



Land East of College Road Campdown, Purbrook

Landscape Play and Heritage Design Strategy



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Job No.	CB_62_265_1000
Rev	
Date	20.12.2024
Author	AE/LM
Checked by	JM
Signed off by	-

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1. Introduction.

About this document

1.1 This document outlines from a landscape perspective the Play Strategy and Heritage Design interventions at the site known as Land East of College Road, Campdown.

1.2 The document has been written on behalf of Dandara to support a detailed planning application for mixed use residential development comprising 590 dwellings, an early years nursery, allotments, public open space and related infrastructure including access and drainage.

1.3 The site is located to the east of Purbrook between College Road and the A3(M). To the north lies the South Downs College campus; to the south west lies Portsmouth Golf Club. The site slopes gently north to south towards the foot of Portsdown Hill and is bounded by mature vegetation to the north, east, and along part of the southern edge.

1.4 The site is archaeologically rich, containing a Scheduled Monument that encompasses the below ground remains of Littlepark Wood Roman villa and a section of the Chichester to Bitterne Roman road. The scheme proposes a number of interventions to respond to the heritage of the site, which will enhance the visitors' and residents' experience and help build the development's sense of place. These are covered in detail in Section 2 of this document.

1.5 The Play Area Strategy has been designed in accordance with Havant Borough Council's planning policy, and also to reference the historic landscape through choice of equipment and layout. The strategy is covered in detail in Section 3 of this document.



2. Historic Landscape.

Existing

2.1 The development site lies on the route of the Roman Road from Chichester (Noviomagus) to Bitterne (Clausentum), near Southampton. Earthworks associated with the road are visible near the north-western boundary.

2.2 In the northern part of the site, the remains of a Roman villa complex - known as Littlewood Park Roman Villa - are located, estimated to be around half the size of Fishbourne Roman Palace in Chichester. Evidence suggests that the villa was connected to the nearby Crookhorn Roman villa, thought to be a tilery workshop, and was possibly the owner's main residence.

2.3 Approximately 270m south of the site boundary, located on Portsdown Hill, is the Scheduled Monument Bevis's Grave long barrow and early medieval cemetery. The long barrow mound is around 88m long and 0.5m high in parts.



Heritage Design Strategy

2.4 A number of landscape interventions are proposed that respond to the historic landscape. These are the intervention relating to the Roman Villa; the intervention relating to the Roman Road; the proposed Orchard; and the view corridors maintaining inter-visibility between the Roman Villa and Bevis's Grave.

2.5 Each intervention is covered in more detail in the following sections.



- ① Roman Villa
- ② Orchard
- ③ Roman Road

Roman Villa

2.6 Littlepark Wood Roman Villa extends over an area of nearly 2Ha in the northern part of the site. It was partially excavated in 1925 and a geophysical survey of the site was undertaken in 2016.

2.7 The excavations and survey revealed a Roman villa complex of 5 or 6 buildings, including the main villa building, workshops and barns. The largest structure incorporated a portico facing south towards Langstone Harbour.

2.8 Using further geophysical surveying if necessary, the building footprint of the key buildings can be mapped and laid out on the surface in the form of gravel paths. This will allow visitors to experience and appreciate the scale of the villa and the heritage of the site.

2.9 Interpretation panels incorporating a visualisation of the Roman Villa and plan of the full layout of the complex could also assist visitors to understand the scale, layout and appearance of the villa complex.

2.10 Benches will overlook the site of the villa. Simple solid stone benches are suggested as this avoids the need for foundations requiring excavation of topsoil; and would be in keeping with the villa site. The benches could incorporate sandblasted lettering.



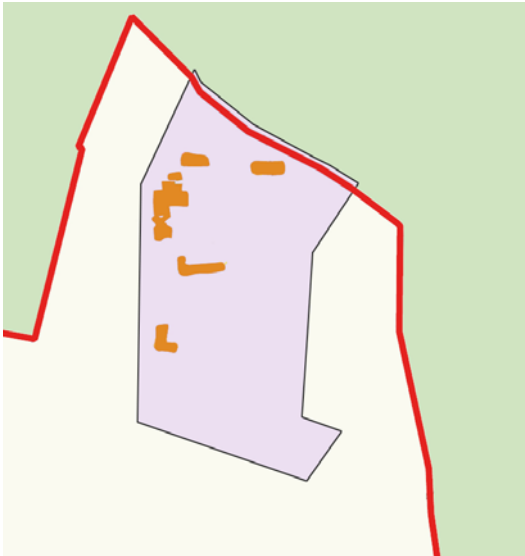
☆ Proposed location for interpretation board
▭ Proposed bench



Example bench



Example visualisation
Credit: Jennie Anderson /National Trust)



Possible structures (Geophysical Survey, TVAS 2016)

Roman Road

2.11 A section of the Chichester to Bitterne Roman Road passes through the site - geophysical readings reveal a metallised surface (in this case pebbles on a clay bed) with roadside ditches; along part of its length the ditch earthworks are visible at ground level.

2.12 To demarcate the line of the Roman Road, a broad strip of grass will be kept mown, along with an avenue of proposed trees along its route. These trees will be offset from the location of the road to safeguard against any disturbance to the archaeological remains.

2.13 Interpretation boards will be located on each side of the Roman Road to act as a gateway feature; these will provide information on the Roman heritage of the site and could also potentially include information on other aspects of the site such as ecological features. They will offer the opportunity to incorporate artwork into the scheme to further enrich the visitor experience. Interpretation in the form of tall boards, columns or screens will be reminiscent of the stone Roman milestones used as waymarkers along Roman roads.



Looking east along the line of the Roman Road; ditch earthworks are visible at ground level (Source: TVAS, 2016)



☆ Interpretation board location



Sculptural way-finding post incorporating artwork and craftsmanship (Cumbrian Stone)



Tall interpretation boards incorporating artwork and information



Views

2.14 Of key importance in the site layout was the requirement to maintain viewing corridors towards Bevis’s Grave (a Neolithic long barrow) and Early Medieval Cemetery. Barrows were often located at focal points in the landscape - in this case Portsdown Hill, a highly prominent landscape feature.

2.15 Two viewing corridors towards Portsdown Hill from the site of the Roman Villa ensure continued inter-visibility between the villa and Bevis’s Grave.



① Proposed view from the Roman Villa site towards Bevis’s Grave
Kinetic view 2.1



② Proposed view further along the viewing corridor towards Bevis’s Grave
Kinetic view 2.2



Roman Orchard

2.16 The Romans are credited with introducing the sweet apple '*Malus pumila*' and the pear '*Pyrus communis*', creating the first orchards in the UK. Traditional orchards declined when the Romans left the area.

2.17 Whilst there is no evidence that the site included a Roman Orchard it provides a good opportunity to explain the link of the Romans with the history of the traditional orchard.

2.18 The orchard on the site will be laid out as a traditional orchard with standard trees, allowing for long species grassland to establish underneath. Trees won't be planted in a strict square pattern, but will mimic the natural evolution of an orchard. The pattern will appear more random where trees have been replaced in slightly different locations over time. This in turn allows for slightly different microclimates and habitat creation.

2.19 Interpretation signs will explain the link to Roman times and the history of orchards in Britain. Species selected will include a mix of heritage and more modern apple and pear species to show how species have evolved over time.



3. Play Area Strategy.

3.1 The Play Area Strategy has been designed in accordance with Havant Borough Council's planning policy (Open Space Strategy 2018).

3.2 Quantity guidelines have been based on an expected population of 1,416 people, given 590 dwellings and a national average household size of 2.4. This equates to 0.35ha of required play space which has been exceeded by the provision proposed here (see also the Open Space Typologies Plan submitted as part of this application).

3.3 The strategy incorporates 10 different play areas - a combined NEAP and LEAP within the Public Open Space to the north of the site; 2 further LEAPs; and 7 LAPs. The plan below shows their locations and walking distances.

3.4 The design of the play areas references the historic landscape through choice of equipment and layout, as described in the following sections.



- ① Castrum Play Space
- ② Via Play Space
- ③ LAP

The Castrum Play Space

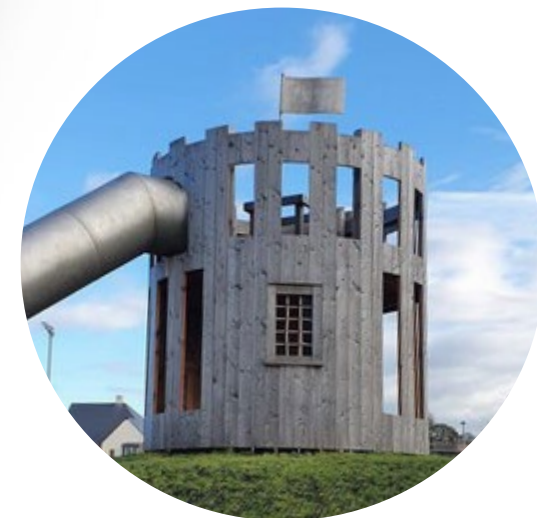
3.5 The Castrum Play Space is a combined NEAP and LEAP with a Roman theme. Play equipment will incorporate wooden towers in combination with other pieces laid out in a rectangle to resemble a Roman fort or courtyard to encourage imaginative play. There may be the opportunity to introduce a colour theme of red and gold or yellow, to reference the Roman military, along with historically themed activity panels. Seating and picnic benches are also provided.

3.6 The play space is easily accessible, being located adjacent to both the existing Public Right of Way and the proposed new cycle path, near to proposed housing, but remaining outside the Scheduled Monument boundary.

3.7 The play space covers an area of 1,557 sqm, in line with Havant Borough Council's planning policy for play area sizes.

3.8 The name of the play space is taken from the Latin word meaning 'fort'.

3.9 An indicative layout is illustrated here and is subject to detailed design.



The Via Play Space

3.10 The Via Play Space is aligned with the route of the Roman Road. A shallow linear channel is proposed running parallel to the Roman Road, which can be crossed in different ways, either by a rope bridge or a suspension bridge. The gently-sloping mown banks of the landform will also encourage play.

3.11 The channel is a reference to the typical structure of Roman roads, which were constructed with drainage ditches to either side. Play equipment can also be chosen to reference the Roman heritage of the site, for example the horse and chariot feature.

3.12 The play space covers an area of 415 sqm, in line with Havant Borough Council's planning policy.

3.13 The name of the play space comes from the Latin word meaning 'road'.

3.14 An indicative layout is illustrated here and is subject to detailed design.



LAPs

3.15 The Play Strategy includes 7 LAPs across the site to ensure 100m walking distance.

3.16 The LAP illustrated in more detail here is located near to the Early Years Centre and incorporates a range of trim trail equipment.

3.17 This play space covers an area of 306 sqm, in line with Havant Borough Council's planning policy.

3.18 An indicative layout is illustrated here and is subject to detailed design.



4. Summary.

4.1 This document has outlined from a landscape perspective the Play Strategy and Heritage Design interventions at Land East of College Road, Campdown.

4.2 As has been described, the scheme proposes a series of interventions to respond to the heritage of the site. These are the Roman Villa; the Roman Road; the key view from the villa to Bevis's Grave; and the Orchard. These interventions highlight the site's heritage, enhance the visitors' and residents' experience and help to build the development's sense of place.

4.3 The Play Area Strategy has been designed in accordance with Havant Borough Council's planning policy, and references the historic landscape through choice of equipment and layout. The strategy proposes 10 play areas, comprising a combined NEAP and LEAP; 2 further LEAPs; and 7 LAPs.



-  Heritage intervention
-  Play space



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