of Plymouth Central Park cannot really be ascribed to him. His son, E Prentice Mawson (1885-1954), who continued the firm successfully, followed his father's style. He studied at the Architectural Association in London, later the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, and entered the family firm in 1910, joining his father and brother J W Mawson. E P Mawson's principal works were the garden design for the Palace of Peace in The Hague, the design of Stanley Park in Blackpool and the Town Planning Schemes for Athens and Salonika. He was responsible for a pavilion at Weston super Mare and the Droitwich Spa Baths, in addition to the layout of the grounds at The Wood, South Tawton, Devon (a private commission).

E P Mawson was a designer of some ability, clearly, but he did not significantly develop the art of landscape architecture beyond what his father had achieved in this field. The design of Plymouth Central Park, therefore, is a good example of a prevailing trend, reflecting principles worked out before 1914. To see how Mawson's ideas could be developed further, it is instructive to compare the design of Central Park with that of the Norwich Parks designed by Capt. A. Sandys-Winsch. Sandys-Winsch was a gifted horticulturalist who had trained at Wisley and had then worked with Thomas Mawson. Between 1921 and 1933, he designed some seven parks in Norwich, all using unemployment relief labour. His most prestigious projects were Eaton Park, 1928 (80 acres) and Waterloo Park, 1933. At the time of its opening Waterloo Park was considered to be the finest park

in East Anglia. The formal core of the pavilion, lawn and bandstand, surrounded by pools and rills of water, is enclosed by pergolas. Steps lead to a herbaceous border 300 metres long, which formed part of the informal circular route around the park, which includes a woodland walk and a children's playground. The sports facilities included tennis courts, bowling greens and sports lawns, separated by yew hedges and set within the formal core. It has just been restored with Heritage Lottery funding.

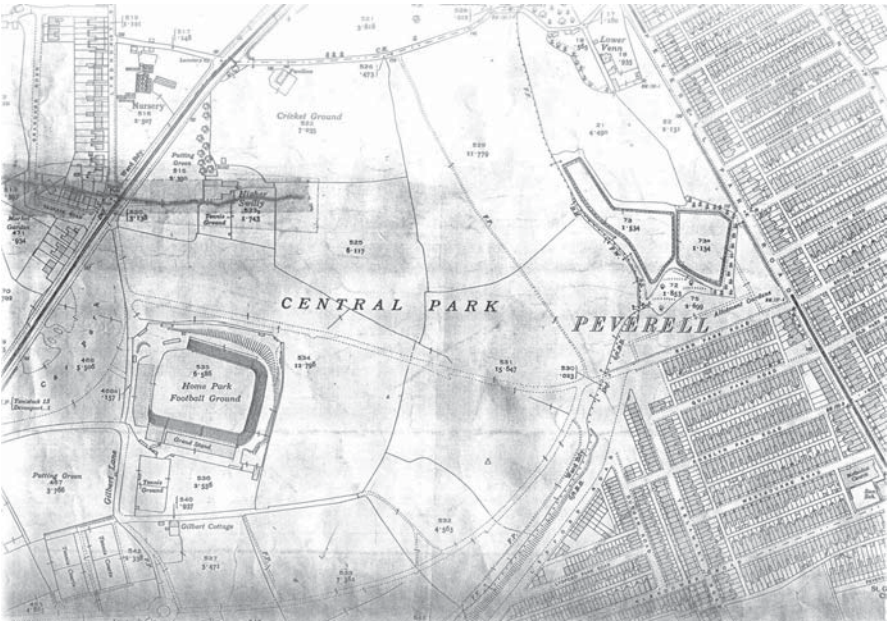


The main impetus to park development in the inter-war period, and one of the main factors that distinguishes park design pre-1914 from that of the period 1918 –1939, is the emphasis on sport and the perceived link between public health and recreation. The Public Health Act, 1925, stressed the need to reserve land for recreation and the National Playing Fields Association was set up in the same year. The Open Spaces Standard promoted by the NPFA was 5 acres per 100 population. In 1926, the Institute of Public Administration was formed and throughout the 1930s, the Ministry of Health sanctioned loans to local authorities to buy and develop land for recreation and for unemployment relief. In 1936, the King George V Memorial Fund for the provision of playing fields was set up. The subscriptions to this fund were and still are administered by the King George's Field Association and are carried out with the co-operation of the NPFA.

3.9 The Execution of Central Park

The ambitious Mawson plan was endorsed by the Hoe and Parks Committee, and then costed, which produced something of a shock. The City Council wrote the Ministry of Health seeking a loan for £130,000 – then the normal way of paying for such capital projects – to be used to carry out the 1928 Mawson plan over a ten-year period. This included for the formation of a feature entrance off Barn Park Road, which, in the event, like much else in the plan, was never executed.

The Ministry agreed to the use of unemployed labourers – as part of a national job creation scheme (the Unemployment Grants Committee) – in December 1929, 80 men for 80 weeks, as part of the phase one works that started in January 1930. In September a more ambitious programme for rebuilding Plymouth Argyle football grounds was approved by the local authority.



1935 OS plan

The Grand Opening and Early Projects

The new park was formally opened to the public at a special ceremony held on 29 July 1931, presided over by the mayor, Clifford Tozer (later Chairman of Plymouth Argyll). This took place on the children's playground and two paddling pools, the earliest of the building projects to be carried out. After which there was a procession to the tennis courts, and then the putting green. The day culminated in exhibitions of cricket, net ball, rounders, sailing, camping, games and gymnastics by children from Plymouth's Primary Schools. In the evening were concerts.

The Souvenir Programme noted the extent of work carried out in the first eighteen months:

- 1 ½ miles of avenues and paths
- Drainage of 144 acres of grassland for use as playing fields
- Playground with paddling pools (removed in the 1970s)
- Putting Greens (removed in the 1970s)
- Eight full-sized tennis courts (removed in the 1970s)
- Car park, with capacity for 1,000 vehicles, approached from Outlands Road

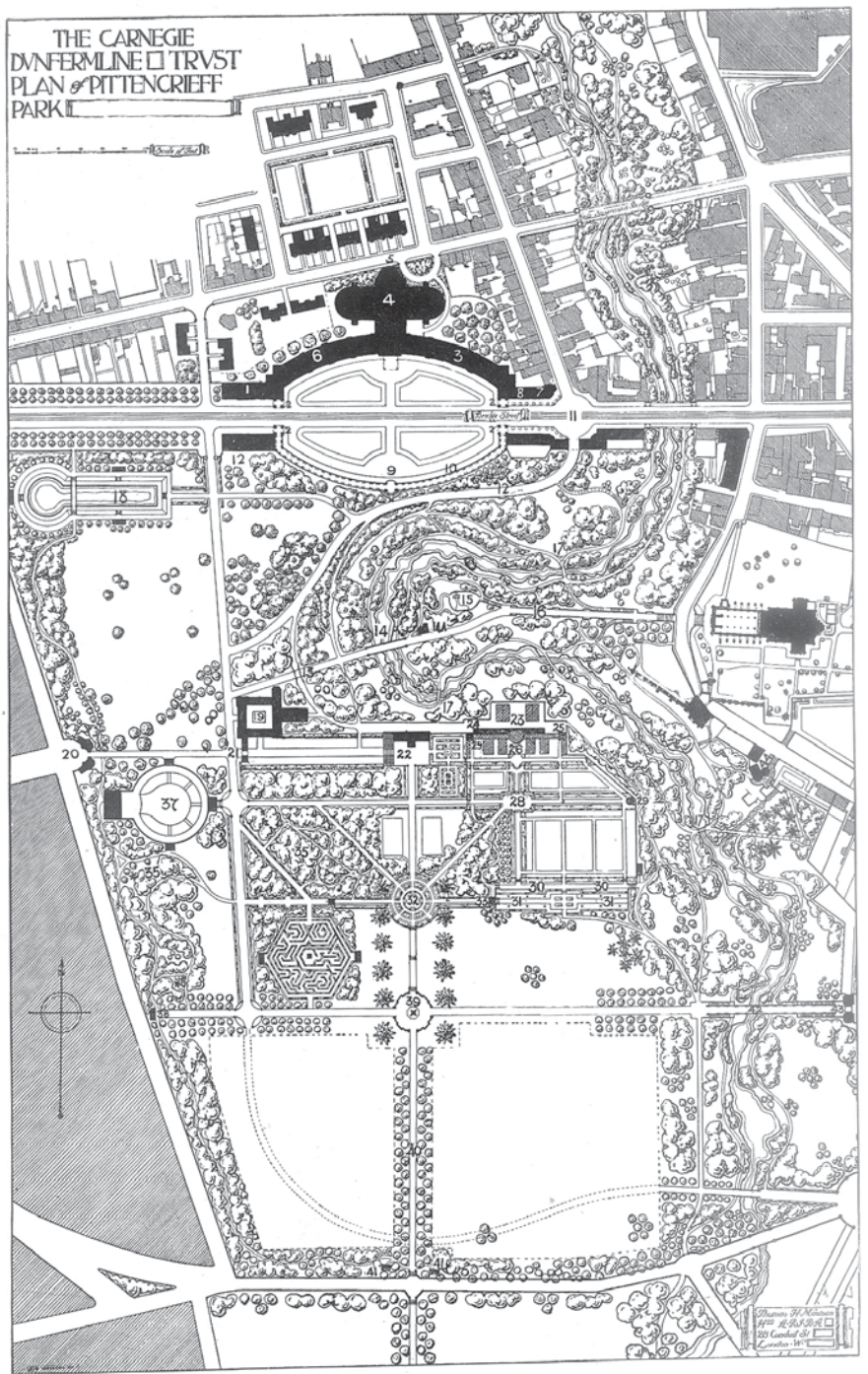


FIG. 253. BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE SURVEY WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE

Mawson's plan for Pittencrieff Park, 1920

Construction of ‘hard features’ commenced in 1931: shelters, toilets, park pavilions and so on, and plans were approved for 51 electric lamps. In December 1933 the local authority approved a design for the bowling green pavilion, and in February 1934 a bandstand.

The 1935 OS shows just how little had been achieved, and what had been executed clearly bore only a passing resemblance to what Mawson had projected.

One of the significant new features was Cricket Pavilion, design by a Plymouth Cricket Club Chairman, architect E G Catchpole in 1935. The Club itself has existed since the mid nineteenth century, and moved to the area soon to be formed into Central Park in the 1920s.

There were, clearly, very great hopes for the park. Bracken’s 1931 *History of Plymouth and Her Neighbours* states:

Much is being done to-day to improve our local amenities. The acquisition of the area between Milehouse Road and Peverell Park Road, including the old Exhibition Fields as a Central Park will, as development gradually takes place, provide a much needed open space for recreation of all kinds. During recent years also considerable sums have been expended on the provision of swimming facilities along the foreshore [Tinside, Sketchely Pool and Mount Wise are mentioned]...

A few years later the (undated) *City of Plymouth Official Guide* recorded:

Plymouth is studded with parks, all agreeably varied; Hartley on the northern heights, Beaumont Park which wanted to be a forest, Thorn Park retiring modestly behind villas of Mannamead, Devonport Park on top-toe above the roofs of the Dockyard town, and, newest and jolliest of all, the Central Park. To make this, the Corporation merged many fields, the number of acres running into the hundreds, and instead of felling and tidying and planting, left much of the land in its natural state. The park has hedges in it, and lanes and hayricks. In the centre, as in Hyde Park, it is possible to forget that a great city lies all around.

In the event, however, very little of what Mawson projected was ever executed. The layout of the area south of Pounds House has some affinities with what was projected, and the accompanying drawing **(cross reference)** documents surviving elements.



PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK
MAWSON PLAN
OVERLAID EXISTING LAYOUT



PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK
ELEMENTS OF MAWSON PLAN
EXTANT 2002

3.10 Analysis of Mawson Plan

The Mawson plan is for a park with two distinct characters. Its western half, near the trunk roads, football stadium and car park, was designed to accommodate organised sports and leisure activities, a series of facilities, each carefully laid out and landscaped.

The eastern half, bordering Ford Park Cemetery and early twentieth-century housing was much less formal, retaining, in places, pre-existing landscape elements including field boundaries.

Pounds House, a grand entrance in Peverell Park Road and Stonehouse Reservoir (reconfigured as a boating lake) formed a second focus of activity, but oriented towards quiet, less active forms of recreation.

The primary entrance was at Milehouse (the junction of Alma and Outlands Roads) close by a tram depot. This entrance leads to one of the two primary axes created by Mawson. This crosses a north-south avenue, leading to the former Exhibition Fields and Home Park (to the north). This drive loops northwards as it descends the slope, before forming part of the Pounds House network of paths. Although little of what Mawson planned was executed, nevertheless, it is important to underline the significance of what was implemented and what still survives today. The framework of Mawson's original design can be seen in the elements of Mawson's plan (see figure xx). Today, only the avenues remain and while these may seem a minimal element of the original projected plan, they continue to play an essential role in the structure of Central Park, just as was originally intended.

3.11 Later Developments and a Note on Sources

There has been significant development in and around the Active Leisure Core of Central Park since the 1960s.

In the immediate post-war period, there were few new buildings in the Active Leisure Core, partly due to war-time restrictions. In the early 1960s the City Council began to make plans for an ambitious expansion of facilities, in collaboration with various private operators. This initiated a period of almost continuous development that essentially is ongoing today. The Mawson plan, clearly, was still a guiding influence for some of these proposals. Early in 1964 there were discussions about forming a boating pool on the site of the old Stonehouse Reservoir, exactly the spot identified by the landscape architect. Generally the post-1960s work has stayed within the area he identified for organised recreational uses

Zoo and Skate Board Park, 1961-1981

A zoo was built in 1961-62, on a 5.6 acre site, to the area east of Home Park. A children's amusement park was created within it in 1963/64, and there followed various buildings used as animal houses, including a tropical house, a birds of prey cage, and reptile house. The zoo facilities expanded in the early 1970s: a dolphinarium in 1970, a sub-tropical species house in 1973-74 along with an animal operating theatre. The zoo had closed by the late 1970s, to be replaced by a skate board park (see below).

In 1979 a skateboard was formed on the former zoo site, the very one recently identified for use as a BMX bike track. It closed just two years later, in 1981, when the concrete structures were demolished and the site grassed over in order to increase the area devoted to open parkland, answering the objections of local people concerned over the loss of green space.

Public Shelters, Conveniences and Sports Facilities, 1961-67

A number of the public shelters and one convenience were constructed in the first half of the 1960s, including the sports changing rooms along the western edge of the park. Additional sports facilities – squash courts and ancillary accommodation – were added towards the end of that decade. A Go-Kart track – a popular attraction – was formed at this time (it received permission in 1967).

Recreation Centre/Mayflower Centre

By far the most significant development was the 1963-65 Recreation Centre, which included a swimming pool (formally opened in 1965), changing rooms, café and access roads. The current Golf Course was created at this time as well. The Centre expanded to form the Mayflower Centre, which opened in 1970, offering a wider range of sporting and leisure facilities. There were proposals in 1973 to erect a public house. Additions and alterations continued through the mid 1970s. Development on this site has been more or less continuous since, with various works, some of them minor alterations, the addition of more squash courts in 1981, for example, others more significant, specifically the 1981-83 enlargement of the swimming pool. This was to designs of the City Architect Edwin Surgery, and included a new diving pool and a new learner pool. The proposals were controversial, and sparked off local protest against the loss of open area in the park.

Club Facilities, 1980s and 1990s

In the late 1970s the Plymouth Cricket Club began to add to its site, extending the facilities first constructed in 1935. There were projects to extend car parking, and other works that continued through the late 1980s. There has recently (1998) been an outline planning application for a health and fitness club, with extended car parking facilities.

In the mid 1990s the Bowls Club's current clubhouse was erected, replacing a relatively recent structure. The position of the club was indicated on the Mawson Plan.

The 1981 City Engineer's Central Park Plan

In 1981 the City Engineer published the first major report on the Park's future since the original plan, which identified improvements including expansion into the 33-acre Ford Park. This had been prompted by growing local concerns at the encroachment of car parking inside the park and expansion of carriageways on its verge, both pressures along the western edge of the site, and also by the perception that development since the early 1960s had not been properly coordinated. This report also recommended that the eastern side of the park should be 'landscaped to create a countrylike feeling of woodland walks and shrubbers stretching from Pounds House to Pennycomequick. It was also proposed – and subsequently enacted – that Venn Lane which was at that time still being used by vehicles be formally closed to traffic.

The 1990 Leisure Proposals

Less than a decade later, in 1990 in fact, the City Council unveiled plans for a multi-million pounds, multi-purpose leisure facility to be developed and run privately. This would have run development over the current site used for exhibitions (circuses, festivals, religious revivals, etc.), and would have included a car park for 1,000 vehicles.

Plymouth Argyll's Home Park

The recent history of Plymouth Argyll Football Club's Home Park is similar to the Mayflower Centre, a series of adaptations and extensions since the mid 1970s, with significant extensions to the grandstands in 1986, 1992-94 and more recently. Remains of the older structure are fragmentary and of no heritage interest.

Recent and Emerging Proposals

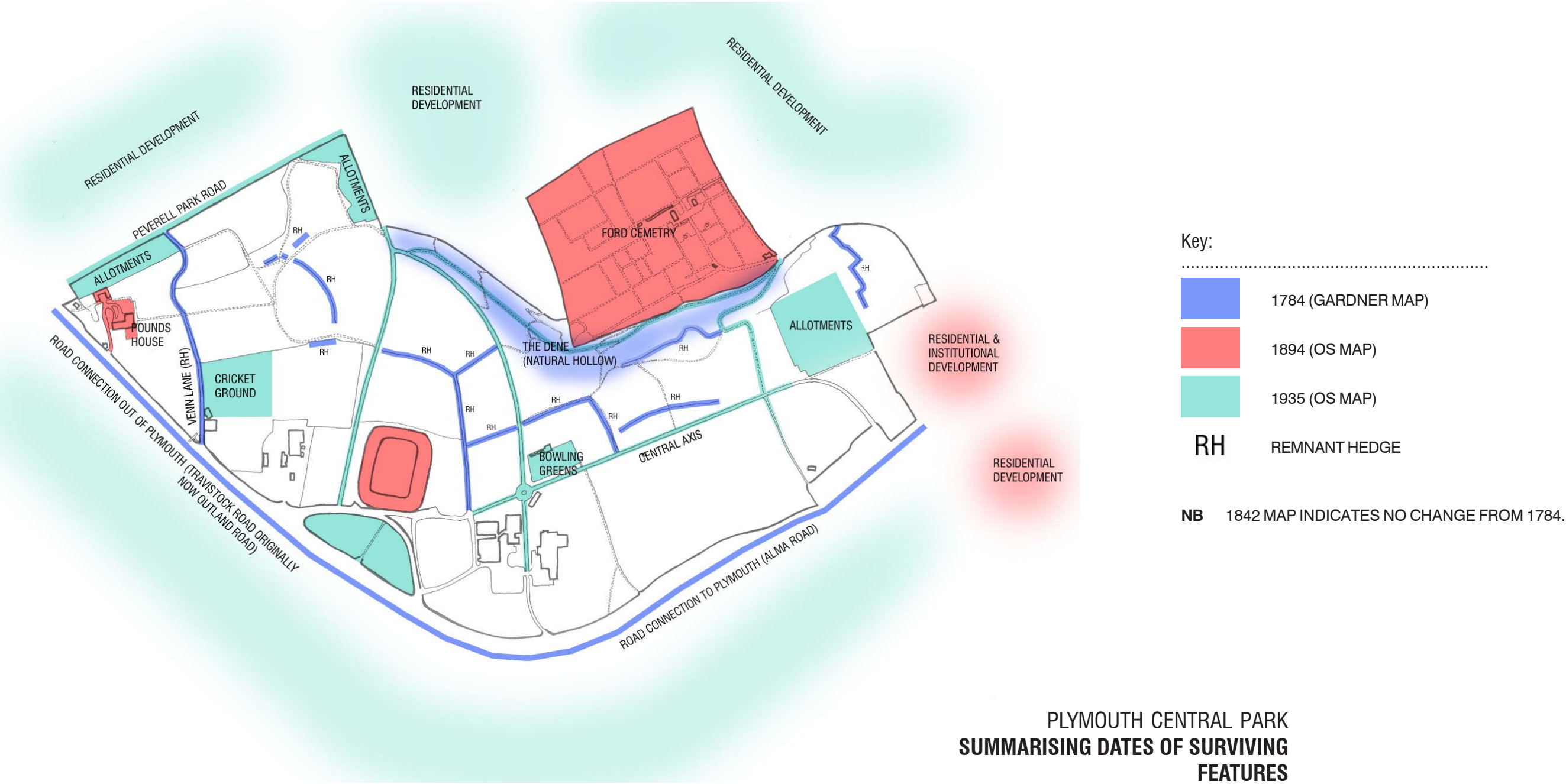
Proposals for leisure extending provision, demolishing existing structures, and rebuilding them are currently being worked up in the context of a masterplan which the Council's officers have prepared (see Appendix). These include the BMX track on the site of the former skateboarding park, and other play areas along the western verge of the park (summarised in the accompanying drawing), and a large adventure playground.

Pounds House

As part of the plans brought forward in the early 1960s, the Council considered improvements to Pounds House, which until that time had been occupied by the Town Clerk for many years. In 1963-64 it was refurbished as a cultural and health centre (opened in June 1964), with a branch library and meeting rooms for local groups, in addition to a café. The most significant development on the Pounds House site was the conversion of the unlisted stable block to the north, or rear of the

main property, for conversion as a surgery and offices. This conversion took place between 1990 and 1995.

Currently Pounds is used as Council offices, and there is no open access or public facilities on site.



4.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.1 Landscape Character

The object of the landscape character assessment is to reach an understanding of the constituent parts of a space. Central Park may be considered at various scales and each level of scrutiny provides a different level of detail. The scale at which one considers a space informs how one characterises that space. As the level of analysis becomes more detailed, the Park can be sub-divided into discrete areas, each of which demonstrates a series of attributes that define it. These attributes, or characteristics, may be physical, societal, functional, aesthetic or psychological, and they may vary to the extent that one set of attributes may be present in one character area, but not in another. However, the lack of a certain attribute is not necessarily a negative – the absence of a clear functional role in a space might contribute to its character which might be defined as confused, vibrant and noisy.

The role of the observer is central to the definition of character. While it is possible to identify a series of specific attributes, objectively (planting, topography, layout) the character is also generated by subjective associations. It is derived, ultimately, from the observations of an individual in a particular place over time. These observations may be added to those of others, codified and become generally accepted, but they have their genesis in how a space is experienced by people.

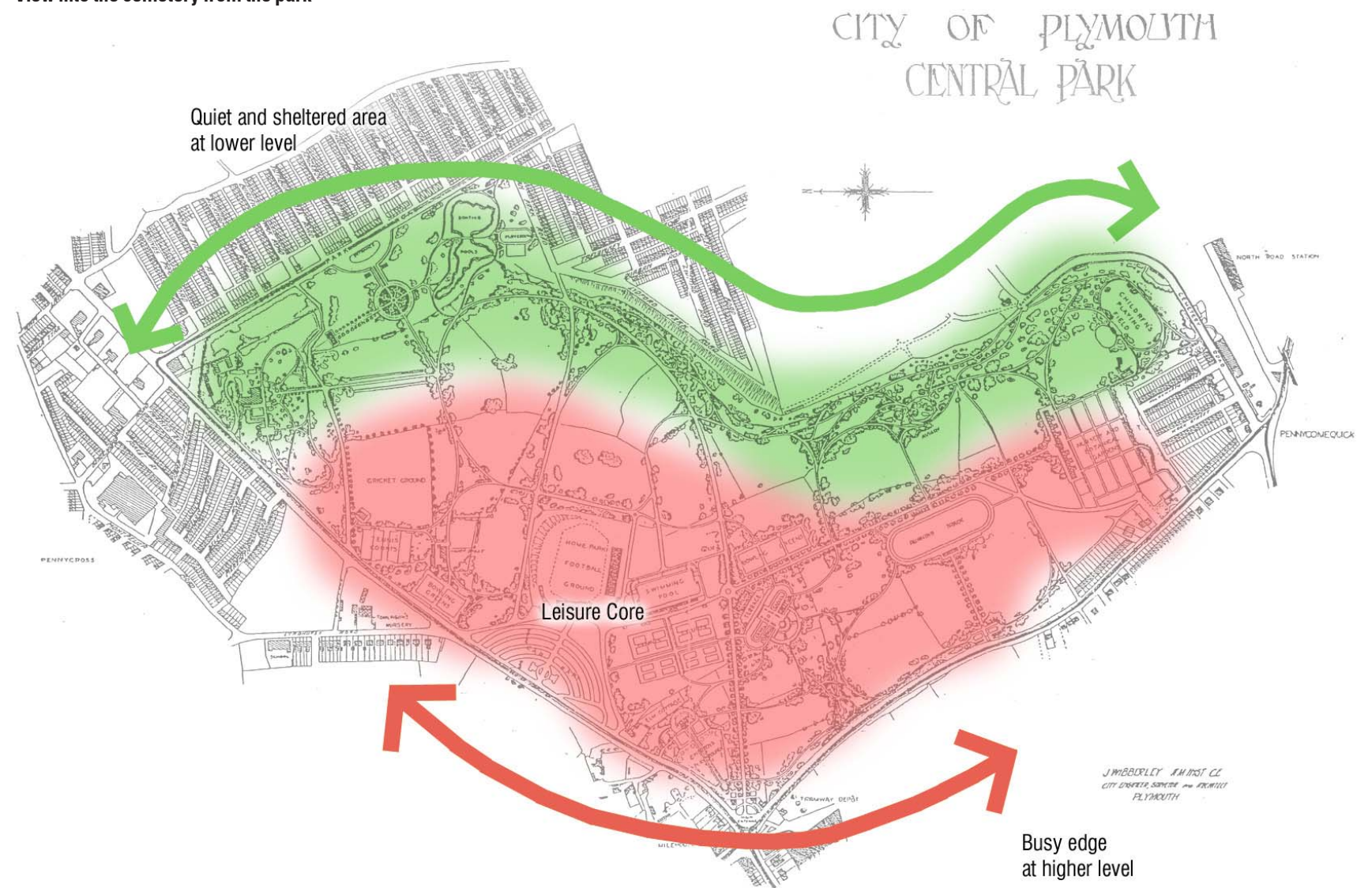
4.2 General Character of Central Park

It is a useful exercise to consider a space, initially, at the most basic level, i.e., at the 'general' level. When considering Central Park it is possible to identify one large division of the space into two gross character areas. At this level of detail, with such a simple characterisation of the space, it is not possible (nor would it serve any useful purpose) to attempt to describe the attributes of the two character areas in any great detail. The point of this exercise is to begin to identify where the fault lines lie, where the major character boundaries are located and how the Park functions at a very basic level.



View into the cemetery from the park

The figure below demonstrates how Central Park might be described as being composed of two very distinct character areas. The boundary between the two is not precisely, but it lies approximately along the line of the scarp, which runs from north to south through the centre of the park. To the east of this boundary, located in the lower level of the site, the Park may be said to be quieter, more sheltered and less developed. This area is more naturalistic in terms of planting and has a greater variety of landscape types and flora. To the west, the site is flatter, more developed and has a busier and more open feel to it.



PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK LANDSCAPE LEVELS

4.3 The Four Functional Character Areas





At the next level of detail, Central Park can be further sub-divided into a series of four character areas. Although there is a degree of overlap, each character area may be said to be defined by the functional attributes of the space. The largest area is the **Municipal Parkland**, which occupies the majority of the eastern half of the park and is analogous to the 'quiet, sheltered area' identified in the figure below. The next largest area is defined as **Formal Recreation and Argyle F.C.** Functionally, this area is characterised by a series of controlled and restricted access facilities where the principal activities are the practising or the watching of sport. This is also the most developed area in terms of buildings and hard surfaces (roads, car parks, fair ground, etc.).

The third character area, and the last within the Park proper, is the **Municipal Sports Field**. As its name suggests, this space is dominated by a series of public sports activities and supporting development. There is some overlap with the Formal Recreation area in that the swimming pool is a municipal concern. The Formal Recreation and the Municipal Sports Fields character areas jointly comprise the 'busy edge' identified in the figure below.

The last character area identified at this level of scrutiny is the **Cemetery**. Although Ford Park Cemetery does not constitute part of the Park proper, it is linked in terms of the landscape and the historical development of the area. As such, it would seem to make sense to consider the management of the two together, even if such an approach merely results in a series of complementary strategies and proposals which are funded, managed and implemented by separate agencies.



Key:

	CEMETRY
	MUNICIPAL PARKLAND
	FORMAL RECREATION & ARGYL FC
	MUNICIPAL SPORTS FIELD

4.4 The Fourteen Detailed Character Areas

The final level of detail breaks up the four functional character areas and considers the Park as series of inter-linked smaller character areas. At this juncture, it is important to be able to define the character in more detail and function alone will not suffice. A series of attributes relating to the physical form, the dominant habitat type and the sense of enclosure have also been considered for each area. In addition, the ability of the individual to experience the character must also be considered. Movement of park users, and the manner in which they gain access to and experience a space, are crucial elements in the

process defining the character of a space, as explained above. The figure below is a key plan setting out the fourteen different character areas identified in Plymouth Central Park. Each one is explained in terms of its visual qualities, its scale (relative to human scale), its function, the nature and quality of movement and the type of planting which predominates.

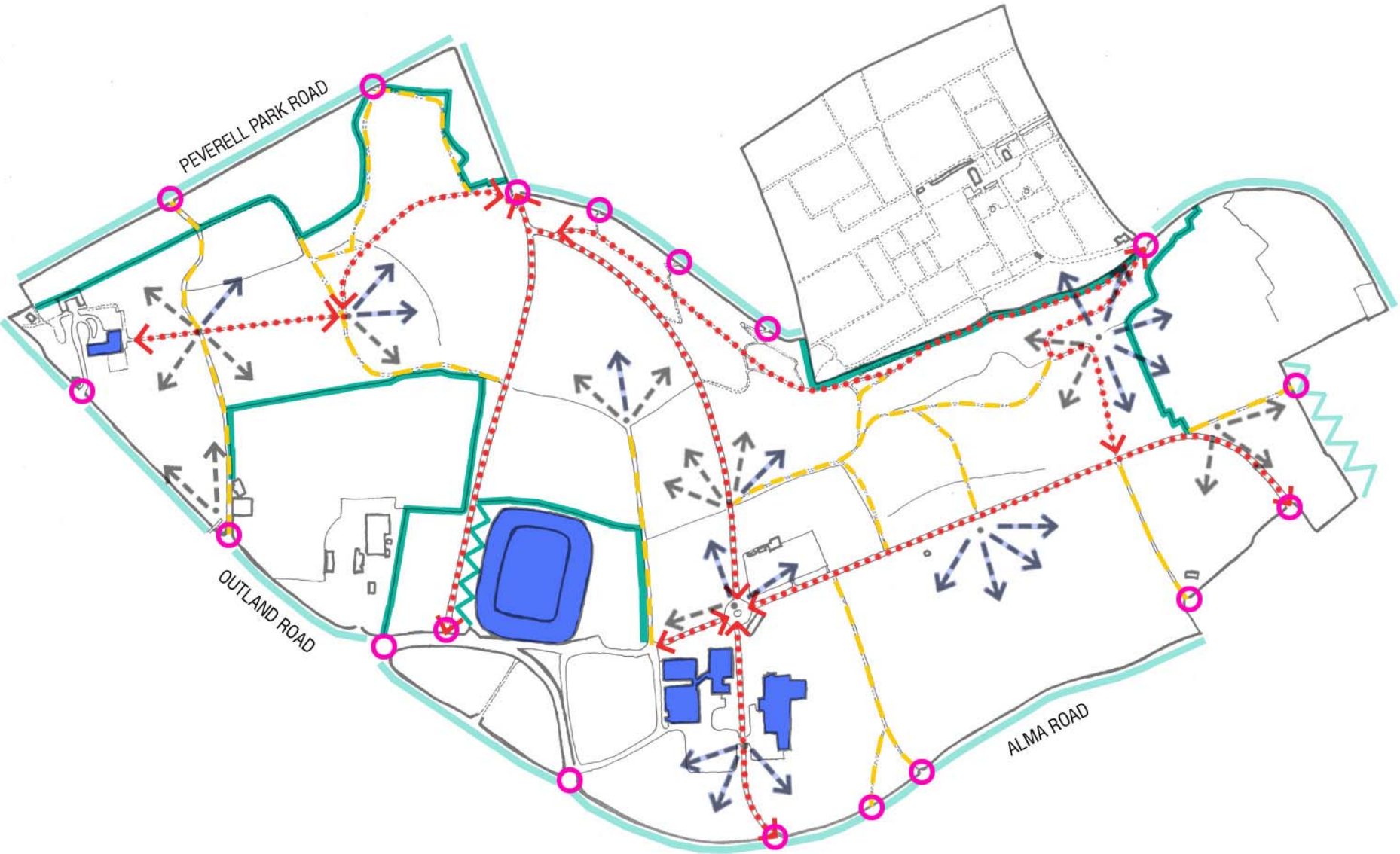


Key:

1	1 - POUND'S HOUSE
2a-c	2a-c - ALLOTMENTS
3	3 - LINK SPACE BETWEEN AREAS 1 & 5
4	4 - REDUNDANT SPACE
5	5 - AMENITY PARK
6	6 - RELICT PARK LAND
7	7 - AVENUES
8	8 - STERILE PARKLAND
9	9 - AMENITY SPORTS AND LEISURE
10	10 - AMENITY LEISURE
11	11 - RECREATION GROUND
12	12 - THE DENE
13	13 - FORD CEMETRY
14	14 - FORMAL RECREATION SPACE



PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK
TREE COVER
STRUCTURAL PLANTING ZONES



- Key:
- LANDMARK BUILDING
 - KEY ROUTES
 - SECONDARY ROUTES
 - EDGES INTERNAL
 - BARRIERS INTERNAL
 - EDGES EXTERNAL
 - BARRIERS EXTERNAL
 - ENTRANCES
 - VIEWS - MEDIUM
 - VIEWS - LONG

PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK
PARKSCAPE

4.5 Gazetteer of Character Areas

Having defined the qualities that contribute to the character of each of the areas identified in figure XX, the next stage is to consider what the significance of that character might be and how it contributes to the structure and quality of the Park.

Landscape Character Areas 1 - 14

1. Pound’s House

Visually	Open
Scale	Medium – with intimate spaces around edges of house and adjacent to areas of planting
Function	Grounds attendant to house – parking, gardens.Park land – open space
Movement	Path system focused on house. Movement across park land unrestricted.
Planting	Extensive tree planting across park land and around house – variety of species. Around house planting more gardenesque – relict of Victorian shrubbery. Relict hedgerow (Venn Lane) runs through space.

2a – c. Allotments

Visually	Enclosed, with views into sites from park and streets beyond.
Scale	Medium to small – broken up by divisions between plots.
Function	Domestic allotments.
Movement	Restricted – gates locked except to key-holders.
Planting	Hedgerows – <i>Rubus</i> , <i>Crataegus</i> , <i>Eleagnus</i> , <i>Acer</i> , <i>Fraxinus</i> , etc.



Allotments are not fully taken up. Boundaries are unattractive and intrusive



One of the two ‘Devon Lanes’ to survive in the park, relicts of an earlier landscape

3. Link space between areas 1 and 5

Visually	Open, except along western edges where it is enclosed by embankment around the sports club.
Scale	Medium.
Function	Amenity open land
Movement	Unrestricted
Planting	Mostly amenity sward. Some tree planting along edges and some shrub planting (rhododendron, camellia, etc.)

4. Redundant space – functionally part of 5 (site of former Reservoir)

Visually	Moderately enclosed
Scale	Medium-small
Function	Amenity park
Movement	Unrestricted, although boggy ground encourages walking along paths.
Planting	Hedge along boundary with the allotments, some coniferous planting along park boundary and relict hedgerows.

5. Amenity park with some sports provision

Visually	Open
Scale	Large – medium (space sub-divided by avenues and relict hedgerows)
Function	Municipal park, with some sports provision.
Movement	Open. Good network of main paths (avenue lit).
Planting	Scattered trees, some good specimens. Avenues of trees.

6. Relict park land – partially used for storage of demolition debris from Home Park

Visually	Open, but dominated by Home Park to the north and demolition debris stored to the west.
Scale	Medium
Function	Vague – could be amenity open space, but is cut off from the rest of the park and isolated by its location adjacent to Home Park.
Movement	Restricted – doesn't lead anywhere.
Planting	Relict hedgerow along southern boundary, and some park land tree planting.

7. Avenues – basis of circulation in the Mawson plan

Visually	Vary between open and enclosed – offering views along their length and, at selected points, out over the park.
Scale	Usually small scale, although views beyond create a feeling of greater scale locally.
Function	Access and circulation through the park.
Movement	Good, open (park gates never closed).
Planting	Usually with semi-mature planting, e.g. <i>Aesculus</i> , <i>Fraxinus</i> , <i>Prunus</i> etc.

8. Sterile park land attached to Swimming Pool and the Mayflower Centre

Visually	Very open
Scale	Large, with views towards the residential areas beyond (to the west) becoming more intimate around the buildings.
Function	None – serves the buildings, but has little apparent use value of its own.
Movement	Unrestricted, although there are few obvious destinations other than the buildings.
Planting	Some semi-mature and mature field trees mixed with new planting.

9. Amenity sports and leisure provision

Visually	Very open, almost exposed in places.
Scale	Very large – views off towards the Sound and the rest of the city.
Function	Amenity sports – rugby, football and pitch and put.
Movement	Unrestricted.
Planting	Occasional trees and avenues along the main axis. Some localised planting to create features for golfers.

10. Amenity leisure provision – bowling green. Part of the Mawson plan's 'centre'.

Visually	Enclosed
Scale	Small/intimate
Function	Amenity leisure/social
Movement	Restricted access to the bowling greens – unrestricted access to the areas of open space around the facility.
Planting	Scattered tree planting, avenue of trees along the main axis, boundary/barrier planting along the edge of the bowling club premises.



Rustic hedgerows contrast with the city. Excellent distant views from many points



Degraded pavement on main north-south walk



Long views in south, but no trees

11. Recreation ground – Penny-come-quick

Visually	Very open/exposed
Scale	Large
Function	None apparent other than as rough amenity open space.
Movement	Unrestricted
Planting	A few scattered trees

12. The Dene – naturalistic landscape – wooded glade and related woodland on slopes

Visually	Mostly enclosed with glimpsed views and selected views to Park beyond and to Ford Cemetery.
Scale	Small/intimate
Function	Amenity open space – used by dog walkers, parents and children, runners, etc. Wildlife habitat. Quiet and secluded.
Movement	Unrestricted along path, although occasional heavy scrub planting blocks lateral movements.
Planting	Very dense tree planting in places. Wide variety of species and age range. Little evidence of woodland floor planting.

13. Ford Cemetery – visually related to the Dene and the wider Park

Visually	Open and exposed at top (east) and more enclosed at the bottom (west).
Scale	Medium/small
Function	Cemetery, amenity open space, wildlife habitat.
Movement	Controlled and somewhat restricted in parts (signs saying beware, etc.).
Planting	Isolated trees (ornamental species) and close cut sward in managed areas. In unmanaged areas, planting is more naturalistic and lends itself to environmental management for habitat creation.

14. Formal recreation space – municipal and commercial, includes car park.

Visually	Varies between open and intimate.
Scale	Large – medium
Function	Home Park (PAFC), fun fair, private sports club, municipal yard, car park, swimming pool and Mayflower centre.
Movement	Controlled in some areas (e.g. around Home Park) and relatively free elsewhere.
Planting	Some relict hedgerow (Gilbert Lane) and some scattered tree planting. Avenue (<i>Aesculus</i>) bisects area.



Open land for passive leisure with good views of the surrounding streets



A number of original benches survive



A 1930s lean-to in the Pound’s playground; wall of earlier (late C18) date

5.0 SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS

5.1 Significance of Landscape Character Areas

Consideration of the significance of the character of a space (and its constituent parts) is a necessary consequence of defining that character in the first instance. The act of defining character implies that there is something about a space that sets it apart from other similar spaces. Despite shared qualities, these spaces are identifiably distinct from one another. Given that these differences exist, it is logical to ask if they are significant, i.e., do they imbue a space with a special character that is important, be it at a national, regional, local or personal level?

5.2 General Heritage Significance

Before considering the significant elements of Central Park in detail, it is useful to consider the importance of the space in general terms. Central Park is, and was always intended to be, a municipal, public park which combined sport and recreation, the key issues of park design in the interwar period. The original design was of high quality and ambitious. However, very little of it was executed. For this reason the Park cannot be said to have national significance in heritage terms. It is, however, of great local significance and regionally important. Although the original design was exceptionally ambitious, the intention of the Hoe and Parks Committee was, undoubtedly, to create a resource for the expanding suburban population of Plymouth.

That said, the site does bear some comparison with other, more renowned open spaces. The original intention was for Central Park to provide for the widest possible range of leisure needs. A quick glance at the original plan indicates the scale of the provision – tennis, golf, football, boating, bowls, horticulture, children’s play, nature walks, etc. In that respect, it might be said that the ambitions of the Hoe and Parks Committee were something akin to the grand ambitions of the original Crystal Palace Park. The park was seen as being the focus for commercial, as well as municipal, leisure activities concentrated in the western half of the site. The proportion of the park dedicated to these, more formal, pursuits is striking when one considers the general perception of a municipal, public park is often one in which soft landscape and low intensity leisure pursuits predominate. At Central Park, the original intention was quite different and, for its time,

radical. Certainly, in terms of the sheer size of the site, Central Park was an ambitious project with a budget to match (£130,000 in 1930, roughly equivalent to £6.2 million today). The proportion of the park dedicated to commercial and leisure activities indicates that it is a park of its time. Earlier Victorian and Edwardian parks may have had the image of low intensity pursuits, but towards the end of the nineteenth century many added football pitches, tennis, bowling and cycle tracks.

5.3 Degrees of Significance

Following on from the earlier process of character assessment, the analysis of the character areas is best approached by stages, considering the site’s importance at a variety of levels. At the wider, **national** scale Central Park (as mentioned above) does not possess the kind of character areas or individual elements which would merit comparison with, for example, Crystal Palace Park or the Earth Centre. It would be more relevant to compare Central Park with those parks which were conceived, designed and constructed during the same period (for example, the parks of Sandys-Winsch, or other, surviving Mawson parks). Such a comparison would reinforce the fact that Central Park reflects the key issues of park design in the inter-war period, i.e., sport and recreation. While Mawson’s design proposals were not fully implemented, nevertheless, the main structure of the park survives substantially as planned, and the historic significance of this should be recognised and emphasised.

At the **regional** scale, much of the significance attributable to Central Park proceeds from activities undertaken therein, and the functions it fulfils for certain sections of the population. Not least among these functions, is the fact that Central Park is home to Plymouth Argyle F.C. The existence of a sports ground on the site of Home Park pre-dates the establishment of the park by some 30 years, and the design of the Park undertaken by Mawson reflects this and respects the importance of association football as a leisure activity. The location of the car park and the avenues providing pedestrian access to Home Park, for example, are indicative of the place occupied by football in the hierarchy of activities pursued in Central Park.

The various sports and leisure pursuits located within the park, both private and municipal, create an identifiable activity zone along the western boundary. The very definite agglomeration of particular types of activity along this edge, together with the scale of development, dominates the park and provides a focus for many different user groups. This sports and leisure core contributes greatly to Central Park’s role as a regional facility. Furthermore, it requires a certain threshold of development to be achieved and maintained (activity and utility buildings, roads, car parks, etc.) for the different concerns to continue to function. Central Park’s significance on a regional scale needs to be considered in the context of the other public open spaces in Plymouth. This would require a more detailed general review of open space provision in the city, an exercise that might be undertaken at some future juncture.

At the **local** level, the park’s significance as a public open space, a location for different activities and as a landscape becomes even more marked. Central Park is, first and foremost, the local park for many people. As such, it fulfils a crucial role in allowing urban dwellers access to green, open space. The scale and quality of the open space, and the range of facilities available, are somewhat greater than the average municipal park might boast, but do not detract from this basic role. For many local people, there appears to be a division between ‘the park’ and the sports facilities along the western edge. This definition of Central Park, where the green parklands and naturalistic planting to the east constitute the local park, and the developments in the west are seen as being something else altogether, provides a key to understanding how the park works and how it is used by local people.

5.4 The significance of the character areas

Before proceeding to the individual elements that constitute the building bricks of the park, the extent to which the previously identified character areas contribute to the significance of the site deserves our attention.

As the level of detail of our analysis becomes greater, so too must the level of detail at which we consider the significance of the different parts of the park. The heritage significance, of course, is a major consideration, but each of the character areas may also be significant for other reasons – local use, natural history/habitat, views and vistas, etc.

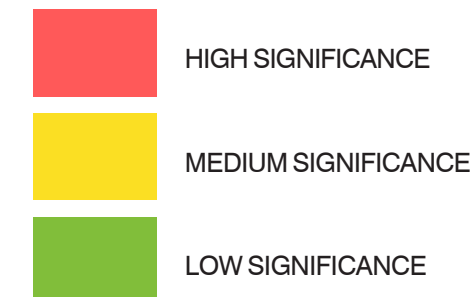
Pound's House

- **Heritage:** this is the oldest building on site, a good example of late Georgian suburban architecture and the largest non-sport use building on site. It has links with some of the more famous events and characters in local history, as well as one of the best examples of an old, remnant Devon country lane (Venn Lane), within its curtilage.
- **Other:** the building is an obvious resource for various activities and has been used as such up until the present day (library, archive, conference centre, events, etc.). Other uses have been proposed, e.g., school, commercial catering, etc. The parkland associated with the house has several fine trees and affords good views across the park and the surrounding area.

Allotment

- **Heritage:** in common with many other areas, Plymouth's allotments have their origins in the requirements for the nation to be self-sufficient in its food production during the First World War.
- **Other:** these are obviously well used and very popular among local residents. It is evident that they have a great emotional and personal significance for both users and visitors to the park. In addition, they have a potential part to play in various healthy living and educational initiatives.

Key:



PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK
HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Link Space between areas 1 and 5

- Heritage: this area was originally part of the outer parkland before Central Park was formed by the acquisition of various land holdings. The four remaining cypress trees on the western edge are reputedly linked to the Winnie the Pooh stories of A.A. Milne.
- Other: this area has a certain intrinsic value as public open space located within the Plymouth urban area, providing for local needs. Venn Lane also runs along its northern edge providing a degree of natural history and habitat significance.

Redundant space – functionally part of area 5

- Heritage: this site was previously part of the Stonehouse reservoir (now filled in) and there are significant remnants of the earth dyke.
- Other: a certain value as public open space and, also, as a location for sports activities. There are a few specimen trees which attest to the site previously being part of a larger ornamental parkland.

Amenity park with some sport provision

- Heritage: very little value, other than relict hedgerows which once formed the boundaries of the enclosed field system.
- Other: has a certain value as public open space and as a location for sport facilities. The relict hedgerows have some considerable habitat and natural history value.

Relict Park Land

- Heritage: very little value.
- Other: this site has been greatly compromised by its location in close proximity to Home Park. Half the site has been used as a spoil heap for demolition debris (soon to be removed we understand).

Avenues – basis of circulation in the Mawson masterplan

- Heritage: these are the only elements of the Mawson plan to have been implemented, which remain today. Along some parts of the avenues, local children planted trees some 60 or so years ago, many of which remain.
- Other: as the principal access routes across and through the park the avenues have a very important place in the structure of Central Park.

Sterile parkland

- Heritage: very little value.
- Other: this site affords views out of the park across the city. There are a few mature trees which have some amenity and natural history value, and a lot of new tree planting which will, when mature, create an interesting landscape.

Amenity sports and leisure provision

- Heritage: very little value, except to the extent that the original Mawson plan identified this area as being the focus for a variety of sport, leisure and other pursuits.
- Other: there are a number of well-used facilities in this area. The location, on the busier, more heavily developed side of the park provides better access to transport routes (park and ride, bus routes, etc.) and concentrates development in one discrete area.

Recreation ground

- Heritage: the name ‘Penny-come-quick’ has certain historic connotations, but little else about this area could be said to have any great historic significance.
- Other: the value of this site lies mainly in its function as public open space, although the quality of the space, and any facilities, is very low.

The Dene

- Heritage: the Dene is present on the earliest maps of the site and, as a topographic feature is an ancient element of the site. It was retained and made into a feature of the Mawson plan – the heart of the naturalistic landscape along the eastern boundary of the park.
- Other: many of the trees are noteworthy for their landscape and habitat value. The landform itself affords some very important views of the park and the cemetery as well as the wider city. The Dene is also the location for a variety of uses traditionally associated with municipal parks – dog walking, jogging, children’s play.

Ford Cemetery

- Heritage: as one of the oldest, active private cemetery companies in the country and with several fine buildings on the site, the cemetery possess considerable historic significance and value.
- Other: the cemetery is a local amenity and has both habitat and landscape value. There are key views to the city and into the park. Visually, very little separates the cemetery from the park.

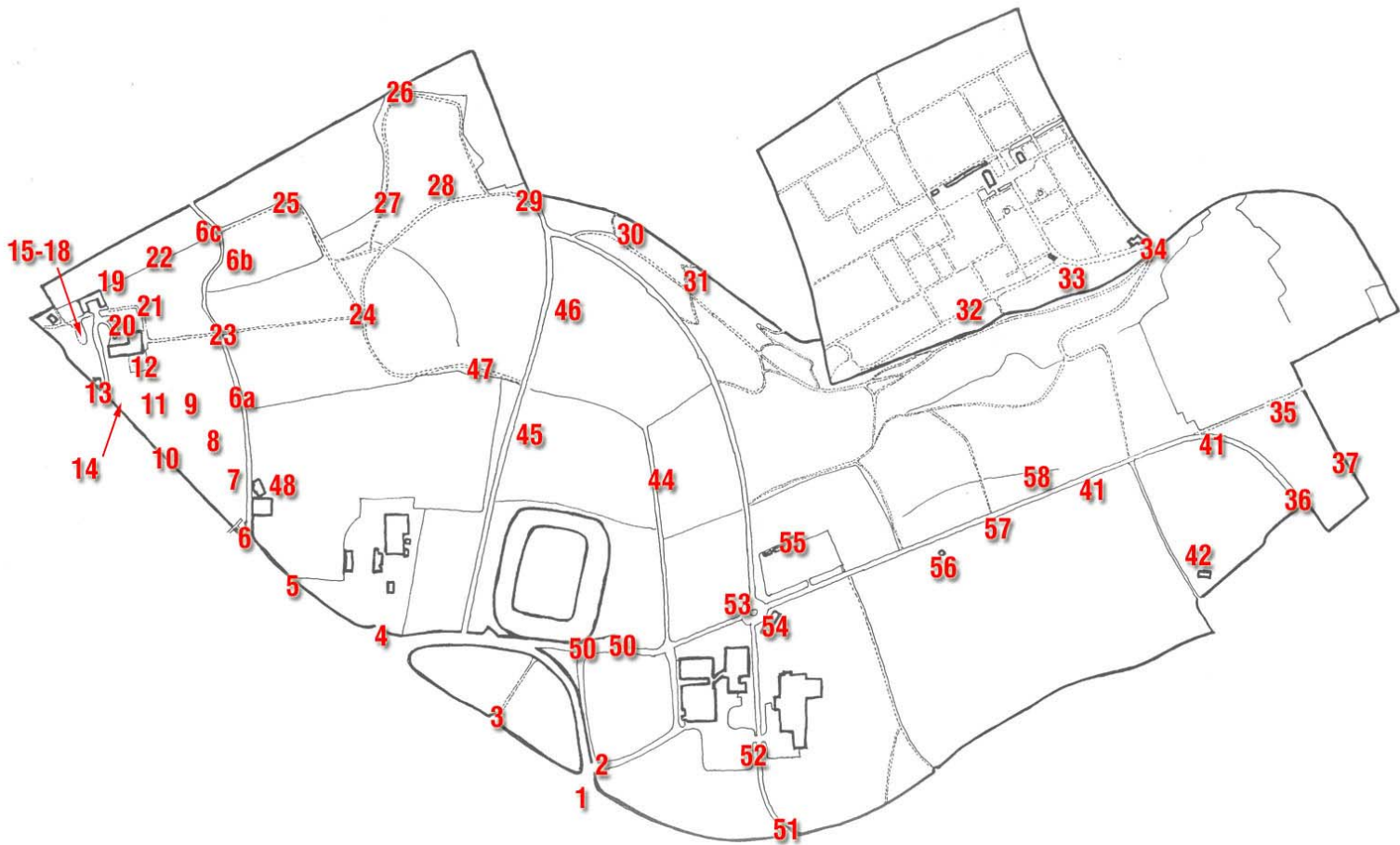
Formal recreation space – municipal and commercial

- Heritage: the sports club (and the cricket pavilion) and Home Park are the most obvious significant elements in this character area, although the renovation of the stadium has greatly reduced the heritage value of the site.
- Other: the sporting activities and the commercial and other leisure activities (e.g., the fun fair) are important elements of this area. The park-and-ride facility located in the Mawson plan car park is a significant part of the wider Plymouth transport system.

Gazetteer of Features of Heritage Interest

The following summary table and associated plan list the structures, buildings and other features (natural and man made) in the park, and indicates whether they are of heritage (historic or architectural/design) interest.

A separate ‘heritage areas’ drawing has been prepared. Some of the proposals for individual items overlap with more general recommendations; the schedule should, therefore, be read in conjunction other recommendations and drawings.



PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK
FEATURES OF HERITAGE INTEREST

Item No.	Name/Description	Heritage Merit	Comments/Proposals
1	Park Lodge, mid to late C19 with C20 additions to south and east. Appears to have been built as private house. Cottage Gothic style.	Medium (building of local note)	Reminder of earlier phase of suburban development in area, possibly associated. Restoration desirable; scope for new development to rear, replacing additions of no note.
2	Limestone Walls, C20 (likely post WWII)	Low (townscape value only)	
3	1930s car park kiosk, part of original plan for Central Park.	Low	Building of no distinction, or real historic value. Should not stand in way of new layout of this area.
4	c.1900 boundary wall in local stone	Low (townscape value only)	
5	c.1900 spearhead railings of standard design	Low (townscape value only)	
6A to 6B	Venn Lane: Hedge row/ former Devon Lane, retaining freestone wall to south junction road; west closed off.	Medium	Good interpretation board at 6A. Victorian gate piers in former boundary wall, bordering a Devon lane hedge, 6B. Path not well used, encouraging fears of personal safety, 6C. To consider as part of overall enhancement package for Pounds House and environs.

7 to 10	Pleasure ground around Pounds House.	High	Fine late Georgian landscape/early Victorian landscape has been compromised by tree loss (9) and embankment (10) of road to west. Contrast with rustic Devon lane (Venn Lane, see 6) is notable survival of earlier pattern. Planting regime/restoration to enhance this character. Relocation of unsuitable municipal park style features is desirable. Embankment bald in appearance; structure planting to mask boundary and create shelter, and more intimate enclosure.
11	C20 municipal planting scheme, including millstone.	Low/Negative	Intrudes on landscape setting of Pounds House. Millstone has no specific historic associations. Relocate and provide more interpretive context for millstone.
12	Formal garden treatment to west flank of Pounds	Medium	Although not authentic to period of house, formal garden in this location is highly suitable to the curtilage of a suburban mansion of the C18/C19. Consider, as part of redesign of area (7 to 10 above) a period garden (c.1820s). Could be part of re-presentation scheme of Pounds.
13	Early to mid C19 gate piers of limestone and associated stretches of wall, with single-storey gate lodge to north: Group once part of formal approach to Pounds.	High	Important element in the Pounds estate. Restore gates and enhance entrance treatment as part of considered landscape/house package (see below).
14	Railings to Pounds House, west lawn.	Low/Negative	Extremely intrusive in fine view south, over early C19 pleasure grounds to Pounds House.
15	Playground shelter of c1935.	Low/Medium	Elegant, simple design redolent of the 1930s. Built off earlier boundary wall (see 16 and 18)
16	Freestone boundary wall to west of playground, up to c.3 metres in places.	Medium	Now incorporated into playground enclosure, built originally in C19, very likely in part of Pounds House outbuildings/service yard (See 19: possible remnants of kitchen garden?) Retain.

17	1960s WC block	Low	No heritage value; excessively prominent.
18	Remnants of late C18/C19 brick boundary wall, forming part of playground enclosure (see 15 and 16 above).	Medium	Now incorporated into playground enclosure, built originally in C19, very likely in part of Pounds House outbuildings/service yard (See 19: possible remnants of kitchen garden?) Retain.
19	Pounds House stable block, early C19, recently adapted for conference facilities and Drs' surgery (early 1990s)	Medium	Handsome, simple detailing in limestone, a good classically proportioned building. Interest compromised by recent works which do not have regard to special interest of older buildings.
20	Pounds House, and landscape treatment (hard) in immediate setting. Structure Early and mid C19 (visual dating), with landscaping of various dates. Freestone low walls to embanked earth bordering drive appear late C19.	High (listed Grade II)	Key element in the northern part of the park, and feature in important views within the landscape. Public realm treatment and recent adaptations/alterations of very poor quality. Recommend feasibility study for this structure and associated landscape. See Summary concluding section
21	Rendered Italianate style balustrade and south terrace of Pounds House, along with associated steps.	High (curtilage of listed building)	Planting is overgrown obscuring view of Pounds House. Enhance as part of more comprehensive scheme for house. See summary, concluding section.
22	2-metre high plus limestone wall, part of earlier estate boundary, containing C19 pleasure grounds.	Medium	Retain; condition appears fair to poor in places. Some blocked original openings present opportunities to increase permeability and safety of eastern part of Venn Lane.
23	'Crossing' of Venn Lane with Mawson axis	High	Opportunity for enhancement (see landscape opportunities drawing) by re-establishing tree planting. Improve hard landscaping; opportunity for focal point and feature. Area to south of Pounds to be kept relatively open.
24	Mawson axis	High	This generally needs reinforcing by replanting missing specimens, which will also introduce scale into space.

25	Remnant hedgerow	Medium	See policies re hedgerows.
26	Gateway	Low	Potential for an enhanced gateway to the park, incorporating a map, information board and improved planting/boundary. See landscape recommendations.
27-28	Former earth dyke to Stonehouse Reservoir, C19.	Medium	Notable industrial archaeological feature – dykes and bowl of reservoir – to be included in interpretation strategy. See summary conclusions.
29	1930s Bollards and gate piers with ball finials. Note: Just east of piers, outside park boundary is an early C20 electric lighting standard of note.	Medium (for group of items)	Survival from Mawson phase, although likely not designed by him. Opportunity for gateway enhancement. Single-storey block to south detracts from appearance.
30	1930s concrete and timber benches	Low	Simple robust design of these benches could serve as model for new items. Existing should be retained/repared or reused in more suitable locations as required.
31	Expanse of 1930s concrete paving for park. In other areas this combined with flush granite edging/guttering.	Low	Of interest only for recording the character or paths as laid out in 1930s.
32	Mid Victorian boundary wall between park and cemetery	Medium	Boundary an important historic marker, and handsome structure. Making openings in it to integrate cemetery and park better would not compromise historic/landscape interest.
33	Brick shelter with rc roof, 1960s.	Low/Negative	
34	Pair of 1930s gate piers forming group with Gothic Revival lodge and its piers to east.	Medium	The 1930s piers are an unusual and attractive design. They appear in need of maintenance. This entrance is part of high significance area, proximate to cemetery entrance/building. Enhancement of structures and area a priority.
35	Playground enclosed by low limestone walls and benches, 1930s	Low	

36	Pair of late Victorian gate piers, designed probably to mark entrance to 'Exhibition Fields'	Medium	Good quality C19 street furniture with historic entrance. Retain/repair.
37	Partially demolished late C19/C20 limestone wall	Low	
38 to 40,42	Areas dealt considered in Landscape Opportunities section.	N/A	
41	Paths with original granite set gutters exposed, the tarmacadam likely covering over original concrete paving. See 31 above.	Low	Retain/reuse granite setts.
42	Changing rooms, c.1962.	Low/Neutral	
44	Another Devon Lane/hedge extant	Medium	Retain and maintain as characterful element.
45	One of most complete of the 'avenues' (layout and planting) to survive from the Mawson design of the 1930s.	High	See Landscape opportunities
46	1930s WC	Medium	Survival of original plan. See landscape opportunities.
47	C18/C19 field walls	Medium	Survival of earlier landscape features. See general policy recommendations.
48	Cricket Pavilion designed by E G Catchpole, 1935.	High	Building of listable quality, after Pounds House the most significant architectural feature in the Park.
50	1930s bollards	Low	
51	Late Victorian gate piers with contemporary bollards (these latter may be inter-war)	Medium	Retain/repair as historic features.

52	1960s shelter	Low/Neutral	
53	<i>Rond Pointe</i> and raised planter with clock, 1960s.	Low	
54	1930s toilet block, with post 1960 infill/extension to south.	Medium	Capable of enhancement/adaptation as a period feature of note.
55	Bowls Clubhouse, c. 1995	Low/Neutral	Recent building of no heritage interest, but clearly well used and maintained.
56	1960s Golf Kiosk	Low/Neutral	
57	1930s covered seat	Medium	Handsome original park feature.
58	1930s light standard	Medium	The only 1930s standard identified in the survey. Retain/reuse. Consider as model for new fixtures across the park or in certain locations.

Summary Statement of Significance

Central Park’s heritage significance is regional, as the largest public park in Plymouth possessing some historic value and interest locally.

This significance expresses itself in the following:

As an Example of Interwar, Municipal Park Design: The combination of active, organised and commercial leisure facilities with more passive and traditional recreational space, including the allotments – the fundamental characteristic of Central Park – is typical of inter-war park design in the United Kingdom. This duality is emblematic of the 1930s’ interest in health and exercise, increases in leisure time and disposable income, and the increased variety of leisure pursuits.

As an Example of the Work of Thomas Mawson: Although Mawson’s scheme was not executed in detail, some of its main elements (avenues, for instance, the retention of the Dene as a natural landscape, the integration of Pounds House with the general parkland) were carried out. It is, however, a late example of his work, an office production.

Local Historical Note: The landscape of the Park contains many ‘relict’ areas, which speak clearly about the pattern of land uses before the area came to be encapsulated by later suburban development. These elements include:

- Pounds House, grounds and associated structures and buildings
- Ford Park Cemetery (which has to be considered as an element in the overall heritage landscape)
- The network of relict hedges (particularly in the eastern half of the park, where there is greater survival – in the western, active leisure core, it is more difficult to understand these. The two complete ‘Devon Lanes’, for their full length spanning the active leisure and passive recreation cores, are of considerable local historical significance
- The remnants – earth dykes and configuration – of Stonehouse Reservoir
- A number of structures which are scattered across the site (these are itemised in the Gazetteer), and are generally of local townscape/landscape interest
- Additionally, the mid 1930s Cricket Pavilion in the Sports Club grounds. This is a potentially listable building, as an excellent example of inter-war Modern design, the work of a well-known architect (E G Catchpole), examples of whose work are found elsewhere in the City.

6.0 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 Introduction

The object of identifying the significance of different elements of the site is to allow for the definition of issues which have affected and will affect the quality and structure of Central Park. Although this is not a definitive list, the issues might include:

- physical condition
- ownership and present management
- use
- areas and boundaries
- resources
- external factors
- understanding
- previous alterations
- public and community expectations
- access
- statutory controls
- areas of conflict
- environmental capacity and threshold of the site

The object of this exercise is to achieve an understanding of the **vulnerability** of the site, i.e., which of the issues are critical to the future success of the Park. Some of these issues may be of immediate concern requiring a short-term response. On the whole, however, the aim is to identify how these issues affect the site long-term (for example, over a period of anything between 25 and 50 years) and to consider responses and strategies that address those issues over a similar period. The nature of a landscape (its character and its structure) is formed over a period of centuries. When looking at how it came to be at any one point in time, one must, of necessity, consider the actions of nature and man stretching back over considerable periods of time. Likewise, when considering the future of a landscape, one should take the long view.

Notwithstanding this overall, long-term approach, it is also important to consider how the various issues might be addressed in the short-term. A series of strategies to secure funding, for example, might be developed for implementation over a five-year period, the ultimate aim of which is to ensure the Park remains a vibrant, well used facility well into the 22nd century. These strategies (short-, medium- and long-term) will form the core of the Recommendations section, which follows.

6.2 Issues

Physical Condition

Central Park is a very large site, with disparate and radically different types of landscape and development within its boundaries. Overall, the Park is in relatively good condition, although there are some areas where degradation of the quality of natural and man made landscapes is apparent (*photographic examples*). Intrusion of development into the landscape of the Park is a major issue in that it has positive and negative implications for the future of the site.

Maintenance of some aspects of the Park would appear to be inadequate or inappropriate. A review of current practices and technologies is an obvious first step to improving the condition of the landscape. It should be noted, however, that given the sheer scale of the Park, maintenance generally would appear to be adequate for the purposes of maintaining the Park in its current condition. Further degradation will necessarily occur as different structural elements, planting combinations, furniture, etc. reach the end of their respective life spans.

The quality of the development, and the facilities attendant to it, varies greatly. Home Park is in the final stages of renovation, but there is some considerable degradation of the surrounding landscape, particularly on the boundary with Gilbert Lane, where considerable quantities of demolition debris are stored. The swimming pool/Mayflower Centre complex is also reasonably well maintained, although the integration of the buildings into the landscape is less than ideal.



Catchpole's Cricket pavilion, 1935



Drainage is poor in places, especially on the eastern boundary

Heritage Issues: Buildings and Structures

The future use and presentation of Pounds House, with its original pleasure grounds and outbuildings and structures, is perhaps the most significant heritage issue identified in this survey. A significant proportion of the park is formed from the house's grounds, and Mawson's scheme was an attempt to relate the house to the wider landscape.

The 1935 Cricket Pavilion poses another set of problems; it is perhaps the finest work of architecture in the park, yet it is unlisted and appears under-utilized.

There are a host of small-scale historic features scattered about the park – gate piers, a 1930s shelter, older boundary walls and hedges. Many are of some heritage interest (see the Gazetteer). These are generally only in fair condition. The very fact that they are scattered across the site, means that they are vulnerable.

Ownership and Present Management

Ultimately, ownership resides with Plymouth City Council, but there are issues relating to leaseholders. Plymouth Argyle F.C. and the private sports club, immediately adjacent to Home Park, occupy a considerable portion of the Park. The rights and obligations of leaseholders, and their very particular requirements in terms of access, storage, security, etc., need to be considered in light of their location within the Park. Views, nuisance, noise, access and other matters need to be considered from the point of view of those users who do not patronise the sport facilities.

Management and maintenance of the Park, overall, is a complicated issue. The presence of different uses, each with their own strategies and systems, added to the involvement of different Local Authority agencies (e.g. Transport, Planning, Environment, etc.) creates the potential for conflicts of interest as one set of priorities intrudes upon another. Long-term strategic approaches to the management of the Park need to take into account both the prevailing conditions and allow for potential changes (of use patterns, leaseholders, ownership, etc.). The objectives and aspirations of all stakeholders will, necessarily, affect the tenor and the outcome of these strategies.

Use

The effective division of Central Park into two halves, with the naturalistic landscape and parkland areas to the east and the developed core to the west, is the most obvious aspect of the use of the Park affecting its significance. The development provides the Park with a functional significance on a regional scale. At the same time, this element of the Park creates a tension between those who would use these facilities and those who regard such development as inimical to the character of the site, and are fearful that the extent of this development may well be extended in the future.



The western verge lacks definition

Areas and Boundaries

At 97 hectares (240 acres), Central Park is the largest open space in the city. Approximately one sixth of the site is occupied by sports facilities and associated development, the remainder being a mix of open parkland, municipal playing fields and naturalistic landscapes. As a proportion of the overall area, the developed areas are not greatly significant. The visual impact of the facilities is reduced to some extent by the careful location of tree planting along the eastern edge if the development. This provides some screening, although some buildings, for example, Home Park, are visible from almost every part of the Park.

The Park is sufficiently large to accommodate the development within its boundaries at present, some of which pre-dates the founding of the Park. The scale and nature of any further development, be it new development or replacement of existing facilities, requires careful consideration. The current ‘boundaries’ of the different elements of the Park need careful consideration, particularly in light of projected funding and revenue streams, against which must be set considerations of habitat and natural history heritage.

Resources

External Factors

There are a number of external issues that affect Central Park, not least the prevailing national decline in the funding and maintenance of public open space. The reduction in funding, and a loss of skills and experience, has resulted in the quality of many of our municipal parks and open spaces being seriously compromised over the last thirty years.

Another major consideration is the change in public perception of how public open space is used. Many groups are recorded as feeling marginalised and excluded from using public open space, for a variety of reasons – fear of crime, lack of facilities, access difficulties, etc. Central Park is not immune to these prevailing societal issues.

Understanding

The lack of a detailed tree survey is a major gap in our understanding of the heritage of Central Park. Given the relatively high tree cover and the maturity of many of the specimen trees, it is important to be able to identify the range of species and their quality.



1960s changing rooms is unattractive

As mentioned above, there is also a lack of documentary and, particularly, graphic evidence of the site. A key measure of the significance of any site is the degree to which it has been recorded by previous generations for posterity. Again, there is a need for this gap in our understanding to be addressed.

Previous Alterations

Public and Community Expectations

There is a good deal of public sentiment and support for Central Park. This, of course, expresses itself in a variety of ways, and there are various positions and opinions that have to be considered. For many, the perception of Central Park is one based upon the Park as a green, open space blessed with a variety of habitats and landscapes, sometimes under pressure from creeping development and ill-conceived proposals to regenerate and restore the park to its former glory. For others, the Park is where they go periodically to pursue an interest or activity, and their understanding of the landscape setting is minimal or something recognised only in passing. There are others again, who inhabit a range of middling positions. The difficulty for those charged with managing the Park, is that they are all valid positions, each requiring due attention and consideration.

This behoves the Local Authority to ensure that its approach is as inclusive and as transparent as possible. At the same time, the Local Authority has a responsibility to local residents, visitors to the facilities on site, the environment and future generations. Given this framework of responsibilities, strategic management of the park, which is also responsive to public and community expectations, requires a deft and carefully considered approach.

Access

The question of access is now enshrined in the Disability Act. As a consequence, all public facilities have to consider how they can maximise access for those with a range of impaired faculties. The topography of Central Park, and the fact that it was first laid out at a time when such matters were not given the same priority, does present problems in achieving universal access to all areas of the Park. Provision of new facilities will necessarily have to observe the requirements of the legislation, but existing facilities are often subject to exemptions dependent on the nature of the use, physical restrictions, planning designations, etc.

Access can also be interpreted in terms of social exclusion from a facility. For many, access is a matter of being able to afford travel costs to an activity or the price of an entry ticket. For other people, expectations, peer pressure and lack of opportunity represent the key obstacles to gaining access to a facility. The sports-related facilities on the western edge of the Park are more likely to be the focus for this kind of access difficulty.

Environmental Capacity and Threshold of the Site

As the objective of the exercise whereby the issues are identified, is to achieve a long-term view of the future management of the site. The notion of **sustainability** is now central to this approach. Sustainability has an environmental, an economic and a social component. Each of these must be considered individually and jointly to reach an understanding of the ability of Central Park to accommodate the likely future requirements placed upon it, while retaining the character and the attributes which currently define it.

One of the central precepts of sustainability is that of **environmental capacity**. The underlying theory is that a site has the capacity to absorb a given amount of a particular activity before degradation of that site occurs.

In terms of Central Park, the main issues relating to this notion of environmental capacity are those relating to the development of site. The naturalistic landscapes and the parkland are generally robust, but can be easily affected by new development, even when it might be some distance away. This sensitivity to the effects of external factors, both in time and space, makes the habitat and environmental capital of Central Park one of the major considerations when contemplating how the different uses within the Park might be located and managed.



The 1930s toilet block near the children's play area, extended 1950s



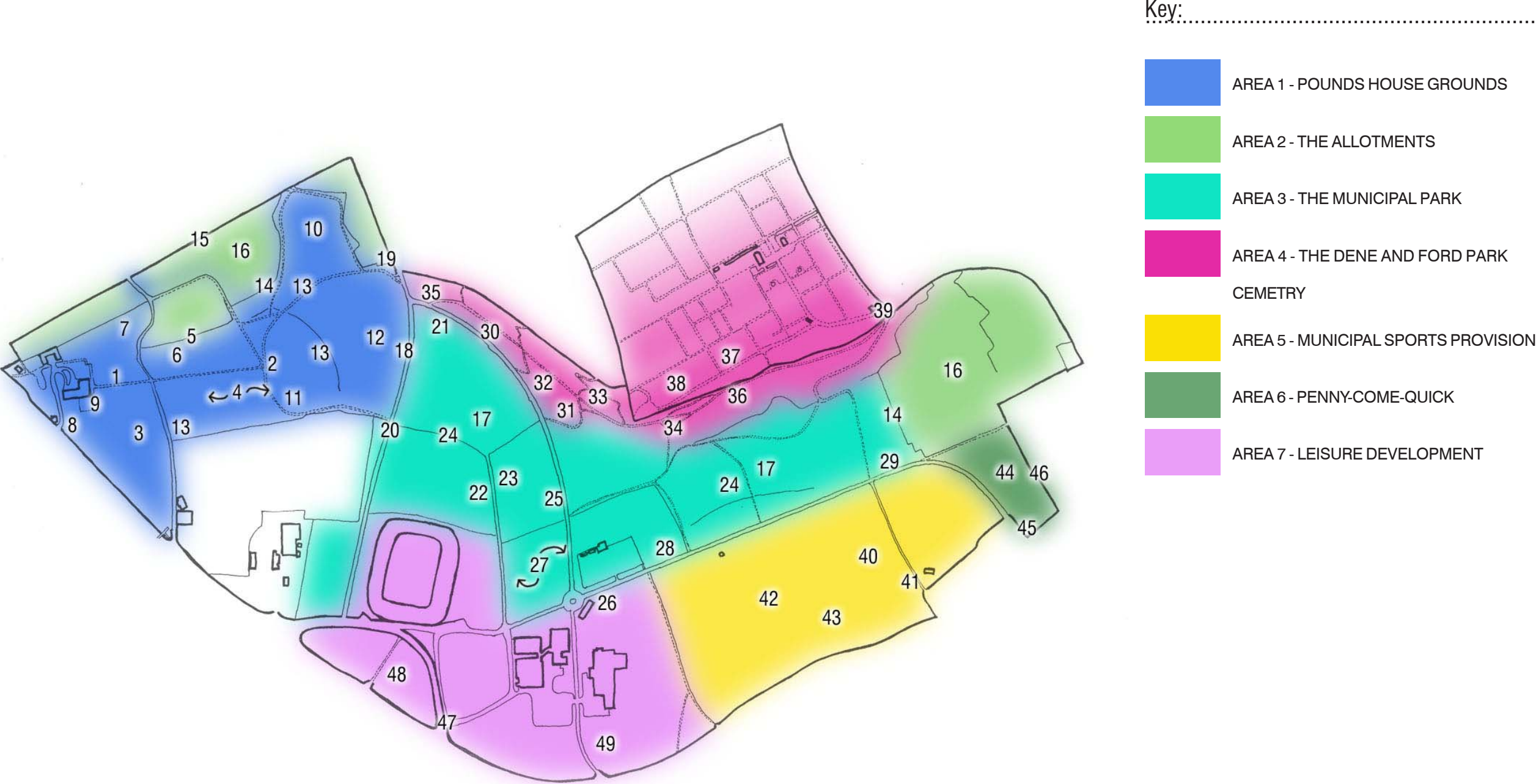
The park is popular as an exhibition site



A mid-1930s shelter near the Bowling Green, a characterful design

6.3 Opportunities

Having identified the issues that affect the park, the next step is to look at the opportunities available, both internal and external to the Park.



PLYMOUTH CENTRAL PARK
LANDSCAPE OPPORTUNITIES

Area 1 – Pounds House Grounds (extended)

1. Reinstate the avenue to Pounds House. Use flowering cherry species, avoiding the brutal pruning regime, which has resulted in the existing stunted pigmy specimens.
2. Create a new viewpoint/gathering space at the point where the avenue currently terminates. Consider extending the avenue to link the Pounds House grounds with the Mawson Avenue.
3. Devise and implement a planned programme of replacement for the existing trees in the grounds of Pounds House. This may require the removal of some existing specimens.
4. Extend the parkland quality of Pounds House grounds into the link space between that space and the southern elements of the park.
5. Thicken the boundary planting between the park and the allotments. Retain selected views.
6. Use a mix of contemporary interpretations of Victorian planting schemes and modern planting techniques to integrate the structure and the history of the newly extended Pounds House grounds with the modern context of the Park.
7. Construct new land drainage along the eastern edge of Pounds House parkland. This would be a necessary precursor to item 2, above.
8. Pounds House road entrance needs to be redesigned to remove conflict between pedestrians and car users.
9. Restore the gardens around Pounds House and the grounds. This work would be linked to a revised approach to the use of the building, the garden and the wider grounds.
10. Underused area at south-east corner of Pounds House grounds and allotments (the site of a former reservoir) – construct new drainage to reclaim this space for positive use. Create community facilities (play equipment, etc.) within a landscape setting designed to integrate the space with the Pounds House grounds on the one hand and, also, with the Dene. Create new gateway to park from Peveril Park Road.
11. Re-surface existing paths to provide better access for users.
12. Re-locate football pitch to new facilities in area 5.

13. Retain existing relict hedges to the south of this section of the park. Use ecological planting and maintenance techniques, instead of amenity grass maintenance regime, to place the hedgerows in a more naturalistic setting.

Area 2 – the Allotments

14. Strengthen the planting boundaries between the allotments and the park, retaining selected views, where possible.
15. Replace existing chain link fencing along boundaries with park and along street boundaries.
16. Conduct audits to ascertain how well used the facilities are. Do they have to be as extensive as they are at present? Depending on the results of such an audit, the options might be to either bring the land back into the Park or to convert the land for a low key community use (in both instances retaining the land as open space).

Area 3 – the Municipal Park

17. One of the first actions listed on the Mawson plan was the creation of a land drainage system to protect the new landscape. The site conditions still merit the installation of land drainage throughout this part of the site.
18. Remove temporary changing facilities.
19. Re-furbish and upgrade the gateway at the bottom of Barn Park Road.
20. Upgrade lighting and drainage along the Mawson Avenue running east to west.
21. Clean and repair the pond or remove it altogether.
22. Remove demolition debris and bring this section of the site back into the park.
23. Restore the damaged elements of Gilbert Lane where possible and protect the remainder.
24. Retain existing relict hedges in this section of the park. Use ecological planting and maintenance techniques, instead of amenity grass maintenance regime, to place the hedgerows in a more naturalistic setting.

25. Restore the avenue leading from Barn Park Rd towards the Mayflower/swimming pool complex, as this was part of the original Mawson Plan and one of the few elements executed. Remove the clock and replace with a more sculptural element.
26. Restore the building adjacent to the clock and bring it into use, either as a community or a commercial concern.
27. Replace furniture throughout with a standard specification and materials.
28. Restore the north to south avenue of Mawson's plan with new planting, lighting and furniture. Remove municipal, mixed planing beds adjacent to avenue planting and hedgerows.
29. Extend avenue (widen path, new tree planting) to top of Holdsworth Street.

Area 4 – The Dene and Ford Park Cemetery

30. Remove redundant 'jungle gym' equipment.
31. Replace amenity mown grass maintenance regimes with ecological regime throughout this area. Under-storey woodland planting and sustainable woodland management regimes to be applied. The aim of this change in management regime would be to create a series of woodland spaces with woodland plant species, glades, coppiced areas, etc.
32. Remove parkland/exotic tree species from the plant matrix.
33. Existing play equipment to be re-located as close as possible, but outside the Dene.
34. Remove the various styles of furniture
35. Interpretation materials to be installed along paths.
36. Paths to be re-surfaced to allow for disabled access through the main section of the site, with a network of more challenging paths leading off up the slopes to the west of the Dene.
37. Create routes into Ford Park Cemetery, bringing this site within the movement network of Central Park.
38. Create new planting along the boundaries between the Dene and Ford Park Cemetery.

39. Create a gateway to the park at the entrance off Ford Park Road and Central Park Avenue.

Area 5 – Municipal Sports Provision

40. Concentrate sports pitch provision in this area. Re-orientate existing pitches to maximise the number of pitches. Introduce floodlighting and flood lighting to mitigate any possible light pollution.
41. Provide new changing facilities.
42. Strengthen the boundaries between the golf course and the sports pitches.
43. New tree and shrub planting to break up the open aspect of the sports areas.

Area 6 – Penny-come-quick

44. Consider this space as a possible opportunity for development – income from this development to provide for new facilities elsewhere in the park.
45. New gateway at entrance onto Alma Road.
46. New tree planting along the southern boundary of Penny-come-quick, in the event that the space is not to be developed.

Area 7 – Leisure Development

47. Gateway at end of Gilbert Lane, leading to the park and to the leisure complex.
48. More tree planting around the car park. Review layout and revise if necessary to improve safe pedestrian access to bays and to the surrounding facilities.
49. The open landscape areas to the west of the swimming pool to be considered as land for development (leisure and associated uses).

7.0 POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Local History Project:

As there is an active users group concerned with the Park, we strongly advise that a local history project be established. Amongst other things, we suggest this consider the following:

- There is a real lack of visual information (photos, paintings, etc.) of Central Park in use. An archive of snapshots collected from local people would be extremely useful in documenting the history of the Park since WWII. Ultimately a copy of this should be deposited in the local studies collection.
- A 'Mattering Map'. Local people should translate their understanding of how the park is used and its history/ personal associations into a community map. This could form the basis of educational information.
- An oral history project, collecting the memories of older (and younger residents of the area and users) could be compiled to accompany the image bank.
- Older place names: These have proved very elusive to trace, but local people are well placed to do the detailed archival work to establish earlier place names. These local place names could be re-applied to different parts of the park, and form the basis for the creation of distinct area identities.
- This project could develop a web presence or 'front end'.

7.2 Education

Quite apart from the historic interest of the park design and layout itself, the landscape contains many features that recall the pattern of land use prior to the creation of Central Park. These provide ideal teaching opportunities, whether for the use of local schools or as part of public information leaflets/guide books. Such literature could be framed around a self-guided walk.

There are no information boards any of the principal entrances to the Park. Neither are we aware of any guided tours. These are essential if people are to understand the meaning of different features that survive from earlier phases, including:

- The relict hedges
- The remnants of the Reservoir
- The grounds of Stonehouse
- Mawson's design concept
- The Venn
- Elements of Pounds House, including the pleasure grounds.

7.3 Pounds House, Grounds and Associated Buildings

This is the most obvious remnant of the site's history, a fine building in its own right, with very handsome grounds to the south and west. The current regime of planting is municipal, and could be redesigned to emphasise the historic character. These more detailed considerations have been identified in the Landscape Opportunities section of this report.

As for Pounds House itself, this is a greatly underutilised resource, presented poorly, at present. It should provide the recreational focus for the entire northern half of the Park. We therefore recommend a feasibility study looking at uses that increase public use and access, including, for example, a café, possibly even an art gallery dedicated to local subject matter and local artists (living and dead). It is the perfect place for exhibits on the Park's history, the distribution of information, the meeting.

This study should look at the entirety of the original pleasure ground, its boundaries (old country lanes, etc.) and its links to the parkland to the south, which are greatly capable of enhancement. See the Landscape Opportunities section. We strongly advise against any new development south of Ponds House before the carrying out of this study. This study should also consider the scope for enabling development within the curtilage of Pounds House (this seems greatest to the north of the house).

The grounds border Venn Lane, which is adjacent the 1930s Cricket Pavilion, identified in this report as a building of national architectural and historic importance. At present this structure is in need of attention (it was not clear to us if it is even in use). The feasibility study should consider the potential of the Pavilion to link in with the pleasure grounds of Pounds.

7.4 Ford Park Cemetery

We are surprised that there are no proposals to form links between the cemetery and the Park. In our view the two have to be considered together, and we strongly advise that emerging proposals have regard to the enormous potential in these space's common boundary – its leisure potential, certainly, but also the common historic interest, identified above. The cemetery is another relict of the earlier land use patterns, located outside what was then, in the mid nineteenth century, the city's area of development.

We suspect that several of the structures in the Cemetery are of listable quality. There may be notable individuals buried there too (see items 1.0 and 2.0).

We are aware of other municipal parks where recreational use has been extended into a contiguous, and still active cemetery (in Dundee, for example, where it works splendidly). Equally, there is a growing trend, most developed in London, to make cemeteries into public parks and nature reserves. Examples include: West Norwood Cemetery; Abney Park Cemetery; Highgate Cemetery. Chris Brooks' study of this phenomenon, *Mortal Remains*, considers the history and reuse of Victorian Cemeteries, and is well worth consulting on this point.

Practically, this proposal would involve linkage of the two local groups concerned with the areas.

7.5 Gateways

The two principal entrances to the east of the Park are greatly in need of improvement, and have some local heritage/landscape interest. Enhancements, including information boards, is highly desirable.

7.6 Relict Hedges

In general these should be maintained where they define a complete 'avenue' or 'lane' – there are two such examples. They should also be maintained outside the Active Leisure Core of the Park (that is, the eastern half), the exception being Gilbert Lane.

7.7 Maintain and Enhance Views

The topography of the site offers fine views, both internally and externally towards the city and the Sound. These should be retained and improved, where possible, particularly those views that afford a glimpse into or out of landscape areas such as the Dene or the Devon lanes (see figure xx).

7.8 Limit Eastward Extension of the Active Recreation Core

The divisions among the functional and character areas has been observed above. The separation of the more active from the naturalistic areas is one of the key elements of the character and the success of the Park as a landscape. The boundary should be maintained by putting a limit on future eastward extension of the active recreation core. Further development should be located within the core area, for example, along the Alma Road boundary.

7.9 The Dene

This space offers a marvellous opportunity to create and manage a series of natural woodland habitats. The process could be implemented in together with the education and Ford Cemetery policy recommendations noted above.

7.10 Sports Provision

Following on from point no. 8 above, the current surfeit of under-used and poorly maintained sports pitches should be concentrated in one location, together with new access, parking and changing facilities. This concentration of provision would necessarily occur along the western edge of the site.

PLYMOUTH

SX45NE
740-1/5/106

OUTLAND ROAD, Central Park
(East side)
Pounds House

II

Large villa. Mid C19. Stucco with stucco detail; dry slate hipped roofs and flat roofs with balustraded parapets or deep eaves, all with modillion cornices; stuccoed axial and end stacks with louvred entablature; various roof dormers.

Large overall L-shaped plan.

EXTERIOR: 2 storeys; 1:3:1-bay garden front with centre bays set back and fronted by a 5-bay loggia. Stucco detail of all elevations includes: channelled rustication to ground floor and segmental or round-arched openings; mostly plain stucco to 1st floor, and pilastered openings with open triangular or segmental pediments on consoles, or square-headed single lights or groups of lights with moulded cornice hoods on consoles. The windows are late C19 or C20 horned sashes and some French windows. The loggia has an arcade of keyed round arches on panelled square columns and the balcony above has a turned balustrade over a moulded and modillion cornice. The moulding continues as a string around the building and is embellished with modillions where it breaks forward over projecting features. The wings flanking the loggia have canted bay windows to ground floor and tripartite windows above. Along the front of the attached terrace and to steps on the left-hand side towards rear are turned balustrades like the balcony balustrade.

Rear entrance front is 1:1:2 bays with distyle-in-antae unfluted Doric porch to 2nd bay from left; balustraded balcony above porch which is set in front of 2-storey break with window with open pediment and flanking quoin strips above round-arched doorway with close-spoked fanlight. Blind windows left of porch, paired windows to 1st-floor right above single light, large window with margin panes and a pair of light at far right.

Right-hand return from entrance has triple lights to 1st bay, then a single light above a doorway, then a projecting bay with pedimented window with shallow balustraded balcony set above a wide tripartite window, now with central door, and at far right is a single-storey wing with balustraded parapet. Left-hand return from garden front is 1:3:1:1 bays with the left-hand bay set back and a 1st-floor oriel to right-hand bay.

Right-hand return from garden front has central pedimented

oriel on brackets and projecting bay on the right with pedimented window above a projecting window with paired square flanking columns.

INTERIOR: not inspected but likely to reflect the high quality of the exterior.

Good example of a mid C19 villa.

(The Buildings of England: Pevsner N: Devon: London: 1989-: 670).

Part Three. Proposals

2. A contribution to off-site open space / play facilities provision.
3. Safeguarding of land for transport improvements.
4. Contribution to provision of educational infrastructure in respect of any new homes provided.
5. In the region of 20% of homes provided to be to Lifetimes Homes standard.

Reasons for the Proposal.

This previously developed site lies on a busy transport corridor, where a high standard of design will be required. The redevelopment offers the opportunity to develop the site at a higher density whilst being in scale and character with the surrounding residential development.

Proposal 63. Land at Western Park Road / Home Park Avenue. Residential.

Land at Western Park Road / Home Park Avenue, is allocated for residential development (approximately 10 dwellings). Development proposals should make provision for the following:

1. Contribution to provision of educational infrastructure.
2. In the region of 20% of homes provided to be to Lifetimes Homes standard.

Reasons for the Proposal.

This is a disused industrial building on the south side of Home Park Avenue, in a predominantly residential area. Redevelopment for residential purposes would remove possible detrimental effects on residential amenity from continued commercial activity. Redevelopment could take the form of a continuation of the terrace or as a corner feature which would enhance the urban form.

Proposal 64. Land at Central Park. Leisure and Sport.

Land in the north western area of Central Park is allocated for leisure, entertainment, sports and cultural facilities. Development proposals should make provision for the following within the context of a co-ordinated master plan for the Park:

1. Contribution to the enhancement of sports and recreational provision at Central Park, including the replacement of the Mayflower Centre and improvements to Home Park.
2. Environmental and informal leisure improvements within Central Park as a whole including improved access through the Park.
3. Contribution to a new car park on allotment land adjacent to Peverell Park Corner (Proposal 123), including the rationalisation and improvement of allotment provision.
4. Improved transport links by a range of modes to the City Centre and outlying areas, including safe pedestrian links.

Reasons for the Proposal.

Central Park is Plymouth's largest park. It is located in an important position close to the City Centre at the heart of densely developed residential areas. The park plays a vital role both to local communities and the city as a whole. However the overall quality of much of its recreational provision does not meet the demands and expectations of modern society. Existing sporting facilities in Central Park serve the whole city and are in need of significant improvements. In addition, a number of green areas of the park are 'tired' and require more robust and higher quality hard and soft landscaping. Development is considered desirable which enhances the Park's status as a destination for sport and leisure and brings forward funding that allows the environment of the Park as a whole to be improved so that it meets future needs.

Efford.**Proposal 65. Leaves Yard, Windsor Road. Residential.**

Leaves Yard, Windsor Road, is allocated for residential development (approximately 32 dwellings). Development proposals should make provision for the following:

1. Assessment of land contamination and implementation of appropriate mitigation.
2. Contribution to provision of alternative employment facilities elsewhere.
3. Contribution to provision of educational infrastructure.
4. In the region of 38-55% of homes provided to be affordable housing, on- or off-site.
5. In the region of 20% of homes provided to be to Lifetimes Homes standard.

Reasons for the Proposal.

This is an existing commercial site within a predominantly residential area. The access to the site is poor for use by commercial vehicles, and on-site activity is a potential source of disturbance to

Proposals Map
No.20

Objectives 6.14

Proposals Map
No.26

Appendix 1
(proposed SPG)

Objectives 1.7

Proposals Map
No.28

Objectives 6.14

Part Three. Proposals

Trelawny.

Proposal 121. Land at Recreation Road. Residential.

Land at Recreation Road is allocated for residential development (approximately 88 dwellings). Development proposals should make provision for the following:

1. On-site open space, and play facilities for young children.
2. Safe and convenient access an area for kickabouts and informal play, potentially off-site.
3. Contribution to provision of alternative employment facilities elsewhere.
4. In the region of 38-55% of homes provided to be affordable housing, on- or off-site.
5. In the region of 20% of homes provided to be to Lifetimes Homes standard.

Reasons for the Proposal.

This existing employment site is within an area of mixed land uses, including residential recreation, sport, and retail uses. Residential development does however closely abut the site on all sides. Problems of noise and traffic from the employment use of the site were raised through the Community Planning Study process, and the site has been the source of a number of complaints from adjacent occupiers. The redevelopment of the site for residential use would help to consolidate residential use in the area, and result in environmental and townscape improvements.

The Community Planning Study process also highlighted for this part of the city a significant deficiency in provision of level grassed areas where children can play ball games. Provision of such facilities could either be on-site or through improved access to off-site provision, perhaps as part of the proposal for land at Ham Drive / Beacon Park (Proposal 85).

Proposal 122. Car park at Peverell Park Road. Car park.

Land at Peverell Park Road is allocated for a car park. Development proposals should make provision for the cycle parking facilities as part of the scheme.

Reasons for the Proposal.

Peverell Corner is a local centre providing valuable shopping and community uses adjacent to a busy road junction. The facilities have little off-street parking available to visitors. This reduces the viability of the local centre and causes inconvenience to the many residents living in adjacent streets.

The space where the off street parking is proposed is part of an allotment site. Proposal 64, for sports and leisure uses at Central Park, provides for the implementation of the car park together with the reorganisation of allotments, included provision of replacement allotments, necessitated as a result of the car park development.

3.3 City-wide proposals.

Proposal 123. Strategic Cycle Network. Cycle Network.

The strategic cycle network will be completed. Development proposals on and adjoining the route should provide for the following:

1. Safeguarding of the preferred route.
2. Provide for contributions towards the implementation of the cycleway.
3. Cycle parking facilities in respect of developments generating significant travel demands.

Reasons for the Proposal.

The City Council encourages cycling to aid sustainable development and to promote healthy living. Over the years it has declined to just 3% of journeys to work in 1991. The City Council aim to progress this towards a fourfold increase by 2012. One of the major deterrents to people using their cycles use is the fear of danger on the roads. The strategic cycle network is shown in Annex 3 of the Proposals Map. It comprises both continuous lengths of route and improved safety conditions for cyclists. These factors will help attract people to use their cycles both for functional and recreational purposes, and so increase cycle trips in the city. Its completion is supported in the General Community Planning Study

Proposals Map
No.20

Objectives 6.14

Proposals Map
No.20

Objective 5

See Annex 3 to
Proposals Map

Objectives 1.7 & 8.9

Part Four. Policies

Objectives 1.5
7.6**Reasons for the Policy.**

The City Council is aware of the demand for berths and moorings in the city. The City Council is committed to improving leisure and tourism opportunities. However, proposals to meet this demand must be measured against a range of issues including the effect that marina developments can have on aspects of the city's environment including, waterfront views, water pollution and the well being of wildlife.

Policy 66. Waterfront development.

Waterfront developments should, where physically possible and appropriate, improve existing provision or create new provision and opportunities for public access to water based recreation. Such development should also maximise opportunities for the development of land infrastructure relevant to water based recreational activities.

Objectives 1.5
7.6**Reasons for the Policy.**

It is important that all sectors of the population have the opportunity to gain enjoyment from Plymouth's waterfront and that new development is compatible with this goal.

Access.Appendix 1
(proposed SPG)**Policy 67. Access for people with mobility problems and sensory impairment.**

Proposals for development to which people have access and where people work must ensure that satisfactory access is provided for people with mobility problems and sensory impairment, carers with children and the elderly. Exceptions to this will apply only where it can be demonstrated that meeting this requirement would:

1. Harm the character, appearance or setting of a listed building, ancient monument or conservation area.
2. Cause a significant obstruction to other users of the highway.

Where these exceptions apply, applications must demonstrate how the goods, services and facilities to be provided by the development will be made available to people.

Appendix 1
(proposed SPG)**Policy 68. Street works and furniture and people with mobility problems and sensory impairment.**

Planning permission will be granted for new and replacement street works and furniture, including temporary measures, where they:

1. Do not hinder people with mobility problems or sensory impairment.
2. Minimise obstructions to wheelchairs and pushchairs.
3. Are safe for everyone.

Objective 10.1

Reasons for Policies 67 & 68.

The application of these policies will ensure that new development provides satisfactory access for people with mobility problems and sensory impairment. Arrangements for the inside of buildings are dealt with to a large extent by Part M of the Building Regulations. It is not the role of the planning system to duplicate these measures. The policies will be applied sensitively with listed buildings, ancient monuments and conservation areas in order to balance the considerations of suitable access arrangements against protection of the historic environment.

Appendix 1
(proposed policy guidance)
Annex 4 of
Proposals
Map
(schedule of
greenscape
areas, including
description
of functions)**4.3 Environment.****Green space and wildlife.****Policy 69. Development in Greenscape Areas.**

Development on or adjacent to Greenscape Areas will not be permitted where it would result in unacceptable conflict with the function(s) or character of the designated land and the area that it benefits. In particular development proposals should not result in:

1. An unacceptable loss of public and private informal recreational facilities and allotments.
2. An unacceptable loss of playing fields or other organised sporting activity, contrary to policies 61 (playing fields) and 63 (protection of indoor or outdoor sports facilities).

Part Four. Policies

3. An unacceptable loss or impact on wildlife habitats, features or species of city-wide nature conservation, scientific or educational importance.
4. An unacceptable impact upon the visual quality and characteristics of the Greenscape Area and community to which it relates.
5. An unacceptable impact on the function that the Greenscape Area performs in separating urban areas, defining urban neighbourhoods, districts or edges.
6. An unacceptable loss of, severance or diversion of existing or potential pedestrian or cycling routes or linkages.
7. An unacceptable loss of or impact on historic or community cultural assets which the designation contains.
8. An unacceptable loss of or intrusion into the countryside. Development in areas identified as countryside should only meet an agricultural, horticultural or forestry need, or otherwise be compatible with the rural and urban fringe character of the area. The loss of the 'best and most versatile' agricultural land should be avoided.

In determining whether a loss of greenscape is unacceptable regard will be had to the following criteria:

- a. Whether there would be an overriding benefit to the local community from the development.
- b. In the case of formal or informal recreation facilities, whether the open space being lost is of low value to the community due to its poor quality, location or level of use and availability of other space that will adequately serve the needs of the community now and in the future.
- c. Whether an appropriate form of replacement provision of the greenscape functions, on or off-site, is proposed as part of the development.

Areas of green space that perform a city wide or higher level function are either central to the overall character of the city or perform such an important function that they should always be retained except in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Reasons for the Policy.

Protection of the city's green spaces, including leisure and wildlife opportunities, was one of the major issues raised through the Community Planning Studies. The policy seeks to provide a robust basis for protecting green space having regard to the Greenspace Assessment undertaken for the City Council and Countryside Agency in 1999.

Greenscape Areas possess a variety of functions. They also display different characteristics; ranging from the formal Victorian Parks in the southern part of the city to the often wooded, semi-natural valleys in the northern part of the city. What binds this variety of sites together is the importance that they play in people's quality of life and the wider benefits that such open space infrastructure gives to the image of the city and to the local and global environment. These spaces provide the most basic level of recreational and amenity resource that is, to all intents and purposes, freely available to people to use or appreciate. The provision and protection of structural green space to serve the needs of the city has been a consistent land use planning objective of the City Council, with its roots in the 1945 Plan for Plymouth. Decisions that would reduce any significant part of this resource should only be made in the context of a strategic land use plan and not ad-hoc planning decisions.

The Greenscape Areas designation generally includes larger sites. Smaller green spaces or linear and narrow spaces could nevertheless provide important functions which might need to be protected. These smaller green spaces are safeguarded by policies 25 (new housing development), 26 (Established Residential Areas) and Policy 77 (development context).

The identification of the functions present on any site is intended to enhance the decision making process and provide users of the Plan with a clearer understanding about what is particularly important on any designated green space site. However, it should be noted that the value of the whole of any green space is likely to be greater than the sum of its parts. The character of a green space and its contribution to a wider area are important considerations which will not be overlooked by concentrating overly on the impacts on individual functions attributed to each site.

Objectives 7.6
11.3, 13.1

Part Four. Policies

Policy 70. European and national nature conservation sites.

Development will not be permitted on or adjacent to a Special Protection Area, (candidate) Special Area of Conservation or Site of Special Scientific Interest if it would harm the value and reason for the designation, unless:

1. There is no reasonable alternative solution and the development is necessary for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, in relation to the status of the particular designation, or
2. Conditions or agreements can be used to prevent damaging impacts on the value and reason for the subject of the designation.

Objectives 13:1,
13:2, 13:7

Reasons for the Policy.

In the interest of safeguarding these areas of European and national importance for wildlife and science, development that might otherwise impact on such designations can be permitted where agreements or planning conditions can be used to prevent or limit impacts to an acceptable level. Only in the most exceptional and rarest of circumstances would damage to such designations be permitted through development. Such development would have to be clearly in the greater public interest for reasons imperative to public health or public importance.

Appendix 1
(existing SPG)

Policy 71. Protection of landscape features, habitats and species.

Existing landscape features, habitats or species which are worthy of protection or retention will be safeguarded. Development will be permitted where:

1. Landscape features, habitats and species that are worthy of retention for their townscape, landscape, nature conservation or amenity value are retained, protected and where appropriate incorporated in the landscaping proposals for the development.
2. The development layout is acceptable in relation to the potential impact on the future health or setting of landscape features, habitats or species to be retained.
3. There are satisfactory proposals for commensurate re-provision of any such feature or species that cannot reasonably be retained in their existing position.

Objectives 11:1,
11:4
13:4

Reasons for the Policy.

These features are capable of being important to the natural environment and human enjoyment and where they merit protection the City Council will seek to safeguard them or ensure their replacement where appropriate.

Certain features, especially species, are capable of being of great significance at a city, regional, national or even international level. Where species are scheduled under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, appear in a Red Data Book, or are listed as notable, rare or vulnerable, their protection or sensitive relocation will be a significant issue.

Appendix 1
(existing and
proposed SPGs)

Policy 72. Protecting trees.

Development proposals that adversely impact on trees will be permitted only where:

1. The felling of the tree is demonstrably necessary or the tree is not worthy of retention for its townscape, landscape, nature conservation or amenity value.
2. The development proposal will not harm the future health or setting of trees that are to be retained.
3. There are satisfactory proposals for new tree planting, where the loss of trees to development has been justified.

Objectives 11:1,
11:4, 13:4

Reasons for the Policy.

Trees are amongst the most valued features of the urban environment, a fact borne out by the Community Planning Study process, with a variety of environmental, social and even economic benefits. For example tree soften the impact of built up areas making them more attractive places to live and work. They may be cherished features of local community. They support wildlife. They improve air quality.

There may be rare occasions where the loss of a significant and good quality tree is justifiable in the greater public interest. Such losses should be recompensed by planting of new trees of an appropriate species and maturity.

Part Four. Policies

Historic environment.

Policy 73. Ancient monuments and archaeology.

The city's archaeological heritage will be preserved as far as possible by:

1. Not permitting proposals for development that would unacceptably affect the most important archaeological remains or their character or setting, whether these remains are scheduled or not.
2. Not permitting proposals for development that would unacceptably affect sites of lesser archaeological importance, unless it can be demonstrated that the importance of the development outweighs the importance of the archaeological resource. In these cases development will only be allowed subject to appropriate mitigation.
3. Where appropriate requiring an archaeological appraisal or evaluation of a site to accompany applications for development, or before an application will be determined. This particularly applies to sites within the historic core of the city; within other known historic foci in the city limits; on previously-developed sites, and on large greenfield sites.
4. Where appropriate requiring provision of interpretation in order to raise public awareness of the heritage asset.

Appendix 1
(proposed SPG)

Reasons for the Policy.

The archaeological resource is a finite and diminishing resource. It is therefore of the greatest importance to ensure that it is preserved as far as possible. The policy addresses this requirement.

Objectives 12:1,
12:5

Policy 74. Development affecting listed buildings.

Development affecting listed buildings will only be permitted where they preserve the building, its appearance, character and setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, unless:

1. The importance of the proposal is clearly demonstrated to be in the greater public interest than the relative importance of the particular building.
2. In the case of demolition, there is proven to be no viable existing or alternative use for the building in a reasonable or improved condition and the building is wholly or economically beyond repair.
3. Where part of the building is affected, it is not of special architectural or historic interest and the proposal is otherwise compatible with the status of the building and its character.
4. Exceptionally, where clear evidence demonstrates that the economic costs of preserving a listed building cannot be sustained. In such cases, sympathetic consideration will be given to proposals for enabling development which achieves an appropriate balance between the benefits of securing the building's survival and any harm likely to be caused to its historic and architectural qualities.
5. In the case of changes of use, the proposal represents the only viable use of the building and it would secure the survival and restoration of a building classed as being 'at risk'.

Appendix 1
(proposed SPG,
and
existing
guidance)

Proposals should where appropriate contribute towards the historic interpretation of the building.

Reasons for the Policy.

The protection of the historic environment is an important national objective as well as something of great importance locally. Many people highlighted their concern to safeguard the city's heritage as part of the Community Planning Study process. The policy sets a framework for providing those safeguards in respect of development proposals affecting listed buildings. Buildings are listed by the Secretary of State for National Heritage for their special architectural or historic interest. The City Council has a statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that they possess.

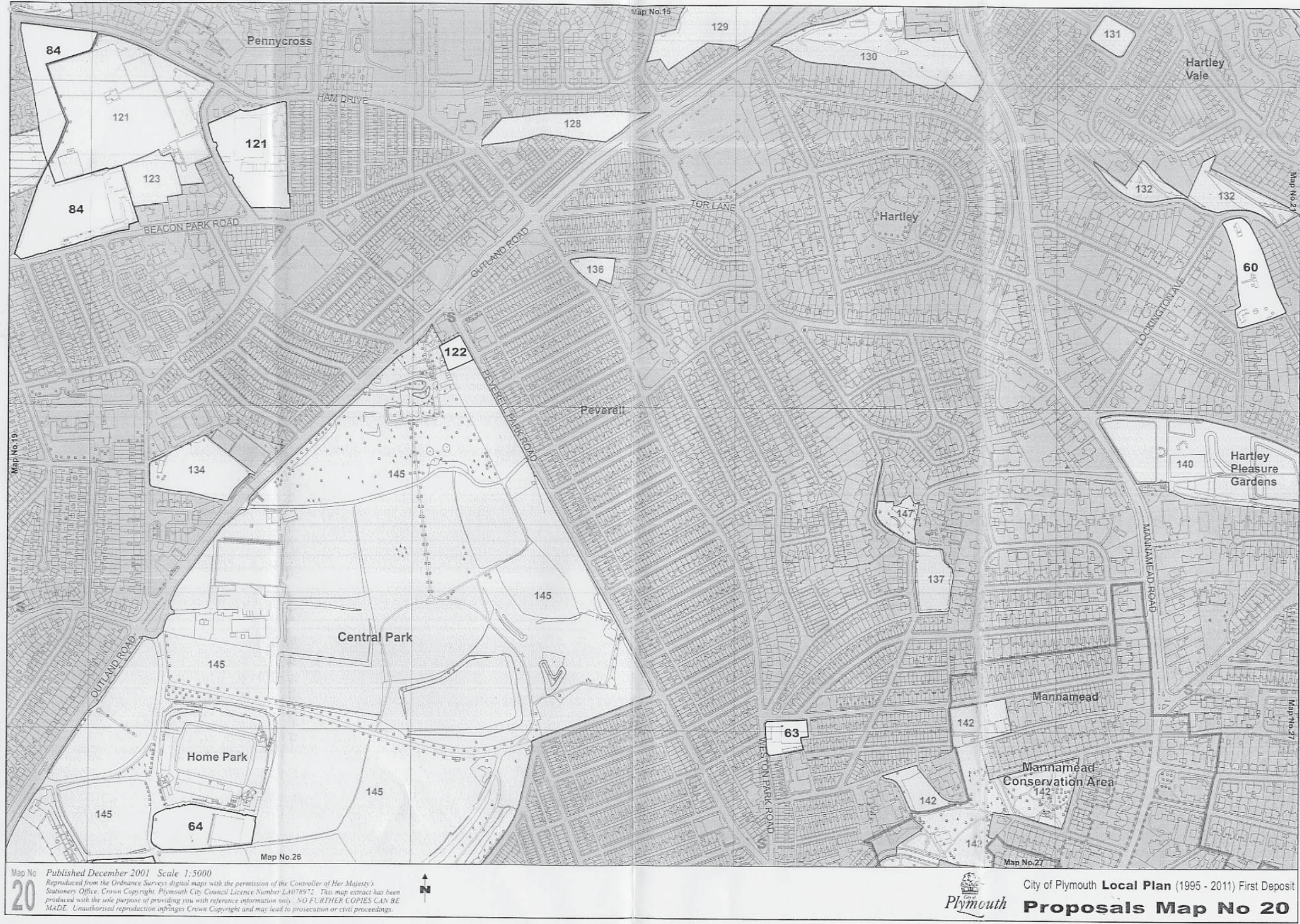
Objectives 11:1,
12:2, 12:3, 12:5

Policy 75. Development in conservation areas.

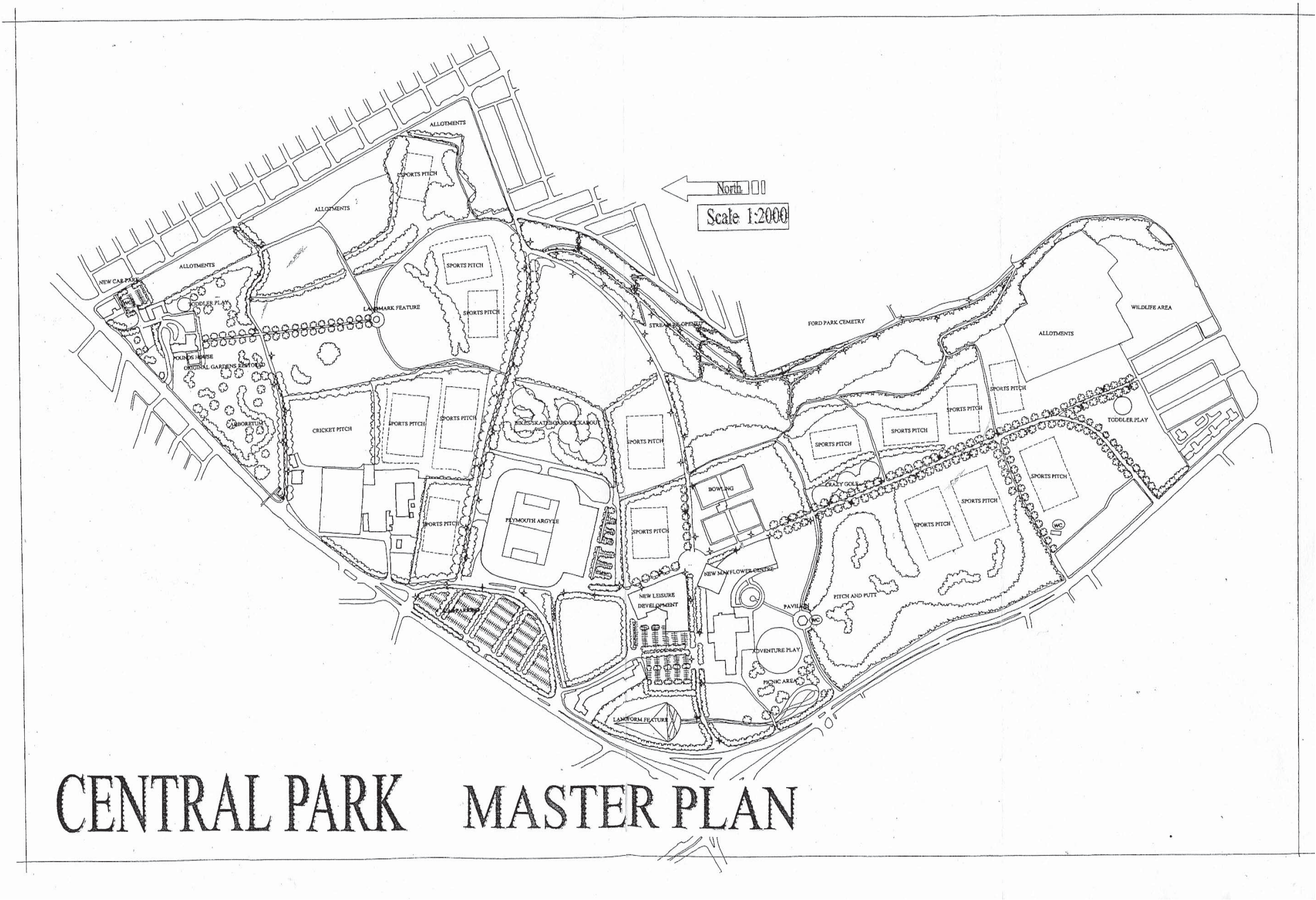
Development proposals that either preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of a conservation area will be permitted. The following criteria should be met:

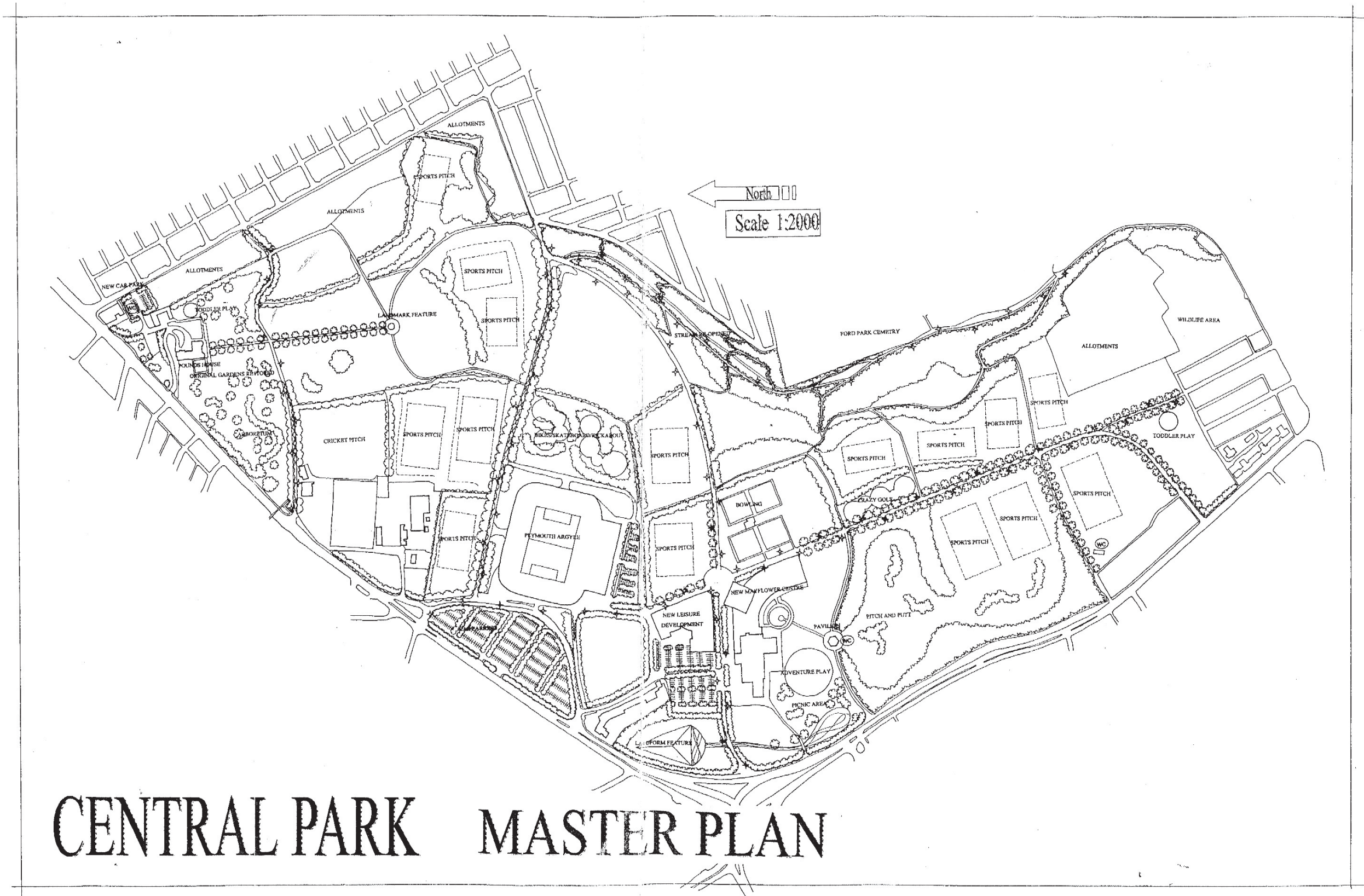
1. The design of the development, including layout, form, materials and other details, should be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
2. Changes of use which detract from the character or appearance of a conservation area will not

Appendix 1
(existing and
proposed SPGs)

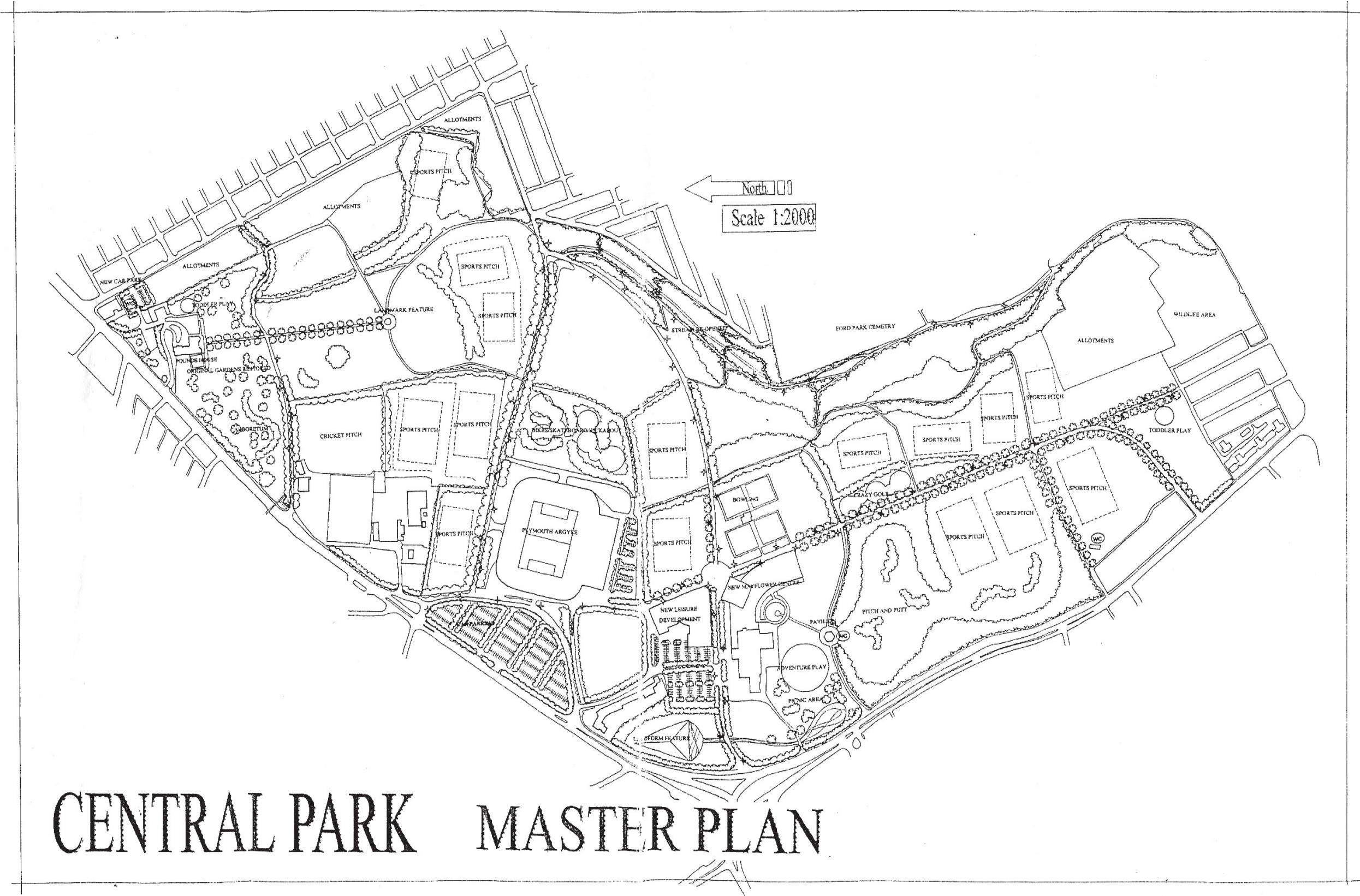


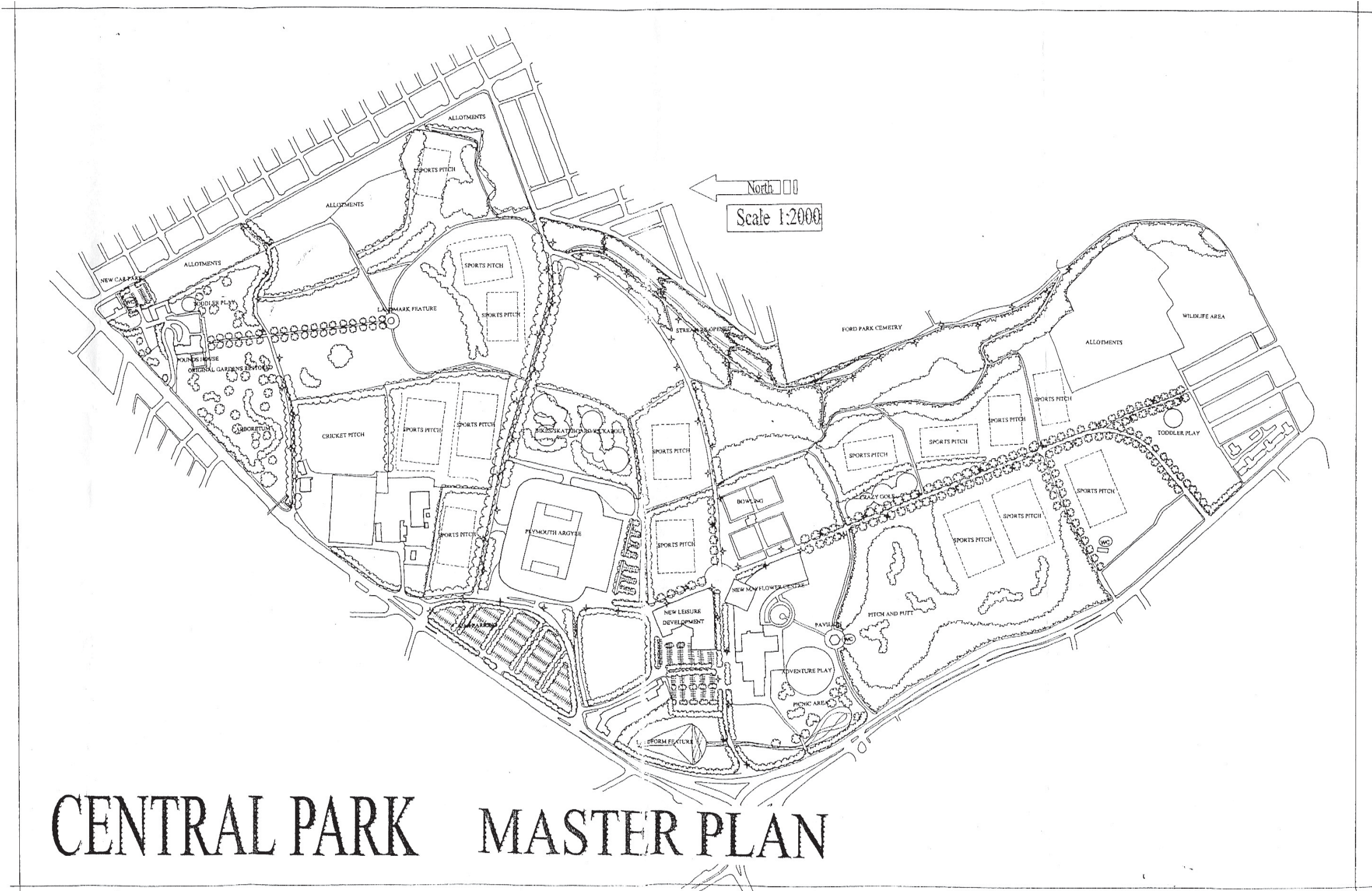












ALAN BAXTER & ASSOCIATES

September 2002

Plymouth Central Park An Historic Landscape Study

Prepared for Plymouth City Council

