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Elgin Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere

Historic Landscape Statement

Prepared by LUC
April 2013

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report forms a Historic Landscape Statement for the landscape around Grant Lodge, within Cooper Park, Elgin. It has been prepared on behalf of Moray Council, to inform proposals for landscape alterations around Grant Lodge. The proposals are part of the Elgin 'Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere' project, an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the revival of Elgin, as part of the Elgin Masterplan and Elgin of the Future schemes.
- 1.2 The study area includes the immediate surroundings of Grant Lodge, extending to the A96 relief road in the south (the A96), the Elgin Library building to the west, the Cathedral path to the north, and North College Street and King's Street to the East. A small area to the north of the Cathedral path, and a small area to the south of the A96 at the truncated North College Street next to Elgin Museum is also included. The study area is shown in Figure 1. It is of note also that the study also considers the context of this area, i.e. elements within the wider Cooper Park, and in the surrounding urban area. This has enabled the historic setting of the Lodge and its immediate (current) landscape to be considered.

Figure 1: The study area



2 A History of the Landscape

- 2.1 This section includes a brief history of the phases of development of the landscape policies around Grant Lodge. Information is drawn from the Grant Lodge Conservation Statement¹, Conservation Area Appraisal² and Elgin Masterplan³, historic maps and other materials.
- 2.2 The urban analysis undertaken as part of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Elgin Masterplan includes a number of historic plans and illustrations dating back to the 17th century, these usefully illustrate how Elgin has developed over the last 4 centuries, including the area of Cooper Park and Grant Lodge. The John Slezer etchings of 1693 (of the view from north of the river) illustrate the period before construction of Grant Lodge and indicate more extensive agricultural land and water meadows along the course of the River Lossie covering the area of today's Cooper Park. This illustration also shows the Cathedral prominently and to its west can be seen the Bishop's Palace and three town houses which used to occupy parts of today's Cooper Park. One of these, the house of the Marchioness of Huntly was later replaced by the development of Grant Lodge. The Slezer etching also indicates the presence of trees close to the urban edge potentially within the study area.
- 2.3 Grant Lodge was built c.1766 on behalf of James Grant 4th Earl of Seafield for his aunt Lady Innes. Its design is accredited to Robert Adam although no plans have been discovered. This was a single villa without wings. Its principal elevation faced south and it occupied a sloping site, addressing the changes in level through the use of a basement level, half sunken on the south (higher) side of the building. A plan from 1769 provides a basic impression of how the landscape was laid out at that time (see Figure 2). The study area was divided into roughly rectangular compartments with 4 parks framing the Lodge. The main approach to the lodge was from the south (from an extension of the High Street at its eastern end) via a straight drive aligned off centre with the Lodge and which terminated at a turning area to the south of the building. Secondary access routes and park boundaries subdivide the area around the lodge, but this early basic plan does not indicate tree planting. A compartment to the south east of the Lodge, adjacent to today's North College Street was used as a Kitchen Garden with nearby offices, and another compartment indicated as being in the ownership of Mr Duff was retained to the south-west. The 1769 plan footnote suggests that certain boundaries would have been defined by walls of which there is no evidence today.
- 2.4 Grant Lodge's limited capacity proved to be insufficient and plans to extend the building were developed by architect John Paterson in 1789. These were not taken forward but in 1791 a wing was added to the north of the lodge from its western side. This created an L-shaped building, which while removing the former symmetry, allowed new views towards the Cathedral and over the parkland to the north. The later plan of 1822 indicates a more developed landscape around the Lodge in which the earlier rectilinear arrangement had been replaced by a softer oval-shaped framework of woodland around parkland and the Lodge (see Figure 3). The Lodge occupied the northern half of the open space allowing its southern aspect to look over an enclosed area of parkland. The access routes were also changed to more sinuous picturesque lines but still approaching the Lodge from the south. By this time the main drive had also been modified to provide access to both the front and east side of the Lodge i.e. bringing access to the side of the north wing. The oval belt of woodland appears to be intended as separation and screen between the Lodge and the urban edge of the

¹ Andrew KP Wright (2006) Grant Lodge Elgin, Conservation Statement.

² Elgin Conservation Area Appraisal Statement

³ Elgin Masterplan, in Moray Council (2011) Elgin City for the Future, Part 2 Technical report and action plan.


town. It also screened the stables, offices and buildings associated with the kitchen garden from the Lodge. This plan indicates however that open views to the east and north east were preserved i.e. towards the Cathedral, Bishop's Palace and the older Dunkinty House.

- 2.5 From c.1840, the 6th Earl of Seafield progressed some substantial changes to the parkland and to the Lodge. These works were related to the Earl's second marriage and sought to substantially upgrade the accommodation and setting of Grant Lodge. The most significant landscape changes were enabled by the acquisition of adjacent plots of land: the former lands of Dunkinty House to the north east, then the Duke of Gordon's field immediately to the east. The latter acquisition allowed the Grant Lodge parkland to be extended towards the Cathedral as shown on the 1868 OS plan of Elgin. These mid-19th century developments included the addition of gate lodge cottages at the southern corner and the eastern end of the (extended) parkland, and the introduction of a new sinuous drive from this eastern gate to Grant Lodge. The original drive (from the south) was abandoned but a number of secondary paths were laid out around the parkland, mostly following or reinforcing the oval shape of the woodland framework. This period of redevelopment also saw the removal of the old Dunkinty House and the establishment of orchard enclosures in this north eastern corner of the park. Refinements to the landscape were undertaken in advance and in parallel with the remodelling of Grant Lodge which took place from 1849 to the designs of local architects A & W Reid. The basic oval shaped woodland framework remained in place but more formally defined spaces to the south and west / north-west of the Lodge were introduced. A semi-circular space framed by trees and a curved path was introduced to enhance the outlook from the north wing of the Lodge, especially to the west and north-west. A single storey extension was built off the east side of the north wing and this provided a coal cellar, ash pit and larder. This development determined that service access was thence focussed on the north-east side of the Lodge and a separate service route was developed independent from the new main drive. This change was accompanied by the extension of the woodland belt on the eastern side of the Lodge, resulting in curtailed views to the east, towards the Cathedral. Adjacent to North College Street, walled enclosures were introduced around the stables and office buildings, thereby reinforcing screening around these developments. The substantial remodelling of the Lodge also included the addition of a porte-cochere at the main entrance and conservatories on the east and west sides of the original villa. The conservatories were demolished in the 1930's but historic photographs illustrate how they created a strong relationship with the surrounding landscape.
- 2.6 By 1870 the lands of Grant Lodge had been extended still further with the acquisition of fields between the Lodge and the River Lossie. However by the end of the 19th century the Dowager Countess of Seafield was persuaded to sell the Lodge and grounds to Colonel George A Cooper, owner of the adjacent College property, so that he could donate the Lodge and its parkland to the town council. This gift was made in 1902 and led to the Lodge being converted to a public library and museum, and the grounds being developed as a significant public park. The latter was designed by Aberdeen architect Dr Alexander Marshall Mackenzie and resulted in extensive alterations to the landscape particularly to the north of the Lodge where a new axis was introduced aligned on the Cathedral, and where a pond, bowling-green, bandstand, circular tree-lined walks and parkland were developed. To the south of the Lodge a new access route was introduced from the south-western end of North College Street to Grant Lodge, North College Street was widened on its north side, resulting in the demolition of the former boundary walls, stables and offices. These developments retained several key components of the extant landscape, including much of the oval woodland belts, the former drive from the east lodge and some of the secondary footpaths. Historic photographs and postcards are available from this time and indicate that an entrance arch was located adjacent to the museum on North College Street and that the access routes were then un-metalled i.e. gravel surfaced, giving the park a substantially less municipal character than today.
- 2.7 During the 20th century, Cooper Park was little changed until the latter half. At this time losses of historic trees had started and some replacement planting had commenced. The earlier drive from the east lodge was abandoned, and in 1981 the A96 relief road was introduced, creating severance between the park and the city centre, and removing the southern corner of the park. The severance also affected access to Grant Lodge leading to the development of a new access road from North College Street, a pedestrian over-bridge with associated earthworks, paths and ramps, together

with the loss of some historic path routes. Part of the former (1902) approach to Grant Lodge was left in its severed state within the park and remains as a tear drop shaped grass island to the south of the Lodge.



- 2.8 Cooper Park remains a significant asset for Elgin. It is an essential feature of the city, important for its heritage, recreation, public access, biodiversity and as the setting for important buildings including the Cathedral, Bishop’s Palace and Grant Lodge. It has suffered some degradation through the introduction of vehicles and the associated adaptations of the park’s infrastructure. A notable change to the parkland around Grant Lodge has been the incremental loss of open spaces with the planting of new trees and the growth of the old. This has resulted in the loss of the original oval planting structure as spaces have gradually been infilled. Recently, several veteran trees have been lost to disease and further replacement planting has occurred. The result is that the entire Grant Lodge area of Cooper Park now has a wooded character with little spatial definition. Grant Lodge is consequently obscured from the south and its outlook is no longer onto well-defined parkland spaces. Views to the Cathedral remain curtailed by the earlier plantings to the east of the Lodge. In the wider park to the north, additional paths have been developed and new recreational facilities introduced. Some of these developments have changed the spatial layout of the parkland and have in part compromised the generous arcs which originally defined the main areas of parkland.
- 2.9 A timeline for the history of the landscape is summarised in Table 2.1 below. A map analysis of the history of the landscape is shown in Figure 2 to Figure 8.


Table 2.1: Timeline of Events in the Landscape History


Date	Key events/landscape elements	Analysis Figure reference	Historic Map thumbnail ⁴
1585 Timothy Pont	Large scale map. Isolated building to west of Cathedral is the Bishop’s Palace.		Timothy Pont map of Elgin and North-east Moray. c.1583-1614
1693 John Slezer	Predates Grant Lodge Extensive agricultural land and water meadows along the south side of the River Lossie. Townhouses evident in area to the west of the Cathedral including the house of the Laird of Pluscarden on the site of the later Grant Lodge. Suggests the presence of trees close to the urban edge, potentially within the Grant Lodge area.		Slezer, John, Elgin - 'The Prospect of the House and Town of Elgine', 1693 
1766	Grant Lodge constructed, designed by Robert Adam, architect, for the Grant family (refer to Conservation Statement ⁵).		
1769	Grant Lodge shown with access routes from south, east and west. Park/field boundaries shown. Kitchen garden labelled to south-east. Plan annotation suggests presence of walled boundaries and offices to the south-east.	Figure 2	Plan of the Parks, 1769, Seafield Archives

⁴ Historic maps are reproduced with kind permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland and Lord Seafield. Larger scale images are provided in Appendix 1. Map titles and references are from NLS website.

⁵ Andrew KP Wright (2006) Grant Lodge Elgin, Conservation Statement.

Date	Key events/landscape elements	Analysis Figure reference	Historic Map thumbnail ⁴
	NB. map is drawn with north to bottom of page (image here is rotated).		
1776	Large scale map, Grant Lodge not shown. North College Street leading to the Cathedral is shown with buildings all along the north side.		Taylor and Skinner's Survey, The Road from Banff to Inverness, published 1776
1791	North-west wing of Lodge built, accommodating change in levels from north to south. (refer to Conservation Statement)		
1822	<p>Significant developments to the grounds since 1769, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access from the south, with a curved route to east side of Grant Lodge • ring of tree planting around Grant Lodge, with open aspect to north-east, and open space around the building interrupted with possible specimen trees • north-west wing added previously to Grant Lodge • policy boundary limited at field boundary between Grant Lodge and the Cathedral. Land marked as belonging to the Duke of Gordon • buildings marked along south boundary (later labelled as stables), dovecot marked to west of field boundary, on Duke of Gordon's land • additional land acquired to the north east allowing expansion of policies to take in areas of former Dunkinty lands 	Figure 3	<p>John Wood, Plan of the Town of Elgin from actual survey, 1822</p> 
1832	Large scale map not clearly showing Grant Lodge.		John Thompson's Atlas of Scotland, Nairn and Elgin, 1832
1838	<p>No significant changes since 1822.</p> <p>King Street is extended to the High Street.</p> <p>This map predates Elgin Museum.</p>	Figure 3	Robert Ray, Plan of the Burgh of Elgin from actual survey, 1838
1848- c1855	Grant Lodge extensively altered, using designs by A & W Reid, later known as J & W Wittet, architects (refer to Conservation Statement). Duke of Gordon's field acquired and substantial landscape developments undertaken.		
1868 OS 1 st edition	<p>Developments undertaken c. 1840-1855 illustrated on this plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial remodelling of Grant Lodge, including new service building extension to north-east • Duke of Gordon's field included in Grant Lodge policies 	Figure 4	OS large scale Scottish Town Plans, 1847-1895. Elgin 1868, VII.12.22 and VII.16.2

Date	Key events/landscape elements	Analysis Figure reference	Historic Map thumbnail ⁴
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction of a sinuous (main) drive from the east with lodgehouse / cottage (dated 1851) • new paths marked through the ring of woodland, additional paths to the north-east and north west of the Lodge creating several circular walking/ riding routes around the grounds • Separate service access developed to north east side of the Lodge • Views towards Cathedral curtailed by extension of woodland belts • stable buildings along north side of North College Street are separated from the woodland by a wall • field boundary trees are marked along the former boundary with the Duke of Gordon's field • additional woodland is marked extending eastwards from the ring, around the stables and south of the sinuous drive • the dovecot is not marked, but an ice house is marked to the west of Grant Lodge • a gate cottage 'lodge' is marked at the southern corner of the policies, on North College Street, adjacent to the Museum • map does not extend to eastern boundary of policies. 		
1873	<p>No significant changes from 1868. Map extends to Cathedral, and shows the east gate cottage. Some paths from the woodland ring to the stables area not shown. Considerable textural detail applied to gardens outside the Grant Lodge Policies. Ice house marked. Former Dunkinty lands suggested as orchards.</p>	Figure 4	OS 1 st Edition, Elgin Sheet VII.12, surveyed 1870, published 1873.
1883	<p>Large scale map not clearly showing Grant Lodge. No buildings marked to north side of North College Street.</p>		OS Index to the OS of Elginshire, published 1883.
1891	<p>Larger scale map. Grant Lodge and stable buildings shown. Sinuous drive shown, which appears to continue to the west and north of the Lodge. No distinction made between wooded and open areas.</p>		OS 1 st edition, one-inch to the mile maps of Scotland, Sheet 95, Elgin, revised in 1876, published 1891
1905 OS 2 nd edition	<p>Significant changes were made to the Grant Lodge Policies following the gift of the land and buildings to the people of Elgin. The creation of Cooper Park included the following alterations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creation of a straight east-west drive from Lossie Wynd to the front of the Cathedral (referred to here as the Cathedral path), that cut across the north frontage of Grant Lodge, severing the woodland ring to the north of the lodge • introduction of an access route from the south gateway on North College Street between the south gate cottage and Elgin Museum, straight towards Grant Lodge, with a 'teardrop' shaped island for circulation • additional paths through the policies, including along the former field boundary (Duke of Gordon's field) and parallel to North College Street • ice house not shown 	Figure 5	OS 2 nd edition, Elginshire, Sheets 007.16 and 007.12, revised 1904, published 1905.

Date	Key events/landscape elements	Analysis Figure reference	Historic Map thumbnail ⁴
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stable buildings removed, former wall line shown as dotted edge of woodland additional paths and planting across Cooper Park to the north of the Cathedral path, including a bandstand 		
1906 OS 2 nd edition	No significant change from 1905 map.	Figure 5	OS 2 nd edition, Elginshire VII.SE revised 1904, published 1906.
1910 OS 3 rd edition	Large scale map, Cathedral Path and south access shown. Less detailed than the 1905 map.		OS one-inch to the mile maps of Scotland, 3 rd edition, Sheet 95, Elgin, published 1910
1912	Large scale map, Grant Lodge not shown. North College Street shown with buildings along north side.		Bartholomew Survey Atlas of Scotland, 1912, Nairn, Elgin
1957 OS	1:25,000 scale map, showing broad outline of paths, including Cathedral path, sinuous drive, and south access route. Less detailed than the 1905 map.		OS 1:25,000 maps of Great Britain, NJ26 and NJ27, published 1957
1975	Oblique aerial photograph showing; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dense woodland cover to the south of the Cathedral path, with open areas to the southeast of Grant Lodge and to the north-east of the east gate cottage large specimen trees close to Grant Lodge (south-east and north-west) showing dark foliage housing blocks to south-west of Grant Lodge, south of Elgin Library prior to construction of A96 bypass Alexandra Road (1981) 		
1981- recent	A96 bypass Alexandra Road constructed through southern part of policies. This cuts through the southern part of the woodland ring, and separates a triangle of land adjacent to the Museum (and the site of the former south gate cottage) from the rest of the policies. Pedestrian over-bridge and ramps introduced in western part of the study area.	Figure 6	
2013 topo- graphic survey	Detailed survey	Figure 7	

Historical map analysis

- 2.10 The historical development of the Grant Lodge policies has resulted in a complex layout of features dating to different times in history. These form layers of different ages, which can be illustrated graphically in Figure 2 to Figure 7.

Figure 2: Historical analysis 1769

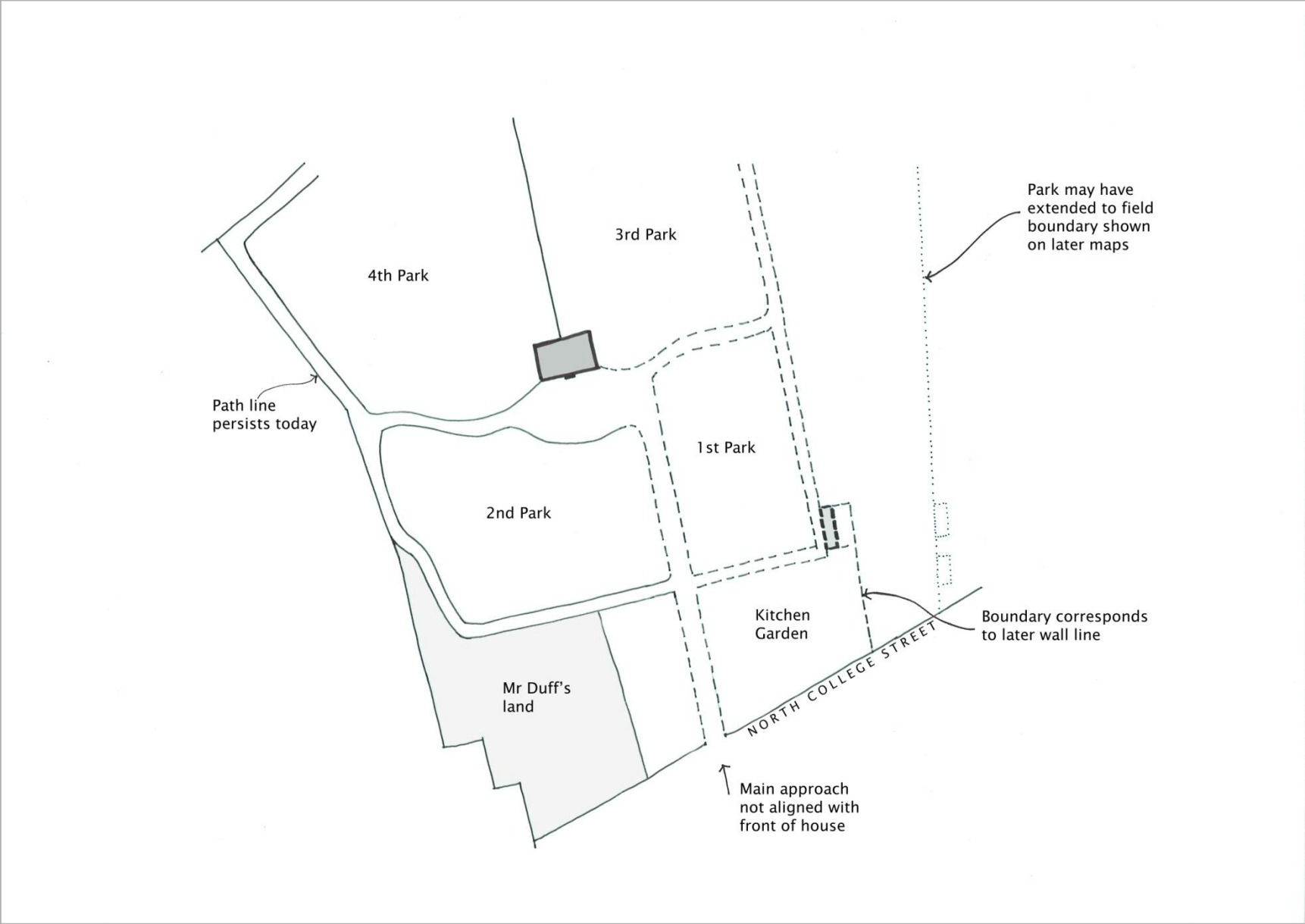


Figure 3: Historical analysis 1822

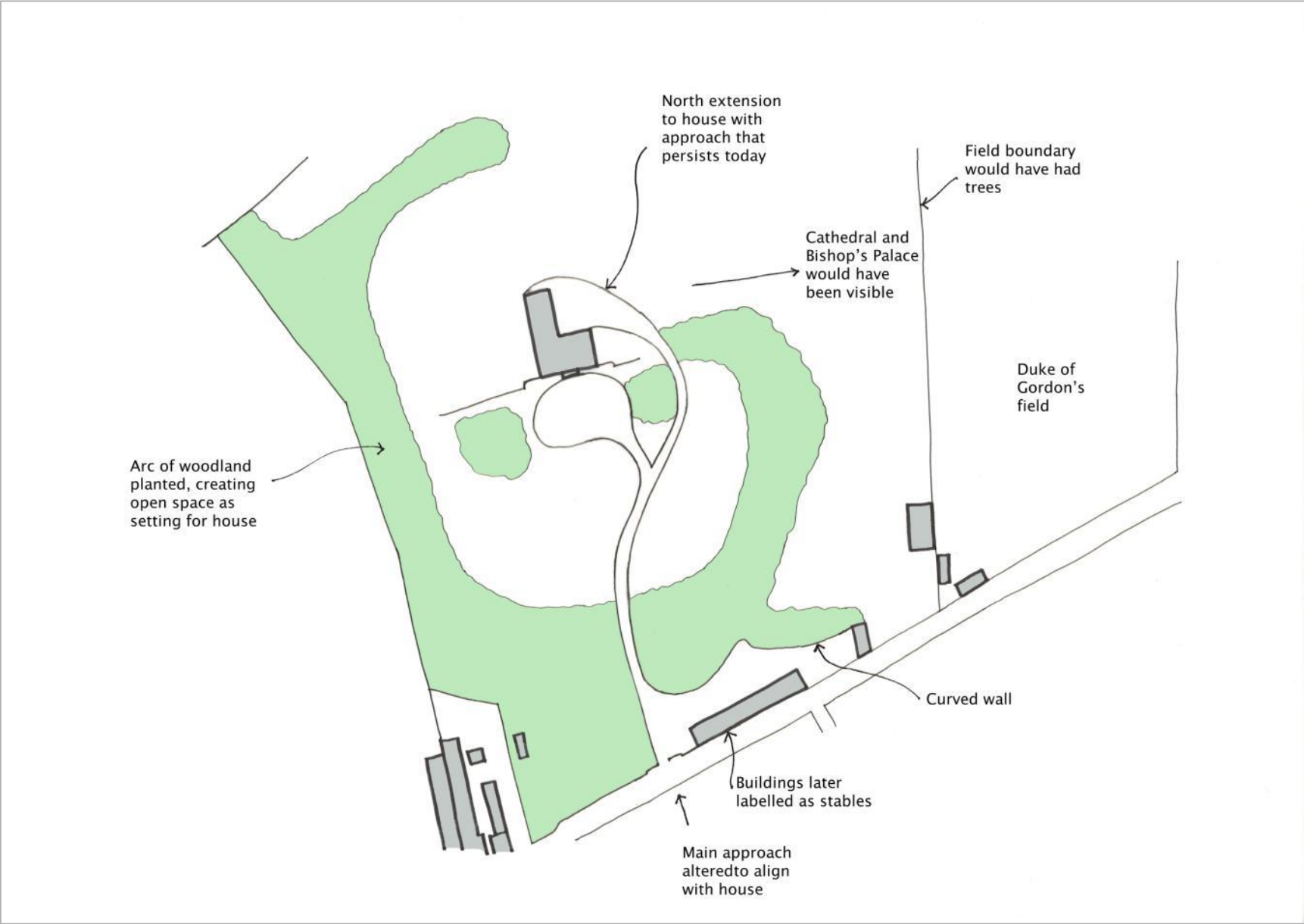


Figure 4: Historical analysis 1868

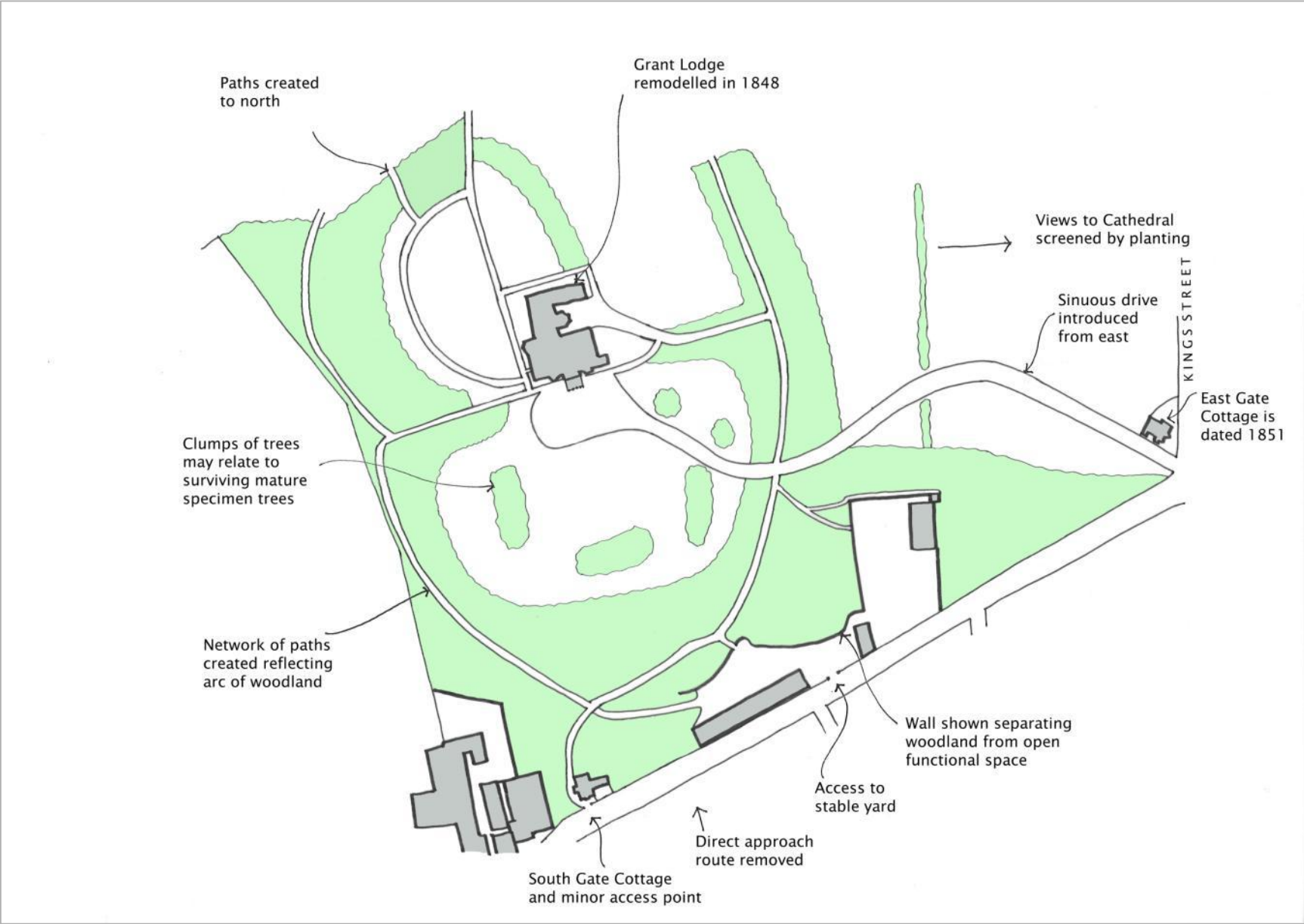


Figure 5: Historical analysis 1905

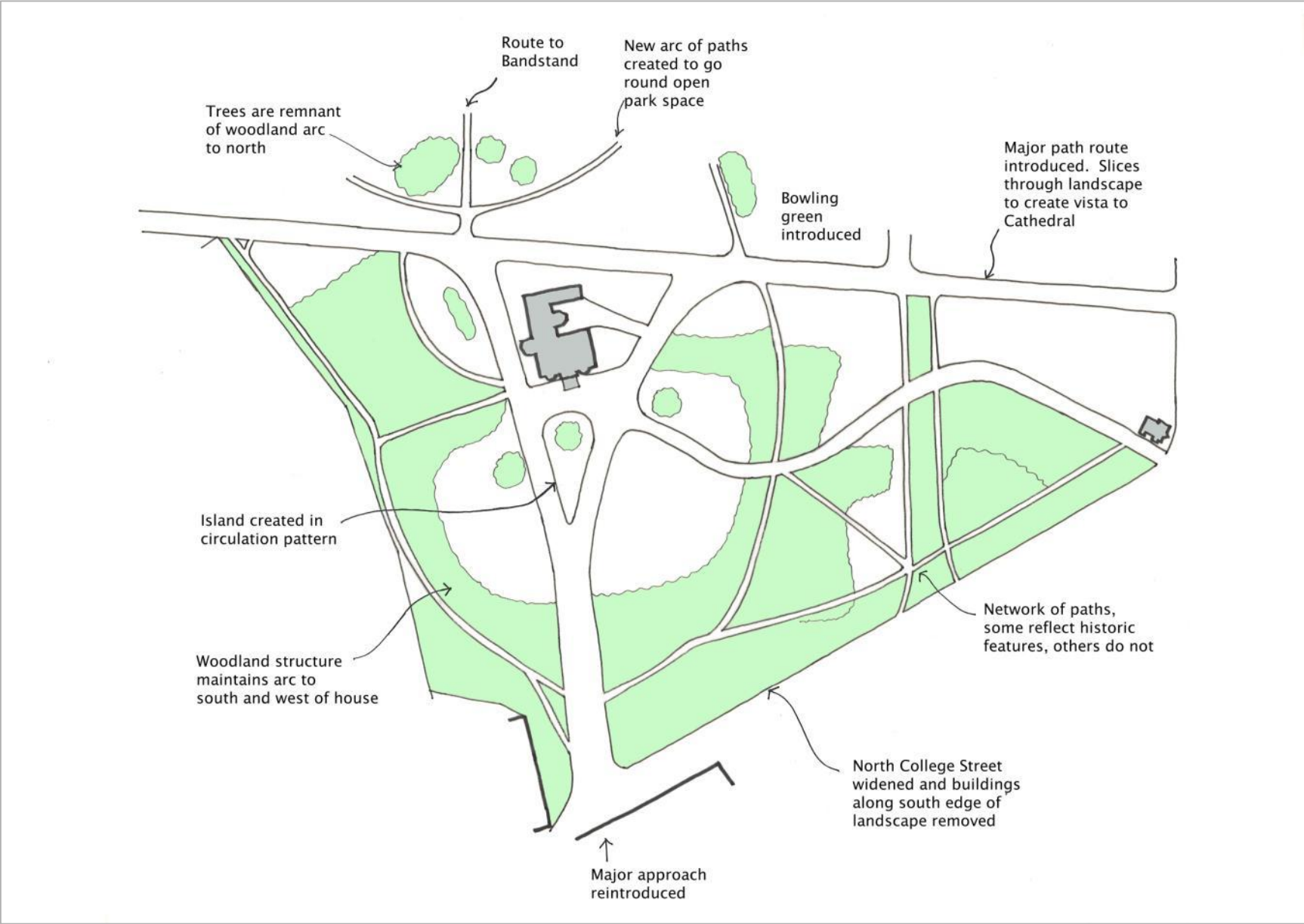


Figure 6: Historical analysis recent

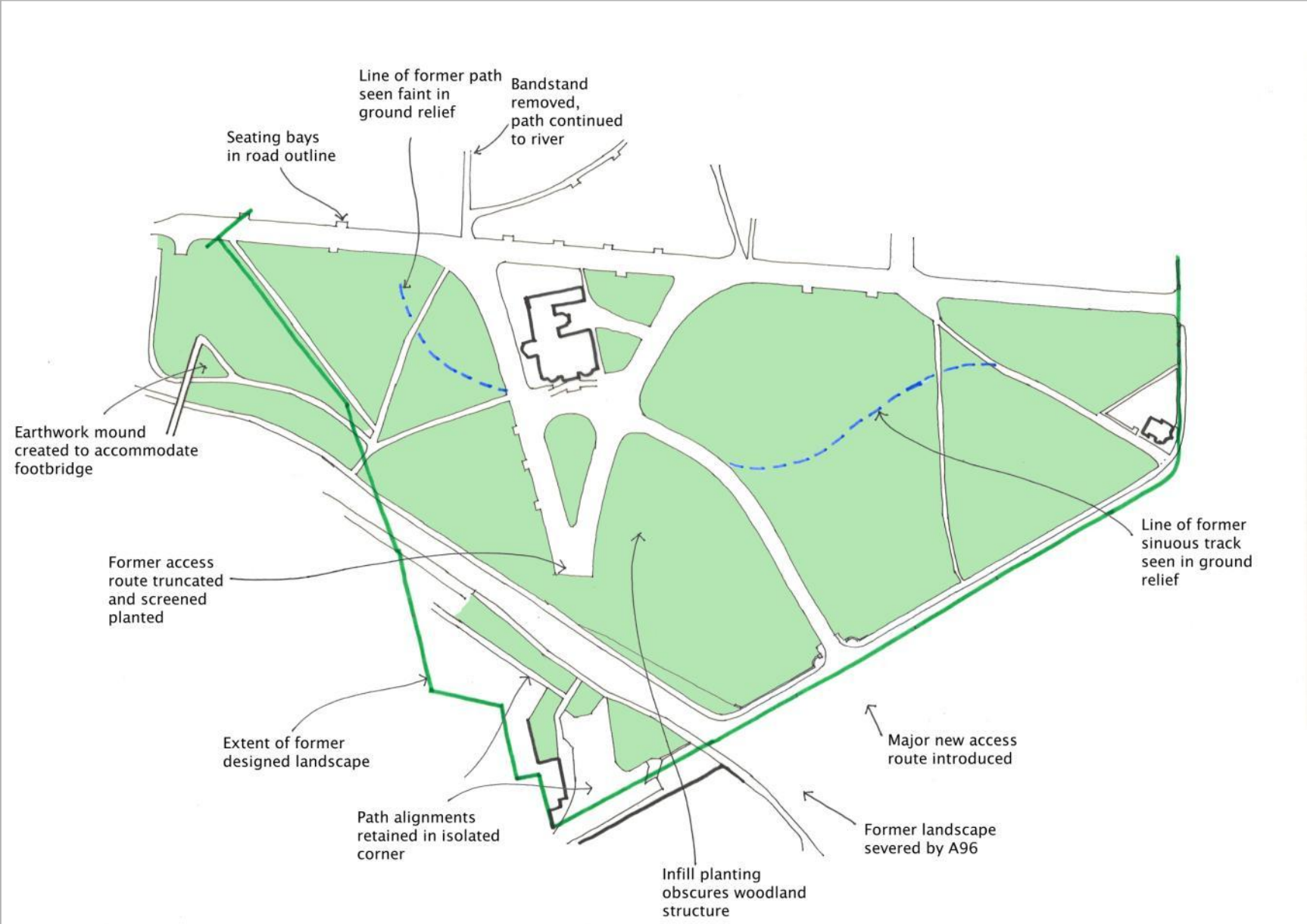
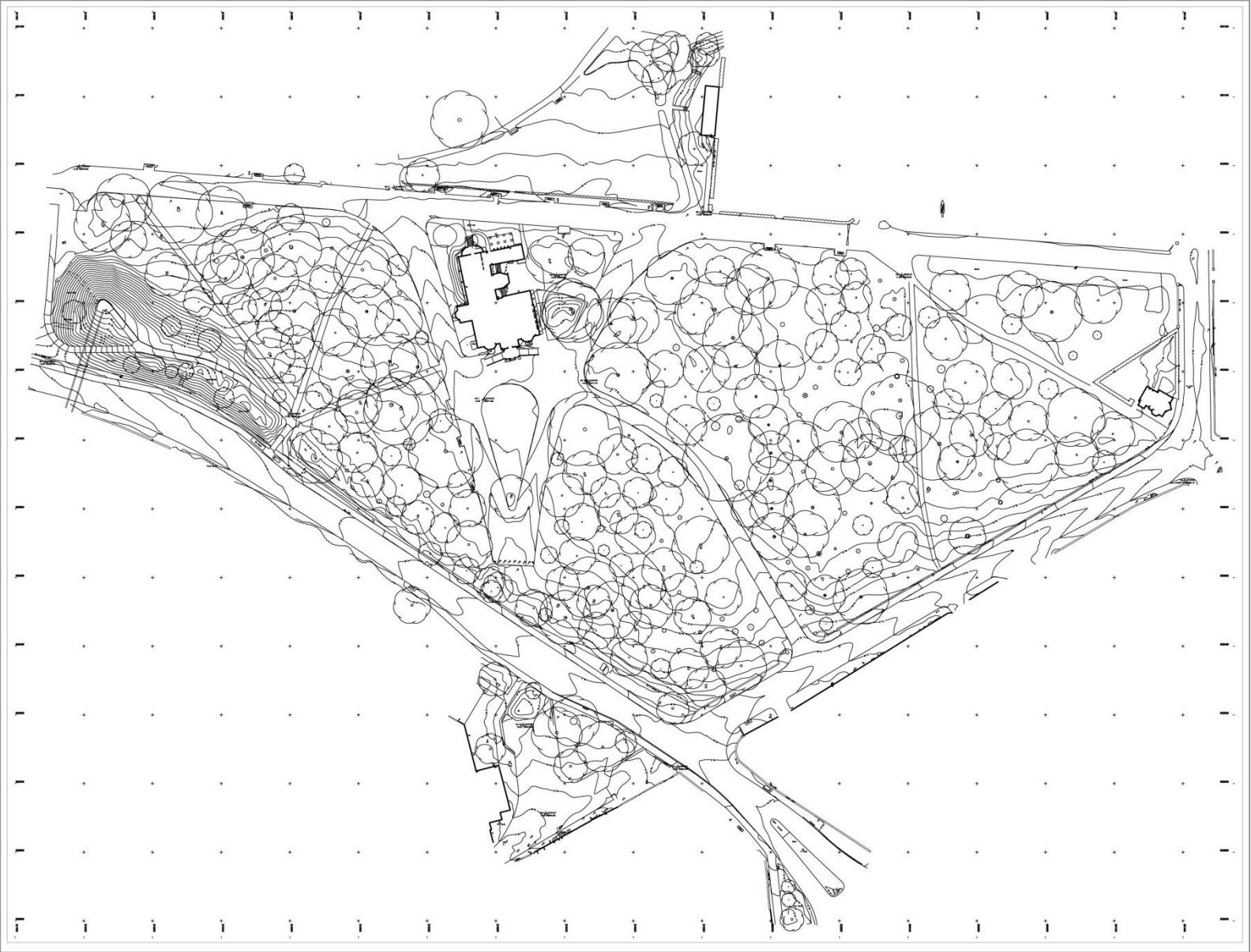


Figure 7: Topographic survey 2013



3 Remnants of the Historic Landscape

- 3.1 The existing features of Cooper Park around Grant Lodge represent the legacy of different introductions to the landscape through its history. Figure 2 to Figure 7 illustrate in diagrammatic form how the landscape has changed since the 18th century. It is evident that the landscape design evolved over this period without any wholesale re-designs but rather a series of adaptations with some new introductions. The result is that the park today contains features dating from different periods and evidence of some features which have been removed but which can still be traced in the landscape. Figure 8 therefore seeks to summarise the age structure of the landscape by indicating the period in the site's history from which they originate.
- 3.2 The landscape design phases generally lack complexity and there are no significant elements of landscape engineering or landscape architecture. The main physical changes have mostly related to the access routes and planting structure, together with the increases in scale as more land was acquired. The woodland planting and the routes of paths around the site are the key structural elements for the landscape that can be identified as consistent with features marked on historic maps. The oldest path routes relate to 18th century field boundaries, even though they are minor paths in the park today. The changes relating to the development of the area as Cooper Park at the beginning of the 20th century are some of the most significant, in particular the Cathedral axis path and the now truncated drives to and along each side of the Lodge. The late 20th century introduction of the A96 relief road and the landscape changes associated with this, significantly altered the character of the southern part of the park.
- 3.3 The pattern of old trees around the park (old trees of long lived species) reveals the arcs of woodland planting that date back to the early 19th century, although some of the individual trees are younger. This pattern is illustrated in Figure 9 and Figure 10.

Figure 8: Age structure of the landscape

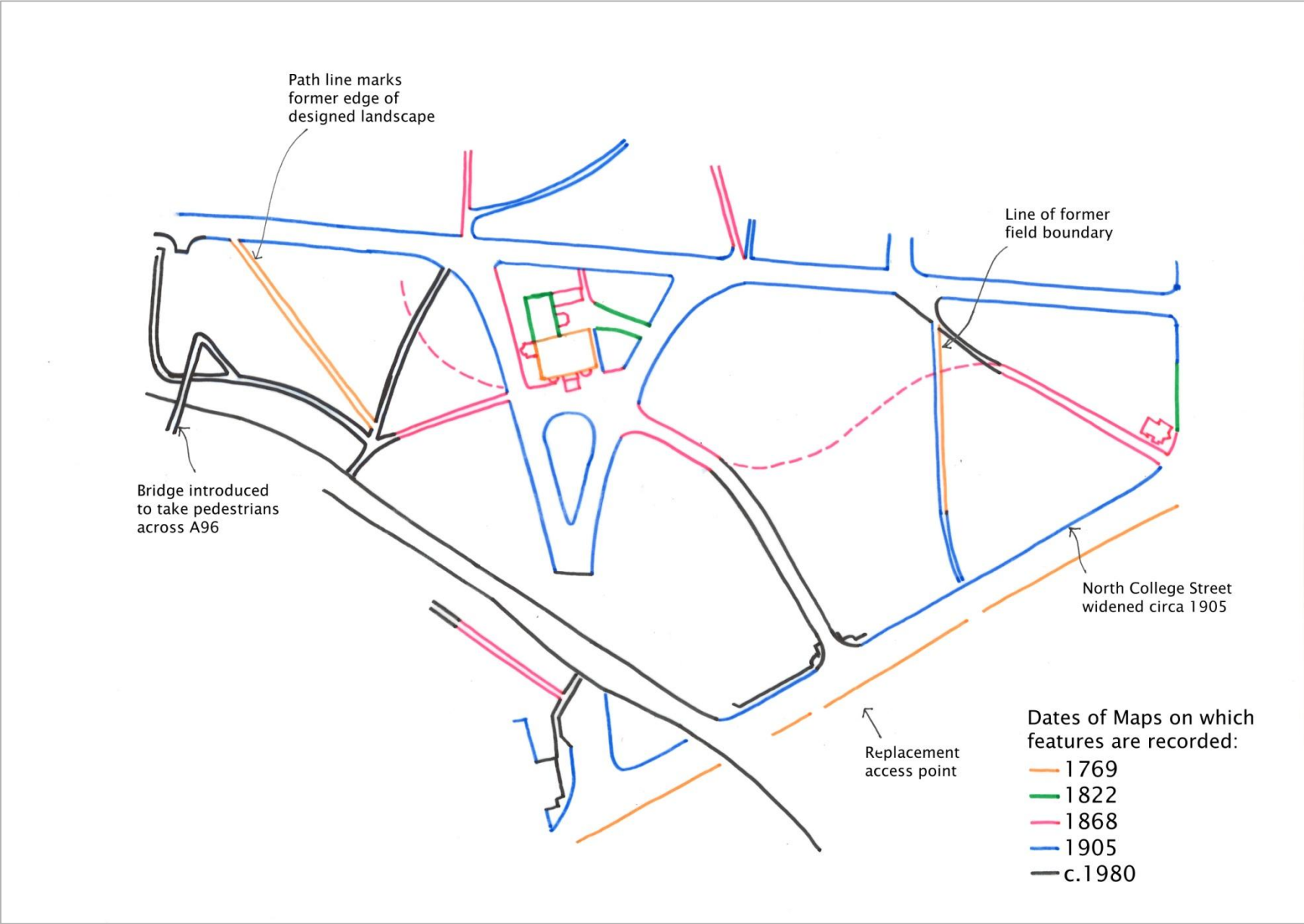


Figure 9: Tree species structure

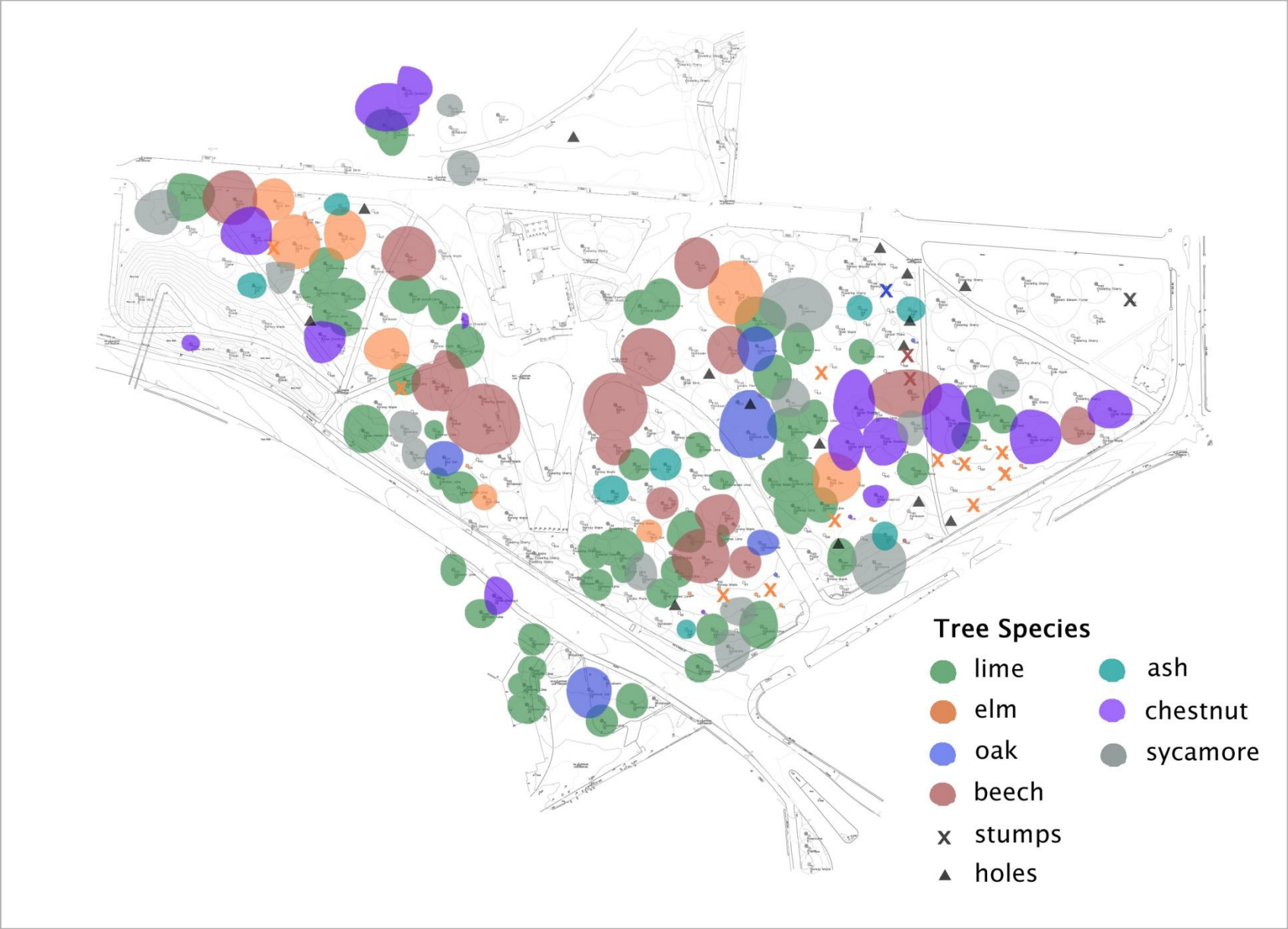


Figure 10: Tree age structure



4 Existing conditions

- 4.1 This section describes the existing features on the site: their nature, historic value and any evident conservation issues. This appraisal was based on a site survey undertaken in early February 2013 following production of a topographic survey of the study area. The appraisal work also included a tree survey undertaken by Scottish Arboricultural Services; the findings of this work have informed this report but the full results of the Tree Survey are appended to this report (Appendix 2).

Existing site features

Access routes

- 4.2 There is a network of roads and paths around the site, with tarmacadam surfacing, generally in good to reasonable condition. Edged with timber 1" boards or with concrete kerbs.
- 4.3 Vehicular access is permitted into the park and the main trafficked routes are the recent entrance drive from North College Street, the truncated section of the 1902 entrance drive and the Cathedral axis. These routes are of tarmacadam with concrete kerbs, generally in good condition. Some parking areas are defined and elsewhere double yellow lines and bollards restrict access or parking. The result of this treatment is that the park infrastructure has a municipal character and pedestrian amenity and potentially safety is compromised. The utilitarian roads and path surfacing is not sympathetic to a parkland setting and does not complement the setting of Grant Lodge or the view to the Cathedral.
- 4.4 The area outside Elgin Library, which is part of the Cathedral path, is paved with 'Toberloc' blocks (or similar), with brick kerbs. These are used to denote the pedestrian priority area outside the Library entrance.

Desire lines

- 4.5 A major desire line runs from the path junction by the bowling green to the front of the Lodge. This path partially follows a historic route (from c.1850) but is now constrained by the presence and size of trees. The desire line path is well used and is consequently a muddy furrow through the grass.
- 4.6 Other minor desire lines exist in various locations across the site, showing as grass damage or footprints in the snow. A number of path corners are cut across by foot traffic and soil has become worn.



Drainage

- 4.7 The main access routes have a drainage system whereby runoff is collected in gullies along the edge of the roads. From the absence of standing water during the site appraisal, it is assumed that the drainage system is still functional along the roads. There is no evidence of drainage along the smaller pedestrian paths although there may be land drainage within the parkland areas. There is some localised ponding along the footpaths and along the lines of historic access routes, presumably where the old sub-base is preventing percolation.

Access Conservation Issues & Opportunities

- Potential traffic management and restrictions to improve pedestrian amenity and the setting of Grant Lodge
- Potential restoration of historic routes as part of the new access network for Grant Lodge
- Removal of redundant truncated roads to allow landscape reinstatement and reduce scale of hard standings
- Enhancement opportunities for removal of municipal treatments to hard surfaces, kerbs, signs and road markings

Street furniture

Benches

- 4.8 Three different types of seating benches are in use. These are of cast iron of different designs, with timber slats. The benches are mostly located along the Cathedral axis path set in bays at the side of the path. A number of benches are missing, belied by the concrete bases in empty bays.

Bins

- 4.9 Proprietary black plastic formed bins with galvanised steel receptacles are located strategically throughout the park. These are secured into concrete bases.

Bollards and barriers

- 4.10 Bollards are used to prevent vehicular access, as in front of Elgin Library, or to denote the truncation of a former road route, as to the south of Grant Lodge.
- 4.11 Concrete conical bollards are used at the south end of the south (truncated) axis, these are old, with eroded concrete, and deep set red reflectors. Red painted post bollards are used across the Cathedral path near library. These have a narrow circular cross-section with a faceted top.
- 4.12 A metal vehicular gate crosses the Cathedral path near the path junction at the bowling green, to stop the public driving along cathedral path.



Fences and gateways

- 4.13 Various styles of fencing are used across the site, the majority is fairly recent and of no historic or aesthetic value. Only at the main park entrances has an architectural treatment been applied. Opposite the Cathedral on the west side of King Street is the gateway to the Cathedral axis. The original gateway pillars date from c.1902 and are surmounted by ornamental lanterns. These are now flanked by more recent (c. 1980) walls, railings and pillars on each side of the gateway. The wall is of sandstone c.600mm high with half-round cope stones. Black painted steel railings are fixed onto the cope and span between the pillars. The railings have decorative finials at intervals. The newer pillars match the originals in style and are of masonry to approx. 2m, with pyramidal cap stones.
- 4.14 The ornamental wall and railing is repeated for short section from A96/North College St corner to c.100m up North College St, including the 'Harrison Gate', dated 2004. This gateway was constructed by the Elgin Trust to commemorate the centenary of the park. These walls and railings are limited in extent leaving the adjoining boundary treatment as only post and wire fencing.
- 4.15 Other fences include
- a high fence of wooden posts and green net wire along A96 Alexandra Rd;
 - a low concrete post and wire fence along North College Street.
- 4.16 No fences are used along Cathedral path, except for a low concrete post and wire fence contained within the beech hedge around the east gate cottage.
- 4.17 Gateways vary in style and scale depending on their location, the main gateways opposite the Cathedral and the Harrison Gate are ornamental as described above, whilst other gateways are defined by only gaps in the hedge, or gaps in the concrete post and wire fence, framed by straining posts.

Lighting

- 4.18 The main access routes within Cooper Park have street lights, mostly with short (c.4.5m) grey coloured steel columns and half globe lanterns. There are however some inconsistencies in the lantern type and in the columns used e.g. black 'Victoriana' style columns are also present in a few locations as at the Library.

Other infrastructure

- 4.19 There is a number of utility power and control boxes (telephone exchange or electricity transformers) located adjacent to paths. Manhole covers are also present.

Signage

- 4.20 Signage across the site relates to modern use, and is predominantly aimed at controlling vehicular movements. Signage includes pole mounted signage and painted road markings.



Street Furniture Conservation Issues and opportunities

- Opportunities to improve the park boundaries and gateways where there is currently only fencing
- Requirements to replace missing furniture components
- Opportunities to improve the standard of furniture and lighting and its consistency across the park
- Opportunities to remove urban clutter and traffic control devices , subject to changes in traffic management
- Requirements for drainage improvements along paths

Planting

Trees

- 4.21 Trees have been surveyed in detail by Scottish Arboricultural Services, and the detailed tree survey report is included in Appendix 2. Additional notes and observations made during the LUC survey of the landscape, focussed on assessing the historical significance of the trees, are contained below and shown in Figure 9 and Figure 10.
- 4.22 The belt of trees that has been shown on historical maps since 1822 is present, but obscured by more recent planting. The belt is made up of primarily lime, elm, beech and oak trees, but there are also some mature sycamore and horse chestnut. There is also evidence where trees from the woodland belt have been lost, in the form of stumps of large girth trees and hollows in the ground where stumps were or where trees fell. The pattern of stumps and hollows reinforces the pattern of the historic belt of trees. There are specimen trees close to the house, including five large beech trees and two large walnut trees immediately to east of house. The beech trees are badly scarred with graffiti carving, most of it healed with scar tissue. This is mostly of illegible marks, although a few dates can be made out, the earliest of 1930.
- 4.23 More recently planted trees range from mature to young trees, and many are planted in formerly open spaces. These have introduced more ornamental and short-lived species including cherry, hornbeam, Norway Maple and poplar. Overall there is notable scarcity of evergreens within the old and more recent plantings resulting in an almost totally deciduous woodland. The main exceptions are the yews to the east of Grant Lodge.
- 4.24 Many of the older trees are over-mature, with dead branches in their crowns. Many show signs of internal rot, dark weeping patches on the bark or scars and exposed wood. The stumps of trees that had similar ground level dimensions to the standing trees, which show significant internal rot prior to felling.
- 4.25 Younger trees are of varying condition, with some trees in poor condition due to damage, or over-mature due to the shorter lifespan of the species. The tree survey recommends the removal of a number of trees in poor condition, as indicated on the tree schedule in Appendix 2.



Other Planting

- 4.26 The landscape is dominated by grass, which is closely mown. Under some of the trees, i.e. those with denser foliage in summer, the grass is weaker, with some areas of bare soil. Circles are cut in the grass round the foot of each tree.
- 4.1 In some areas, particularly along the southern fringe, there are bulbs in the grass. These include snowdrops and daffodils, and in one location to the south of the A96, crocuses. The snowdrops are generally thin with a few small clumps, and therefore fail to create an impact on the appearance of the grassland below the trees. Daffodils are more numerous, and will create a swathe of colour under the trees later in spring⁶.
- 4.2 There are borders of shrubs for decorative or screening purposes in various locations:
- Decorative borders include plants such as potentilla, buddleia, juniper, lonicera, cornus, cotoneaster, viburnum and dwarf conifers (this is not an exhaustive list);
 - Screening borders include plants such as berberis, roses, hypericum.
- 4.3 The former star and crescent beds in the 'teardrop' shaped lawn to the south of Grant Lodge, have now been grassed over, although they are still visible in the grass, and are picked out in light snowfall. These formerly had bedding displays. A raised and inclined bed retained for seasonal bedding is located to the northwest of the Lodge on the north side of the Cathedral axis.



Planting Conservation Issues and opportunities

- A tree replacement strategy is required which takes into account the spatial structure of the landscape
- Veteran trees near public access routes require monitoring and tree surgery to ensure safety
- Recently planted trees in inappropriate locations could be transplanted to better locations
- There are opportunities to improve the horticultural content of the park generally for display, spatial definition and to complement key activity areas
- There are opportunities to improve the biodiversity of the park through management changes and species selection

⁶ Note: fieldwork was carried out in early February 2013.

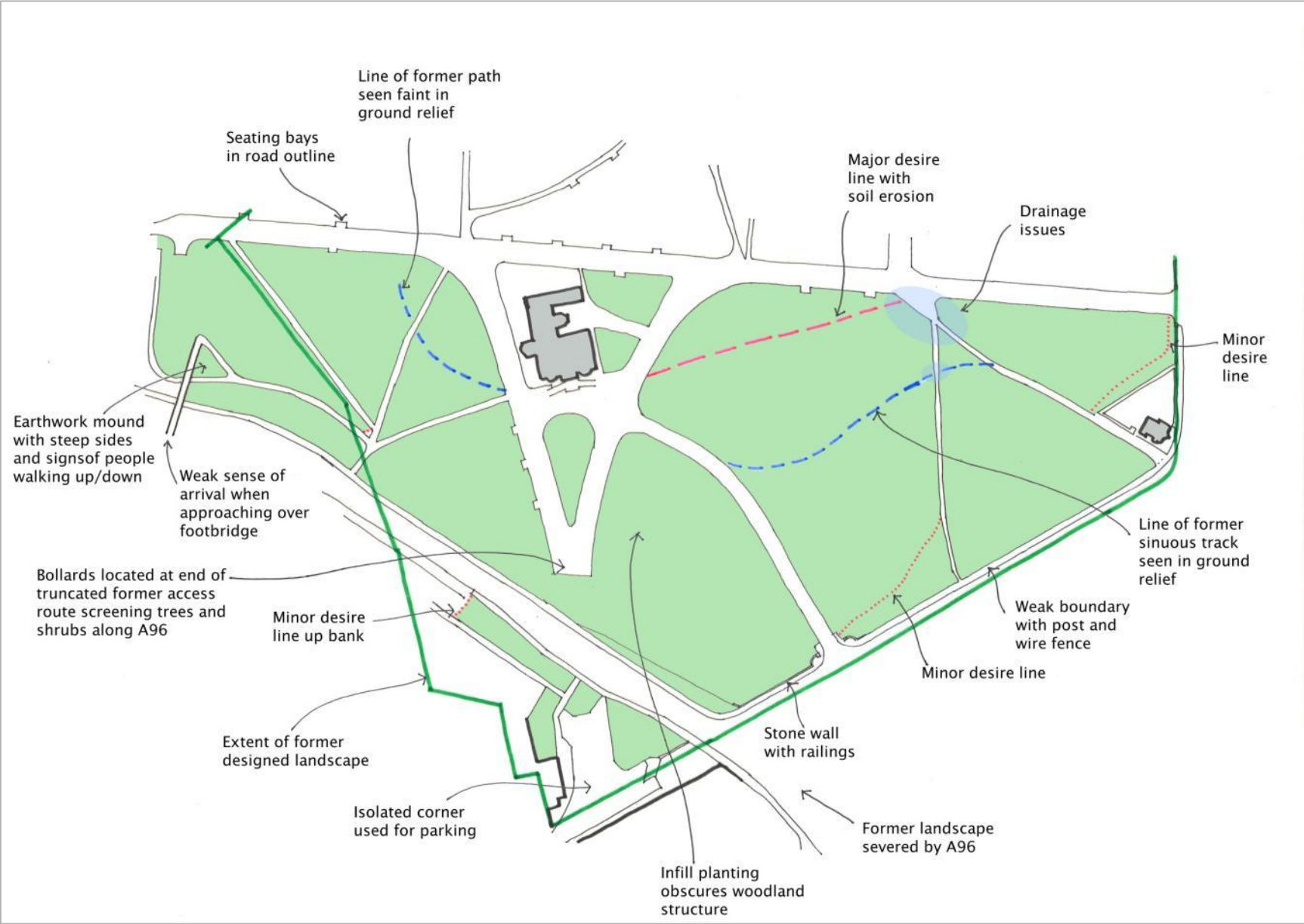
Buildings

- 4.4 This Historic Landscape Statement does not go into detail about the buildings in the Grant Lodge policies, but the buildings of interest around Cooper Park are listed below:
- Grant Lodge (detailed information is contained in the Conservation Statement⁷);
 - East gate cottage;
 - Elgin Library;
 - a small cottage to the west of Elgin Library, which may be a western gate lodge to the Grant Lodge policies
- 4.5 The south gate cottage, dovecote and ice house marked on historic maps are no longer evident in the landscape. The site of the bandstand can be seen as undulations in the grass to the north of Grant Lodge.



⁷ Andrew KP Wright (2006) Grant Lodge Elgin, Conservation Statement.

Figure 11: Existing site issues



Wider Cooper Park

- 4.6 Cooper Park is dominated by flat open amenity grassland that is marked up with sports pitches and crossed by two tarmac paths. The northern edge of the park is defined by the River Lossie, which has a levee along the south bank (the topography rises on the north bank). Trees planted in the levee and on the park side of the track include poplars and willows amongst other species. South of the broad levee, there is a tarmac track of a width suitable for service vehicles. This runs from the north side of the boating pond, along the River and round the north-eastern boundary of the park to join the Cathedral path adjacent to the bowling green. There is also evidence of pedestrian traffic along the top of the levee where a better view of the river can be obtained.
- 4.7 To the east of the open parkland, there are more enclosed areas, including a playground with topographic features (ramps, slides, bridges), some garden areas and a small aviary. The bowling green is adjacent to these areas, and is bounded by hedges. A hedge runs along the north side of the Cathedral path, with open grass and trees to the north, and decorative shrub/perennial borders run along north and south sides of the Cathedral path further towards the Cathedral.
- 4.8 To the west of the open parkland, there is a skate park of concrete formation. West of a hedge and some trees lies the boating lake, with shrubs and trees to the north, and a hedge along the lakeside path to the east. The western shore of the lake has a path running along the bank (almost at water level), with mature trees between this and the parking/road areas. A collection of benches, including picnic benches is located to the south of the pond, between it and the Library. There are islands in the lake, the southernmost in the shape of the British Isles, although this is not perceptible from the water's edge, nor is it advertised as being so.
- 4.9 From the middle of the open parkland, and from the northern and eastern edges, there are panoramic views south and southwest towards landmarks on the Elgin skyline (see Figure 12). These include the St Giles Church tower and the Ladyhill Monument on Castle Hill. The Cathedral is visible from some locations, but is screened by mature trees along the park boundary. The Library is in a prominent building, which is currently more noticeable than Grant Lodge, which is partially hidden behind trees (in particular the single large leaning ash tree to the north of the Lodge). Vehicular and pedestrian activity is visible around the Library, which draws attention to it as a destination facility.



Existing Maintenance

- 4.10 Maintenance appears generally to be good, with mown grass and tidy borders. Shrubs within borders have been pruned using hedge trimmers, which suits some plants better than others.
- 4.11 Trees have clear rings at their bases. Recent tree work has been carried out, with evidence of pruning and tree surgery in addition to the felling of diseased trees. There is evidence of the recent loss of a number of large trees, with fresh cut stumps, scars in the grass from the falling trunks and branches, and chainsaw woodchips.

Drainage

- 4.12 There are a few locations on the site that show evidence of drainage problems. These include the lowest points on paths where drainage has not been provided or has become blocked.
- 4.13 The path junction to the south of the bowling green has standing water at the exit points of the paths leaving the cathedral path. This is the wettest path location in the Grant Lodge policy area.
- 4.14 Another poorly drained section, with standing water and mud on the tarmac path, is formed in a dip in the path that corresponds to the crossing point of the route of the former sinuous drive (introduced c.1850) with the existing path.



5 Conclusions and Further Work

- 5.1 The grounds around Grant Lodge were developed through the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries with the Lodge situated in an open space surrounded by a ring of woodland. Specimen trees were planted within the open space to frame the house from the south. Stables, outbuildings and functional space (including kitchen gardens) were located along the south-eastern boundary of the grounds, along North College Street.
- 5.2 The setting of the Lodge in its ring of woodland was twice interrupted during the 20th century: at the turn of the 20th century, when the grounds and Lodge were gifted to Elgin, and Cooper Park was created, the enclosing ring of woodland around the Lodge was cut through by the straight axial path that focuses on the Cathedral. The stables and outbuildings were removed, and the path network was diversified. In the late 20th century, the landscape around the Lodge was again severed by the construction of the A96 relief road, which cut across the woodland belt. Screen planting along the road edge encroached into the open space at the front (south) of the Lodge, and further infill planting of trees has obscured the original structure of the woodland ring.
- 5.3 The current uses of the Grant Lodge area of Cooper Park are mainly as a thoroughfare between the Cathedral, Elgin Library and towards the town centre. The current disused status of Grant Lodge does not generate activity in its vicinity except for parking on the adjacent roads. The heavily treed character of the Grant Lodge area is shaded in summer and lacks the amenity of the park to the north, this limits activities within this area except for access.
- 5.4 Section 4 outlines some of the more immediate and obvious conservation issues and opportunities within the study area. These can be summarised as follows:
- **Future losses of significant trees and opportunities to develop a replacement strategy, which may include adjustments to reinstate the ring structure to the woodland and species selection to protect against future disease risks;**
 - **Opportunities to restore the spatial structure around the Lodge, bringing back clearly defined spaces and to reinforcing views to and from the building;**
 - **Future access requirements will pose conservation issues, with potential impacts on historic trees and on the pedestrian experience of the park. There may be opportunities to reinstate or partially re-use historic access routes within a future access strategy;**
 - **Opportunities to increase the awareness and recognition of the heritage of the site. This may encompass the former uses and ownerships of the Cooper Park area including the townhouses that occupied the area before Grant Lodge and later landscape features removed during development phases;**
 - **The current boundary treatments are inconsistent in quality and represent a weak edge and poor image for the park in several places. There would be potential benefits to redefining the poor quality boundaries and their gateways, taking into account the future access requirements and key views into the park from the surrounding areas;**

- **The park's infrastructure has a municipal character which fails to complement the architectural heritage or landscape values. There is consequently a range of opportunities to improve the public realm in a way that provides more consistency in style and quality, is sympathetic to the park/less urban in character, and is complementary to the architecture and to new any developments associated with Grant Lodge or the Cathedral.**
- **The restoration of Grant Lodge will increase activities in this area of the park and may provide opportunities for supporting a wider range of activities across the park, including externally based education, volunteering and training activities.**
- **Car parking requirements can pose a threat to landscape heritage unless careful siting and design considers the history of the site and minimises the potential damage to root zones of important or historical trees.**

Further work

5.5 This study represents a preliminary historical and physical appraisal of the Grant Lodge area of Cooper Park. It is intended as supporting information to the intended Stage 1 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is recognised that there would be value in further research and site investigations to inform the production of a Conservation Management Plan for Cooper Park, covering a greater area than this study and thus providing wider context for the Grant Lodge developments and for other strategic initiatives related to the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Project. Such additional work is recommended for the development stage of the HLF project as listed below:

- A Conservation Management Plan for Cooper Park as a whole, in accordance with HLF guidance; this would ideally be undertaken as supporting information for the Stage 2 HLF submission. The Conservation Management Plan would ideally be supported by a number specialist studies including:
 - **Archaeological research** and investigations in relation to the pre-17th century uses of the landscape and former town houses within the Cooper Park area; former stables complex, office buildings, kitchen garden and associated walls;
 - **Statement of Significance** for the landscape (as part of the CMP);
 - **Activity Plan** for Cooper Park may be required as companion to the Conservation Management Plan or may be developed for Grant Lodge and the park jointly;
 - **Landscape Masterplan** which addresses the access and parking requirements for Grant Lodge and other landscape conservation and enhancement proposals.

Appendix 1. Historical Maps

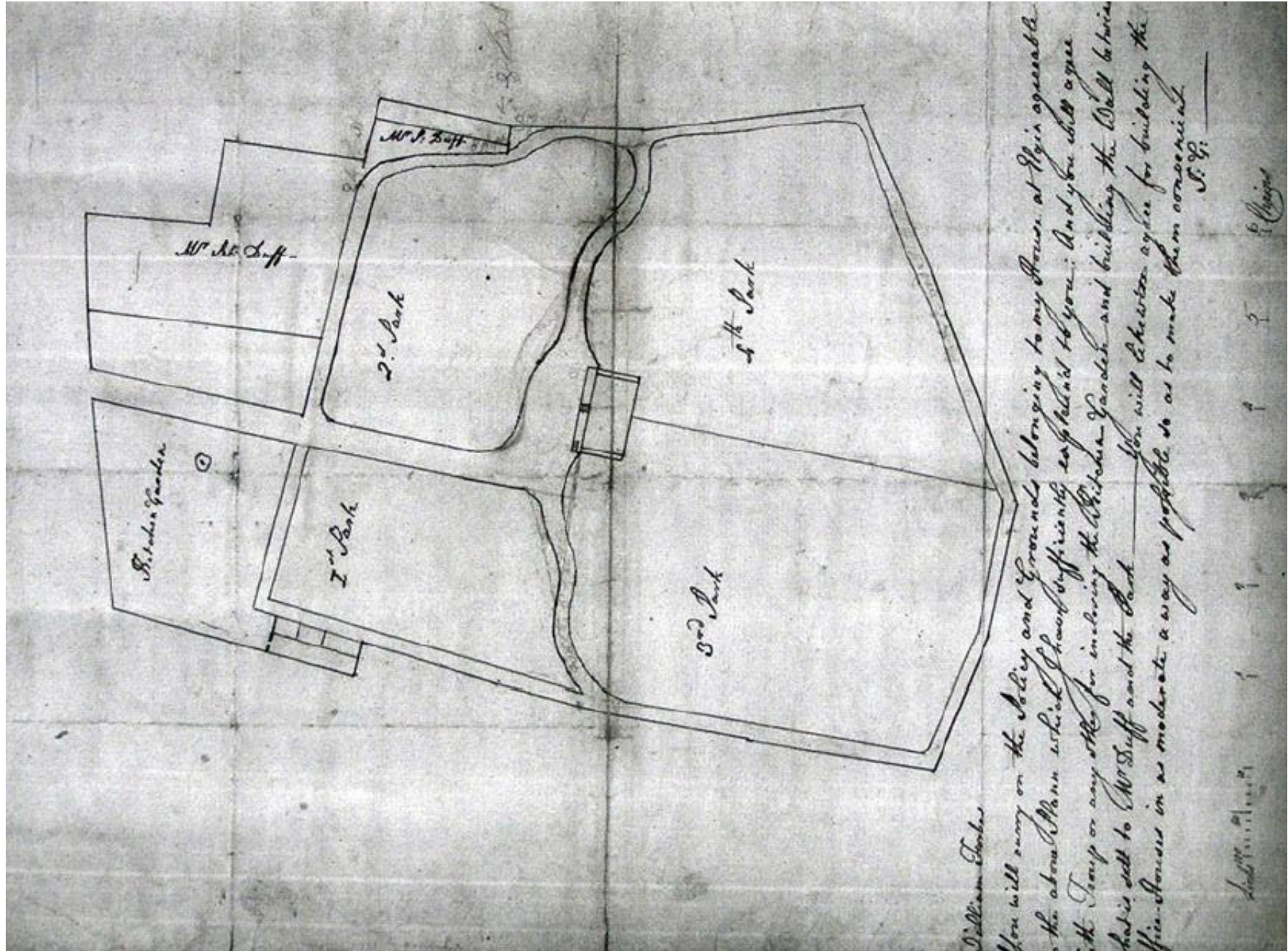
1769 'Plan of the Parks' reproduced with permission from Lord Seafield.

Other historic maps reproduced with permission from the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland.

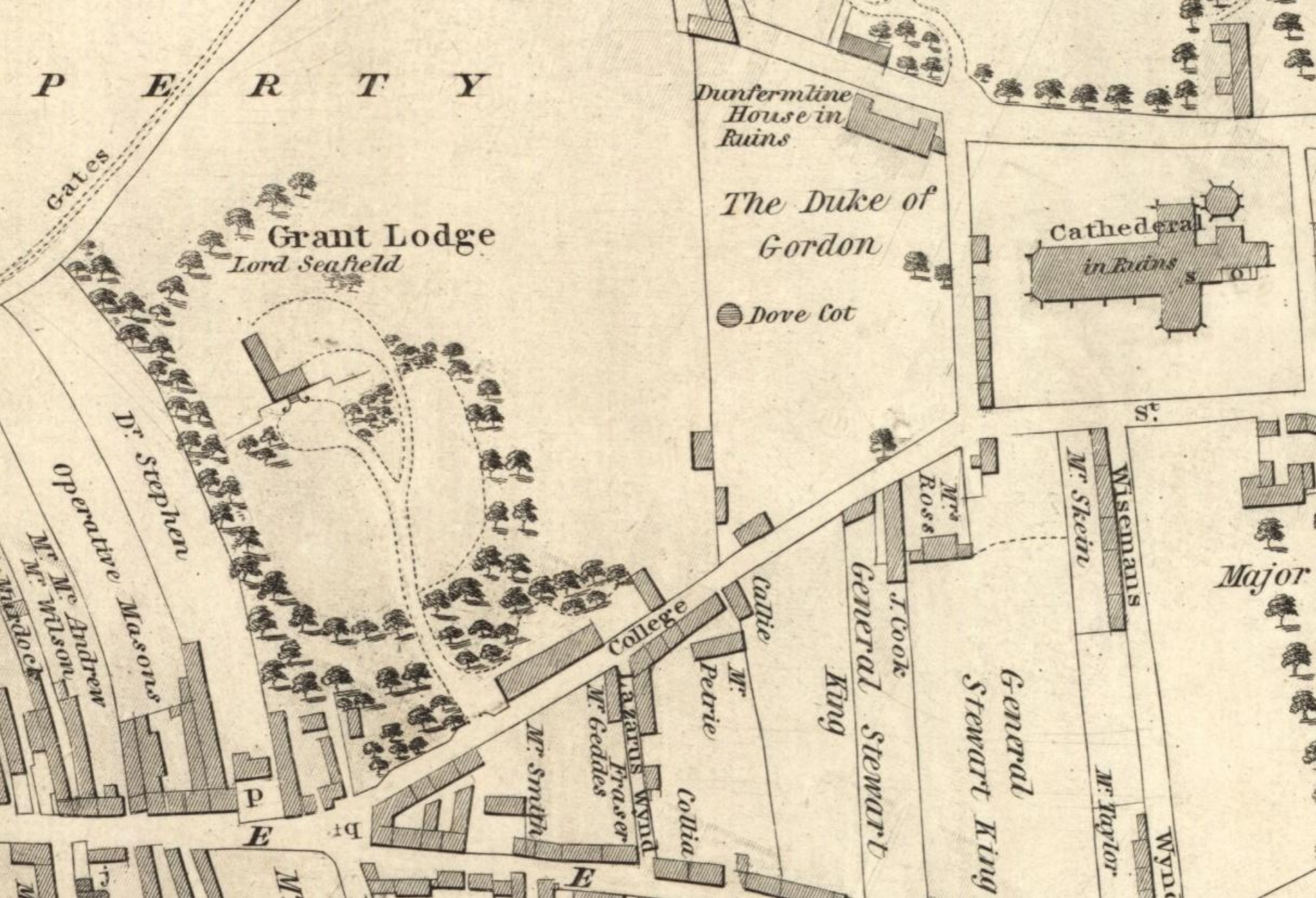
Slezer, John, Elgin - 'The Prospect of the House and Town of Elgin', 1693 (NLS).



Plan of Parks at Elgin, 1769, Seafield Archives (Lord Seafield)



John Wood, Plan of the Town of Elgin from actual survey, 1822 (NLS)



OS large scale Scottish Town Plans, 1847-1895. Elgin 1868, VII.12.22 and VII.16.2 (NLS)



OS 2nd edition, Elginshire, Sheets 007.16 and 007.12, revised 1904, published 1905 (NLS)



Appendix 2. Tree survey information