

Birmingham 2022 – Victoria Park Temporary Trackway

Heritage Statement



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This document has 14 pages including the cover.

Document history

Revision	Purpose description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
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Contents

Chapter	Page
Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	5
1.1. Site	5
1.2. Methodology	5
2. Site Description	5
2.1. Topography	6
2.2. Land Use	6
3. Development Proposals	7
3.1. Description	7
4. The Heritage Assets Affected and their Significance	7
4.1. Designated Heritage Assets	7
4.2. Non-designated heritage assets.	8
5. Impacts	8
6. Mitigation	9
7. Summary	9
8. Limitations and Assumptions	9
Appendix A. Designated Heritage Assets Gazetteer	11
Appendix B. Non-Designated Heritage Assets Gazetteers	12
Appendix C. VIC-LBO-930	13



Executive Summary

Atkins Ltd has been commissioned by the Birmingham Organising Committee for the 2022 Commonwealth Games to secure full planning permission for the use of Victoria Park for the Lawn Bowls and Para Bowls event for the Games. As part of this, there is a requirement for a further planning permission relating to a temporary vehicle trackway, solar panels and fencing to be installed.

This heritage statement has been prepared to accompany the full planning application. The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will be held in venues across Birmingham and the West Midlands from 28 July until 8 August 2022. The venues being used for the Games stretch from Coventry and Royal Leamington Spa in the east to Cannock Chase Forest in the north-west of the region.

In order to deliver the events at each venue, there will be a requirement for a series of overlay (temporary) structures at each of the venues for the duration of the games. The overlay includes all the temporary infrastructure required to support a particular facility or venue, including but not limited to temporary seating, tents, cabins, staging, power, fencing, flooring, lighting and signage. A combination of adaptation of new/ existing venues and fully temporary venues will be used. The Organising Committee and their contractors will plan, design and deliver the overlay for all competition/training venues and non-competition venues.

The proposed description of development for the application is as follows:

“Temporary use of an area of Royal Leamington Spa Victoria Park for the purposes of hosting the Lawn Bowls and Para Lawn Bowls event for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games; erection of temporary structures, including vehicle trackway, solar panels and security fencing to the site boundary.”

The works needed to create the temporary overlay in support of the Commonwealth Games event will cause limited, temporary impacts to the settings of Leamington Spa Conservation Area and the Spa Gardens Registered Park and Garden (NHLE 1000498). These impacts will be temporary and limited to the duration of the Games event. The impact to the conservation area will be limited to the location of the temporary overlay only. The impacts to the Spa Gardens and Victoria Park will be constrained to the settings of these assets. All of these impacts will be less than substantial harm.

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Atkins on behalf of Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee as part of a planning application for temporary overlay associated with the Lawn Bowls venue at Victoria Park, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

1.1. Site

For the purposes of this Heritage Statement, the Site comprises the extent of the proposed temporary overlay shown in the Site location plan in Figure 2-1 below.

1.2. Methodology

This Heritage Statement aims to identify the heritage assets within the Site that have the potential to be affected by the proposals and their setting.

In relation to identified heritage assets within the Site, the Heritage Statement will describe their significance; and assess the potential impact of the proposals on that significance, including physical change and change to their setting.

Heritage assets include designated and non-designated assets, as well as both buildings and below ground archaeology.

Data was sought from the following sources for the purposes of this Heritage Statement:

- Historic England's National Heritage List for England (NHLE)¹ for nationally designated assets;
- Leamington Spa Conservation Area Appraisal ²; and
- The Warwickshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) for non-designated heritage assets.

2. Site Description

The Site is located within Victoria Park, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, and is located on the southern edge of Victoria Park immediately north of the A452 Park Drive. It is bounded to the north and west by Victoria Park with the River Leam to the north. A residential area is located to the east.

A site location plan with the locations of the identified heritage assets is shown in Figure 2-1.

1 <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list> (accessed 05/12/20)

2 Leamington Spa, A Guide to Conservation areas. Warwick District Council. Undated.

Figure 2-1 – Site location plan (not to scale)



2.1. Topography

The Site has a total area of approximately 0.9ha.

LiDAR data shows the ground profile across the Site is uniform with a slight fall to the north and west. Ground levels fall from approximately 51.3m Above Ordinance Datum (AOD) at the eastern end of the Site to approximately 49.75m AOD in the north-western corner.

There are no significant changes in level within the Site nor any retaining structures.

2.2. Land Use

Historic Ordnance Survey mapping from 1889 shows that the Site and the surrounding Victoria Park were occupied by a cricket field. The residential development to the east was also present at this time. The land to the south of the Site was occupied by a railway junction and goods yard. The cricket field became a public park, Victoria Park, in 1905. Buildings associated within the bowling greens to the north-west of the Site had been constructed by 1939. Over this time, the railway junction and good yard to the south had continued to expand.

Ordnance Survey mapping from 1952 shows the Site to be in the form it is today. The extents of the railway junction and goods yard progressively reduced over the subsequent years until the 1980s when it arrived at its current layout.

Today the Site is part of the wider Victoria Park, which is grassed. Part of the perimeter footpath around the park runs through the southern part of the Site. There are a number of mature, deciduous trees present, primarily located along the Site's southern boundary.

3. Development Proposals

3.1. Description

The proposals comprise the erection of temporary structures, including a vehicle trackway, solar panels, and security fencing to the Site boundary associated with the temporary use of an area of the park for the Lawn Bowls and Para Lawn Bowls event for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The facility is anticipated to be in place from June to August 2022.

The temporary overlay for the park is illustrated on drawing number VIC-LBO-930 in **Appendix C**.

4. The Heritage Assets Affected and their Significance

4.1. Designated Heritage Assets

The Site is located within the Registered Park and Garden of Spa Gardens (NHLE 1000498) and within the Leamington Spa Conservation Area.

There are no other designated heritage assets within the Site.

A written description of the designated heritage assets is provided below.

4.1.1. Spa Gardens (NHLE 1000498)

The Spa Gardens (NHLE 1000498) are a Grade II Registered Park and Garden incorporating Victoria Park. The Spa Gardens comprise a kilometre-long chain of land totalling circa 20 hectares of space laid out as riverside walks, gardens, and parkland, created at various points in time from 1814 to 1903. The gardens run east west along the River Leam through the centre of Leamington Spa to include the western half of the Pump Room Gardens, the eastern half being created around the Pump Room built by Bertie Greatheed in 1814 in conjunction with the Warwickshire businessmen who founded the modern town. The sports grounds to the west of Adelaide Road are linked to York Promenade by an underpass beneath Adelaide Road bridge which was established in 1893. The eastern half of the space is a bowling green, the western half tennis courts. These aspects of the spa gardens were designed by Anthony Morgan, the Borough Surveyor and were opened by the Local Board of Health in 1862. Victoria Park sits within the spa gardens and was designed by William de Normanville, opening in 1897. Areas were laid out within the park for football, cricket and other sports. The park featured a track around its perimeter for cycling and running.

The Spa Gardens draw significance from their association with Edward Willes and the businessmen who founded the town of Leamington Spa, the London architect PF Robinson, and the Leamington Spa Corporation. They also draw significance from their aesthetic value as landscaped gardens and pleasure grounds designed to appeal to the public. The survival of the Spa Gardens into the present day and their communal value to the people of the town also lend significance to them. Victoria Park draws significance from its association with William de Normanville, it's group value with Adelaide Road Bridge as another de Normanville design, its communal value as a public park, and its evidential value as an example of Victorian civic patronage.

The Spa Gardens and Victoria Park share a setting, which is typified by an extensive urban greenspace extending across the city centre. The setting of the Spa Gardens and Victoria Park is calm and tranquil but has some, very limited, intrusion by road noise which slightly limits the significance the gardens and park draw from their setting.

4.1.2. Leamington Spa Conservation Area.

The historic core of Leamington Spa forms part of a conservation area covering the historic town. The Site within Victoria Park at the south-western edge of the Conservation Area, which is characterised by its interface with the old town, open space at the bowling club, large Edwardian houses and Regency villas, smaller scale late 19th century terraces, and the principal entrances to Victoria Park.

The setting of this element of the conservation area is of mixed period residential housing in well preserved streets with little modern infill, open public space at Victoria Park and the Spa Gardens. The aspect of the conservation area pertaining to the proposed temporary overlay derives significance from its associations with the foundation of Leamington Spa and its associations with William de Normanville and the Leamington Spa Corporation.

The conservation area draws significance from the variety and preservation of the residential homes within it and the communal value of the open greenspaces it contains. The presence of the modern railway and the Princess Drive recycling facility and sewage works to the south of the conservation area boundary slightly degrade the setting of the conservation area through noise intrusion and elements of inter-visibility. This aspect of the conservation area derives significance from its setting.

4.2. Non-designated heritage assets.

There are two non-designated heritage assets within the Site, Victoria Park (HER MWA12976), incorporating New River Walk which was opened in 1897 as a public greenspace and currently includes car parking, lawns, tennis courts, children's play area, and the Royal Leamington Spa Bowling Club, which will form part of the site for the games event.

Victoria Park draws significance from its survival as a public greenspace, its communal value, and its continued use in its historical purpose. The setting of the park is degraded by the modern addition of car parking, play areas and tennis courts. The River Leam, Park Drive, Archery Road, and Adelaide Road serve to constrain the setting of the park.

5. Impacts

Proposed works within the Site are shown in the submitted drawings as part of the planning application package for the Scheme. For the purposes of this Heritage Assessment, the following drawing has informed the considerations for those heritage assets identified as being within the Site:

- VIC-LBO-930

The proposed development and the temporary works associated with it will cause temporary physical impacts and temporary setting impacts to the Spa Gardens and Leamington Spa Conservation Area, and on Victoria Park, incorporating River Walk.

The Leamington Spa Conservation Area will experience temporary physical impacts to its south-western extent. This impact will be temporary in nature and will be related to the temporary structures being placed within the conservation area. The impact will result in a temporary degradation of the significance of the conservation area for the duration of the event. This impact will be caused by the intrusion of the temporary overlay into the historic Victoria Park and its setting. Victoria Park and its primary entrances are one of elements that characterise Area 36 within the conservation area. The conservation area derives only limited significance from its setting, and as such the impact will be limited and will constitute less than substantial harm to its significance.

The Spa Gardens and Victoria Park will receive temporary physical impacts and limited temporary impacts to their setting through the placement and intrusion of temporary overlay elements associated with the event. The event overlay will be present in the setting of the Spa Gardens and Victoria Park for the short duration of the event. The temporary structures will create a temporary impact to the significance these assets can draw from their setting. This impact will occur as the overlay will temporarily degrade the historical legibility and open space of Victoria Park. The intervisibility of the temporary overlay with the assets also contributes to the impact to their setting.

This impact will be limited to the duration of the Games event and will not create any permanent changes to the setting of the Spa Gardens and Victoria Park. As the setting of the assets is only one aspect of their significance, the impact to them will be limited. As such the impact to the Spa Gardens and Victoria Park will be less than substantial harm.

There will be no impacts to as yet undiscovered archaeological remains caused by activities relating to the proposed development.

6. Mitigation

Impacts to the designated heritage assets can be mitigated through the following measures;

- A toolbox talk will be given to the Venue Delivery Team to ensure they understand how to avoid impacting heritage assets during construction.
- The use of temporary ground surfacing as part of the overlay erection to ensure that there is minimal impact to the garden and park surface during the event.
- Considered placement and usage of signage, banners, wrap as part of the event to reduce the impact to the conservation area and intrusion into the viewsheds of heritage assets. Where necessary consultation with local authority conservation officers will be undertaken to facilitate this recommendation.

7. Summary

The works needed to create the temporary overlay in support of the Commonwealth Games event will cause limited, temporary impacts to the following designated and non-designated heritage assets:

- The Leamington Spa Conservation Area
- Spa Gardens Registered Park and Garden
- Victoria Park, incorporating River Walk

These impacts will be temporary and limited to the duration of the Games event. The impact to the conservation area will be limited to the location of the temporary overlay only. The impacts to the Spa Gardens and Victoria Park will be constrained to the settings of these assets. All of these impacts will be less than substantial harm.

8. Limitations and Assumptions

This Heritage Assessment is produced on the basis of the following limitations and assumptions. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the following limitations are applied to this assessment:

- Local Archives have not been consulted as part of this assessment.
- Historic England has not been consulted as part of this assessment
- There has not been a site visit as part of this assessment



The evolving nature of the Commonwealth Games planning and development process means the overlay for the events may be altered/amended prior to planning approval stage. The temporary overlay used in this assessment is indicative in nature and subject to change within the red line boundary of the proposed development. Any changes will be reviewed and monitored by the OC and their specialist advisors, and any changes in impacts will be addressed by them where necessary.

Appendix A. Designated Heritage Assets Gazetteer

Table 1: Designated Heritage Assets Gazetteer

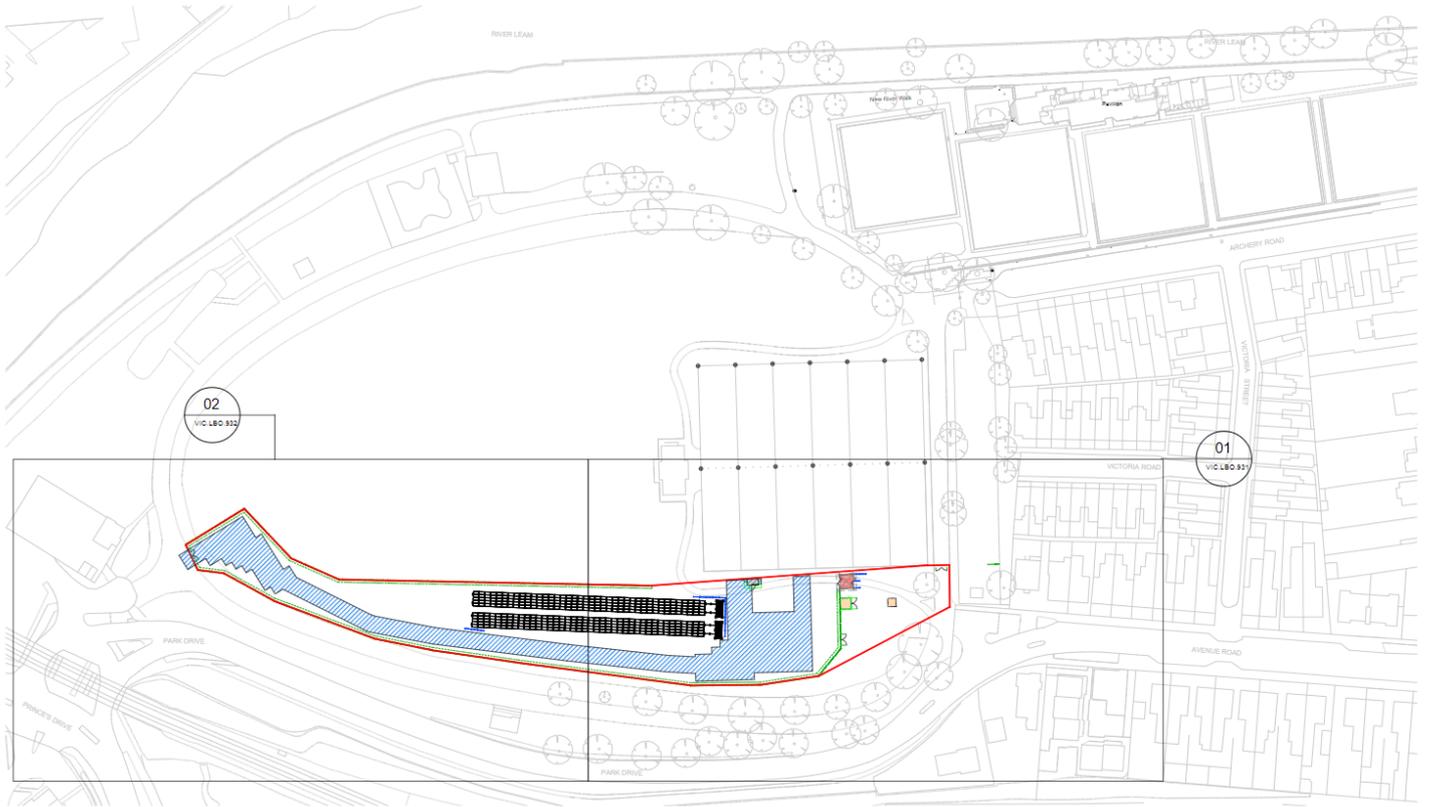
NHLE Reference Number	Type	List Status – Grade	Name/Description	Location (within wider study area or within 250m of scheme boundary)
1000498	Registered Park and Garden	II	Spa Gardens, Royal Leamington Spa	Within Red Line Boundary
N/A	Conservation Area	N/A	Leamington Spa conservation area	Red Line Boundary within the conservation area

Appendix B. Non-Designated Heritage Assets Gazetteers

Table 2: Non-designated Heritage Assets Gazetteers

HER Reference Number	Type	Name	Description	General Period	From Date	To Date
MWA12918	MON	New River Walk, Leamington Spa	Riverside walk on South bank of river with tree planting.	Late Modern - Modern	1751	2050
MWA12976	MON	Victoria Park, Leamington Spa	Victoria Park opened in 1897 and incorporates New River Walk. In the Great War 1914 to 1918 the park was used by the British Army Remount Service as a Veterinary Centre which included stabling for 350 horses.	Victorian to Modern	1897	2050

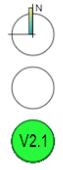
Appendix C. VIC-LBO-930



LEGEND:

- Appraisal Boundary
- Security Boundary
- Temporary landscaping
- Tree

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TOWN PLANNING
 VIC - Victoria Park
 Lawn Bowls
 Statutory Authority
 Site Plan Proposed

A3 1:1250

VIC LBO 930



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