

Beauchief Hall

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Final Draft March 2007



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Summary of Consultation Undertaken

After a period of public consultation Sheffield City Council adopted this Conservation Area Appraisal and the accompanying Management Proposals for Beauchief Hall on 19th March 2007, which means that they are now a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications in the area.

BEAUCHIEF HALL CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

1.0 Introduction

Purpose of the appraisal

1.1 This appraisal seeks to record and analyse the various features that give the Beauchief Hall Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest. The area's buildings and spaces are noted and described, and marked on the Townscape Appraisal map along with listed buildings, buildings of townscape merit, significant trees and spaces, and important views into and out of the conservation area. There is a presumption that all of these features should be "preserved or enhanced", as required by the legislation.

1.2 This appraisal builds upon national policy, as set out in PPG15, and local policy (see section 2.0). It provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the Beauchief Hall Conservation Area can be assessed.



Beauchief Hall from beside the main entrance

1.3 To be concise and readable, the appraisal does not record all features. The omission of any feature from the text or accompanying maps does not, therefore, mean that it is not of interest or value.

Summary of special interest

1.4 The Beauchief Hall Conservation Area was designated on 18th December 1969.

1.5 The special interest that justifies designation of the Beauchief Hall Conservation Area derives from the following features:

- Beauchief Hall, including adjoining steps, forecourt walls and gates (grade II*);
 - Pegge's Cottage and outbuildings (grade II);
 - The grounds of Beauchief Hall (grade II Registered Park and Garden) which include walled gardens and woodland walks with formal viewpoints;
 - The 'Fir Walk';
 - Ornamental ponds;
 - Views to the Peak District;
 - Woodland backdrop;
 - Notable group of listed historic buildings in rural surroundings;
 - Prevalent use of stone as a building material;
 - Possible further remains of Beauchief Abbey;
 - Mature trees.
-



Stone sports pavilion overlooking playing fields



Front of Beauchief Hall

2.0 The planning policy context

2.1 Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. It is the quality and interest of an area, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a conservation area. Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas. Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

2.2 This document should be read in conjunction with national planning policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG 15) – Planning and the Historic Environment. The layout and content follows guidance produced by English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the English Historic Towns Forum.

Local planning policy

2.3 This appraisal provides a firm basis on which applications for development within Sheffield City can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework produced by Sheffield City Council. That framework is set out in a number of documents, notably:

2.4 The *Unitary Development Plan (UDP)* which is the statutory development plan for Sheffield, adopted in March 1998.

2.5 The *Sheffield Development Framework (SDF)* will be the City’s portfolio of local development documents, collectively delivering the spatial planning strategy for the whole of the Sheffield District except for the area in the Peak Park. Once adopted, the SDF will replace the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

2.6 The *Sheffield Urban Design Compendium*, a design guide primarily for the City Centre, although much of the design guidance is relevant throughout the rest of the city. The compendium provides information for designers, and sets out strategic information at a city wide level. It provides guidance relating to the specific parts of the city, for both the built form and public realm.

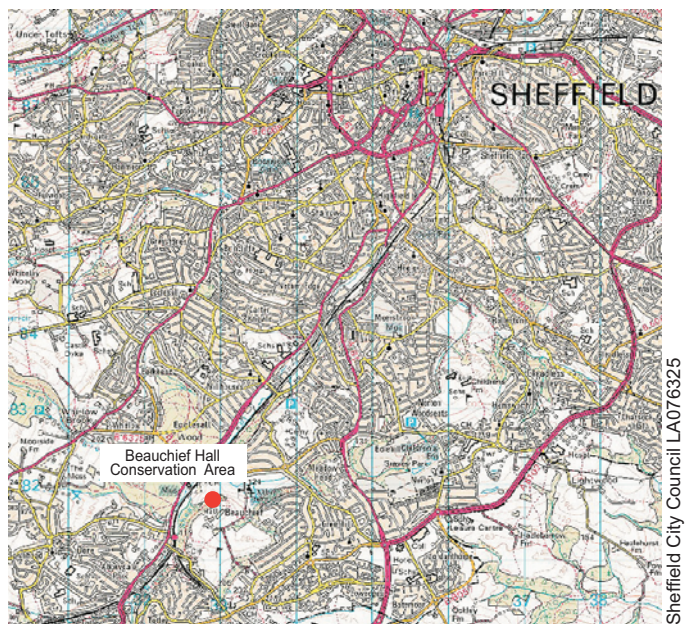


The ornamental ponds in winter

3.0 Location and setting

Location and context

3.1 The conservation area is located 5.5 km south west of Sheffield. By car, the area can be reached from the south along Beauchief Lane, a tree lined narrow lane off Bradway Lane, from the north the Hall is approached along Beauchief Abbey Lane. The land is in private ownership but a number of footpaths pass along the periphery of the conservation area.



Ordnance Survey map showing location of Beauchief Hall Conservation Area

3.2 There are two principal elements of Beauchief Hall Conservation Area: Beauchief Hall and environs (a grade II* listed 17th century country house) and Beauchief Hall's formal gardens and pleasure grounds that are registered grade II in English Heritage's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*.

Boundaries

3.3 The boundaries of the conservation area have been drawn to enclose Beauchief Hall and its formal gardens and pleasure grounds.

4.0 Landscape setting

Topography and relationship to surroundings

4.1 The boundaries of the conservation area have been drawn to enclose Beauchief Hall and its formal gardens and pleasure grounds.

4.2 The conservation area has a secluded rural setting though it is not far from 20th century housing developments.



Stone piers and decorative railings around formal garden



Rear of 'garden shed' in the walled garden

4.3 To the west of the conservation area Ladies Spring Wood occupies the head of a rising slope, forming a shallow concave line of enclosure to the west and south west. To the north east of Ladies Spring Wood the wooded headland continues north-eastwards with High Wood occupying a spur of high ground and thus extending the curving line of enclosure to the north of the Hall.

4.4 Ground within the site is generally falling southwards and eastwards. A deep belt of trees (Gulleys Wood) encloses a short length of the southern boundary which is otherwise marked by Beauchief Drive and a field boundary which is part of a historic formal walk around the west side of the Hall's grounds.

5.0 Historic development and archaeology

Origins and historic development

5.1 Brief general history of Beauchief monastic estate

5.1.1 The Beauchief Hall Conservation Area is located close to a separate conservation area, the Beauchief Abbey Conservation Area, focussed on the remains of Beauchief Abbey. The two conservation areas have distinctively different characters but are historically linked, both having formed part of the medieval monastic estate of Beauchief Abbey. The Beauchief Abbey Conservation Area is appraised in a separate document.

5.1.2 Beauchief Abbey was founded c1175 for Premonstratensian or White Canons by Robert FitzRanulph. The Abbey land amounted to c 800 acres (324 ha) with the Abbey set in a park of 200 acres (81 ha) with several fish ponds fed by a small stream.

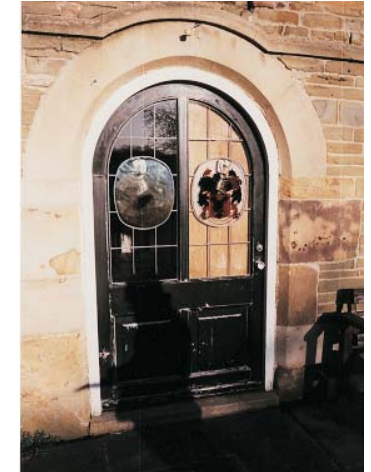
5.1.3 Beauchief was surrendered, as part of the dissolution of the monasteries, and in 1537 granted by Henry VIII to Sir Nicholas Strelley for the sum of £223. The property granted included gardens, orchards, ponds and parks plus a further 259 acres.

5.1.4 The estate descended, through marriage, to Edward Pegge who in 1671 built a new mansion, today's Beauchief Hall, with stone from the Abbey which by that time was ruinous. The site chosen for the new mansion was to the south west of the Abbey and is thought to be the site of the Grange where the monks formerly made their butter and cheese.

5.1.5 Edward Pegge used stone from the Abbey not only to begin building Beauchief Hall but also to add a small church to the west tower of the ruined abbey. The Church of St Thomas a Beckett and a Scheduled Ancient Monument enclosing the remains of the inner precinct of Beauchief Abbey are the centerpiece of the Beauchief Abbey Conservation Area.



Southern gable of Pegge's Cottage



Detail of door, Beauchief Hall

5.2. Brief history of Beauchief Hall

5.2.1 After the death in 1679 of Edward Pegge, the creator of Beauchief Hall and its grounds, the estate remained in the ownership of the family, by direct descent, until the death of Edward's great grandson Peter in 1836. Peter Pegge's sister's son, Broughton Benjamin Steade, assumed the surname Pegge-Burnell on inheriting the estate in 1836 and completed the building of Beauchief Hall, whose front bears his initials BBPB.

5.2.2 In the late 19th century the Hall was leased to the Wilson family of Sheffield, manufacturers who subsequently purchased the Hall and part of the estate from the Pegge-Burnells in 1923. In 1958 the Hall, gardens and grounds were purchased by De La Salle College for use as a school. The school closed in 1977 and the Hall was sold again in 1982 for conversion to office use. The offices are currently the headquarters of EDP PLC Group.



Extract from OS map of 1875

Archaeology

5.2.4 English Heritage's formal 'assessment of importance' of the Beauchief Abbey Scheduled Ancient Monument states the following: "Beauchief Abbey is an important example of a small Premonstratensian house founded for a small group of men...the foundations of a wide variety of monastic buildings are still in place and provide a good illustration of the layout of this type of monastery. The buried remains of further buildings and features survive in Beauchief Park which has suffered very little disturbance or development in the centuries since the Dissolution. Together, these provide important evidence of the economy and way of life peculiar to Premonstratensian canons."

5.2.3 The 1875 OS map shows the layout round the Hall to be generally in accordance with an early c17 description and an 1810 plan, with additional features. Beauchief Drive, an extension of Beauchief Abbey Lane, is the northern approach to the Hall and is shown on the 1875 OS map but not as suggested by the 1759-61 Fairbank survey or as indicated on the c 1810 farm plan. It was possibly laid out in conjunction with the 1836 alterations to the Hall.

5.2.5 Although the Sites and Monuments Record and the South Yorkshire Archaeology Service's Historic Environment Characterisation Study cannot be regarded as definitive or comprehensive, data from both sources indicates that the area is rich in archaeological remains which, in addition to the scheduled abbey, also includes the sites of a medieval fulling mill, a paper mill and sites associated with early industrial charcoal production and ore smelting. There is also a World War II Royal Observer Corps underground monitoring post.

5.2.6 The whole of the conservation area therefore has archaeological potential above and below the ground, and it is likely that further consideration will need to be given to the effect of applications for substantial new development.

6.0 Spatial analysis

Key views and vistas

6.1 The focal point of the conservation area is Beauchief Hall from where there are long views out over the former estate and distant countryside in an arc from the south-west to the north-west. Formal viewpoints (mentioned below) are one of the deliberate planned features of the landscaped grounds. There are good views of the Hall from beside the ornamental ponds.

The character of spaces within the area



Walled garden from raised forecourt at Beauchief Hall

6.2 The landscape to the west and south of the Hall is open grassland (including playing fields) with newly planted widely spaced standard trees in the westernmost quarter. To the east of the Hall, the Fir Walk and the former nursery (containing an uncharacteristic straight line of leylandii) give this part of the conservation area a more enclosed, private character.

7.0 Definition of the special interest of the conservation area

Uses and activities

7.1 The principal buildings are in office and office storage use with an adjacent area of car parking. A recently built clubhouse west of Beauchief Hall overlooks an area of approximately six acres of playing fields including a bowling green.

7.2 The formal walled gardens, which are private, continue to be tended as recreational gardens. Open space encircling the conservation area's principal buildings is generally grassy parkland with, to the north of the Hall, a deer park and, to the east, a large roughly rectangular area of ground which is a former local authority nursery, divided by a long line of tall conifers.

7.3 The conservation area has a rural, tranquil atmosphere.



Beauchief Hall from the south west



Front door at top of a flight of stone steps, Beauchief Hall

Architectural and historic character

7.4 Beauchief Hall (listed grade II*) is situated on a level platform set into sloping ground leading up to the north-west where Ladies Spring Wood and

High Wood form a backdrop. The architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner describes the building as “solid and stately”. The stone building, with seven-bay front of three storeys with parapet, was constructed in 1671 by Edward Pegge, altered in 1836 and restored in c 1989 for office use. The main doorway is reached by a grand spreading staircase with heavy stone balustrading.

7.5 South west of the Hall is a range of stone outbuildings (grade II) around a courtyard with a U shaped range to the west and a detached building to the east, sometimes known as Pegge's Cottage. The detached outbuilding dates from 1667 and is indicated on the c 1810 plan as a brewhouse. It is built with coursed squared stone with ashlar dressings and its most prominent features



Looking eastwards from Beauchief Hall



Eastern façade of Beauchief Hall

7.6 The western range, to the west of Pegge's Cottage, is also stone built and possibly formed part of the 1836 rejuvenation of the estate. The outbuildings are linked to the south-west corner of the Hall by a 17th century stone wall with gate piers (grade II).

7.7 The only other large habitable building in the conservation area is a recently built clubhouse which, being built of stone and with the appearance of a barn, blends well with the area's historic buildings.

Historic garden and features

7.8 The grounds of Beauchief were landscaped in the 17th century to create formal gardens and pleasure grounds. Most of the 17th century landscaping survives albeit changed by later alterations to the environs of the Hall (e.g. car parking, playing fields) and 200 years of natural growth and decay.

7.9 The grounds are registered grade II in English Heritage's Register of *Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*. The information below is a brief synopsis of the document that accompanies Beauchief Hall's entry in the Register which contains a full account of the historic development of the park and a detailed description of all its most important elements.

7.10 There are four significant elements in the layout of the gardens:

7.10.1. The grounds immediately surrounding the Hall were laid out in a series of four **walled gardens**. Immediately to the south of the Hall is a rectangular formal garden extending c 60 metres to the south, flanked by high stone walls in line with the width of the Hall. The southern boundary is marked by low stone walls, topped with ornamental wrought iron railings with a central carriage entrance with ornamental wrought-iron gates between tall ashlar pillars. To the east of this garden is a series of three terraces stepping down from a wide graveled terrace walk that runs eastwards from below the Hall. This area is enclosed by stone walls and has a central axis which leads from a brick and stone pavilion down to an opening in the southern boundary. Immediately west of the Hall is an enclosed square garden laid to lawn from which, in a north easterly direction, a formal walk leads to a viewpoint, the Fir Walk (see below). To the west of the Hall is a further roughly square garden which has at its centre a three tier stone fountain

7.10.2. The **'Fir Walk'** is marked on the c 1810 plan. It leads in a north easterly direction from the Hall along a wide path, lined with trees and holly, to a viewpoint where, at a short flight of stone steps, there are views through woodland over lower ground towards Beauchief Abbey.



Gate leading to modern parking area



Gates and stone gate piers at southern entrance to walled garden

7.10.3. South of the Hall is a series of three irregular **ornamental ponds**. The lowest pond to the east has a stone edging and a small island and is separated from the centre pond by a narrow strip of land which is accessed from the north by a small 19th century Iron Gate with cast iron pier set within 19th century iron fencing. Ponds are indicated on the c 1810 plan but are shown as two narrow formal canals to the east and a circular pond to the west with a small square building or platform, and a further pond to the west. The 1875 OS map indicates two irregular ponds with a platform area to the west enclosed on three sides by a ditch.

7.10.4. From the end of the 'Fir Walk', an informal path leads northwest into High Wood. On entering the High Wood the path turns to wind south westwards along the boundary, thus forming a **woodland walk** with occasional views to the Hall, former estate land and beyond. Within Ladies Wood c 200 m west of the Hall is a rectangular raised viewing platform constructed in coursed random stone. The platform is marked on the 1875 OS map. South west of the Hall a path leads off the woodland walk heading east, then northeast along what is, in effect, the boundary of the conservation area. The first section, leading east, commands views out to the north east. The second section follows, in part, the line of a route indicated on the 1875 OS which led back to the Hall, thus completing the circuit.



Stone steps leading to well beside Beauchief Drive (south side)



North façade of Beauchief Hall from the woodland walk

Trees

7.11 Trees and open space surrounding the central hub of the Hall and are the essence of the conservation area. Trees, which form a backdrop to views across the area, are a particular feature of the grounds of the Hall, particularly those along the 'Fir Walk', beside the ornamental ponds, along the boundary of the conservation area and individual specimen trees (e.g. monkey puzzle, cedar) close to the Hall.



Start of woodland walk from Beauchief Drive



Ornamental pond in summer

8.0 Issues

8.1 This section contains a brief summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the Beauchief Hall Conservation Area together with recommendation, if any, for changes to the current conservation area boundary. Strengths and weaknesses, together with other more specific 'positives' and 'negatives' that were identified during the appraisal process, form the basis of a separate document, known as the *Beauchief Hall Conservation Area Management Proposals*.

8.2 The *Management Proposals* set objectives for addressing the issues arising from this appraisal and make recommendations for possible improvements and the avoidance of harmful change.

Strengths

- Historic buildings;
- Landscaped park and garden;
- Access via Public footpaths;
- Trees, ponds and wildlife;
- Tranquil rural setting.

Weaknesses

- Large tarmac'd car parking areas to west of Hall;
- Subdivision of open space by hedge to demarcate playing field area;
- Concrete kerbs and 'speed humps' suburbanise the drive to the Hall;
- Unkempt appearance of former nursery area;

- Absence of information about history of woodland walk;
- Line of leylandii in former nursery.



Open space to the west of Beauchief Hall beyond playing fields

Beauchief Hall Conservation Area boundary review

8.3 It is recommended that the existing conservation area boundary is adjusted to accord with the boundary of the registered historic park and garden. The existing map of the historic park lacks detail but (1) the current conservation area boundary does not include a well in the form of a stone grotto beside the stream in Gulleys Wood which is a feature of the Hall's grounds and included in the historic park and (2), the northern boundary of the conservation area does not extend as far as the northern boundary of the historic park. Sheffield Council's map may be incorrect on this point. On the English Heritage map, the historic park appears to follow the line of a footpath. Sheffield Council's map shows this boundary following the line of the edge of the woods. The conservation area boundary follows the line of the edge of the wood. Clarification is needed. In any case, the historic park should be wholly included within the conservation area.

Bibliography

Pevsner, N *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire The West Riding* (Penguin 1967);

English Heritage *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest – Beauchief Hall* (2003);

Thirtieth List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (DNH 1995);

Ordnance Survey 1875, 1898, 1923.

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Useful contacts and addresses

For information on listed buildings and conservation areas:

Urban Design and Conservation Team
Sheffield City Council,
Howden House,
1 Union Street,
Sheffield S1 2SH.
Tel: 0114 273 5804

www.sheffield.gov.uk/in-your-area/planning-and-city-development/urban-design-conservation

For information on the status and interpretation of the statutory Development Plan and supplementary planning guidance:

Forward and Area Planning Team
Sheffield City Council,
Howden House,
1 Union Street,
Sheffield S1 2SH.
Tel: 0114 273 4157

For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas:

English Heritage
37 Tanner Row
York
YO1 6WP
Tel: 01904 601901

For an excellent range of technical advice leaflets:

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB),
37 Spital Square, LONDON E1 6DY Tel: 020 7377 1644

The Georgian Group,
6 Fitzroy Square, LONDON W1T 5DX Tel: 020 7529 8920












The Victorian Society,
1 Priory Gardens, Bedford Park, LONDON W4 1TT Tel: 020 8994 1019

The Twentieth Century Society,
70 Cowcross Street, LONDON EC1M 6EJ Tel: 020 7250 3857

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-  Current Conservation Area boundary
-  Listed Building
-  Building of Townscape Merit
-  Focal building
-  Historic Street surface
-  Prominent tree
-  Stream or pond
-  Important open space
-  Prominent tree group
-  Significant view
-  Woodland walk

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 DIRECTORATE OF DEVELOPMENT
 ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: JOHN MOTHERSOLE

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
 DIRECTOR
 D CURTIS BA, DIP.TP, MRTPI, FIHT

SCOPE:

TITLE:
**BEAUCHIEF HALL
 CONSERVATION AREA**

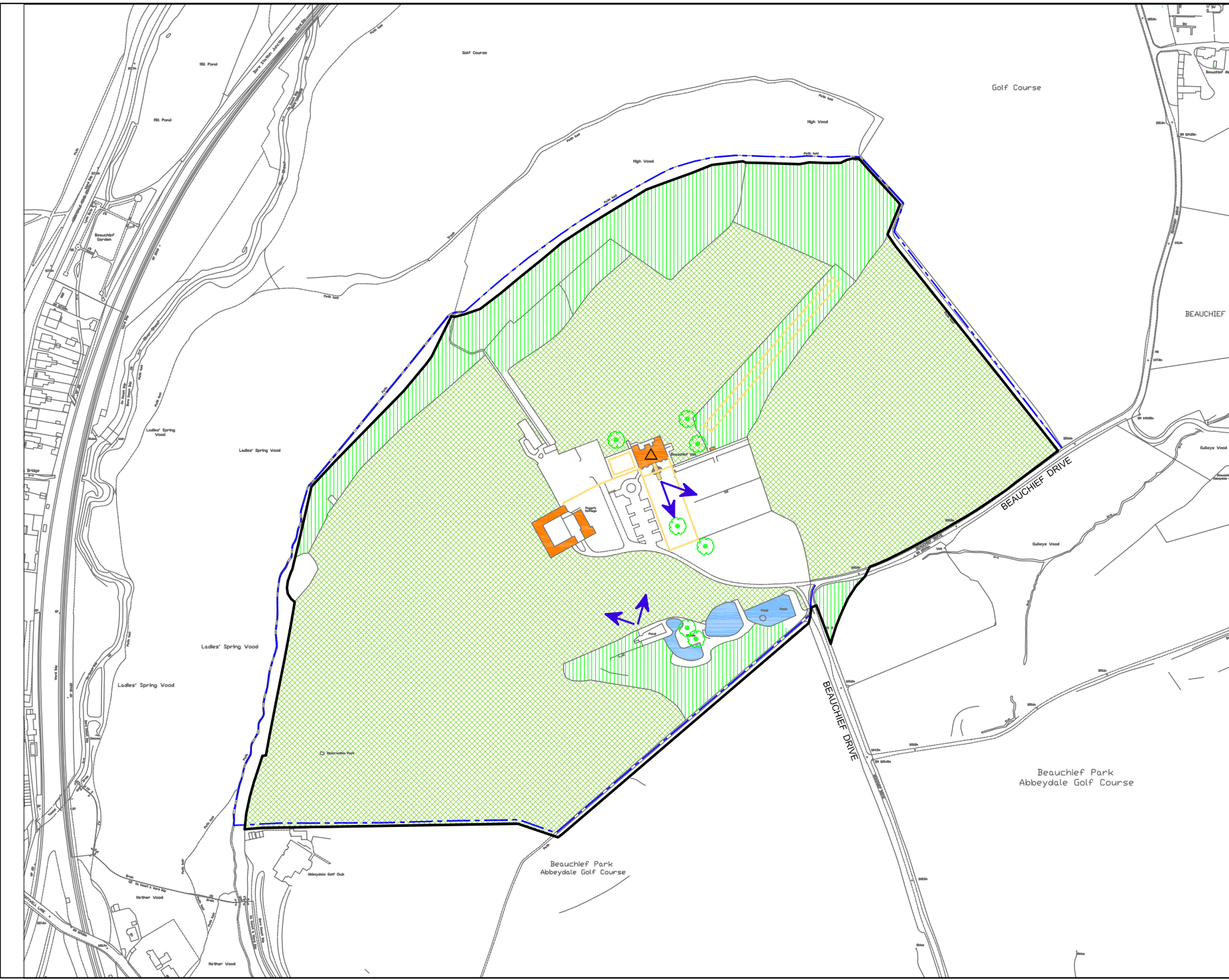
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SCALE:

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Summary of Consultation Undertaken

A consultation draft of this document was subject to a period of consultation between 22nd January and 16th February 2007. All local residents in the conservation area were sent copies of the document along with a survey form asking for their comments. Residents were also invited to contact the Urban Design and Conservation Team if they wished to discuss the Appraisal or Management Proposals further. Local members and local community groups were also consulted as part of the process.

