

Christchurch Park

A Variety of Landscapes

Christchurch Park is an urban green space where centuries of planting and parkland development have provided a legacy of a landscape which today has many mature trees, in groups or peppering managed park grassland. Around Christchurch Mansion more formal lawns and small areas of gardens are maintained.

The park is generally rectangular in shape and covers an area of 33 acres (approximately 82 acres). The parkland falls steeply from Park Road in the north tapering at the southern end where it meets Soane Street, the total fall is about 38m. The topography in the central section is pronounced, with many steep undulations providing tangible evidence of 19th century gravel extraction.

The park can be divided into five Landscape Character Areas: Mansion & War Memorial Area, Parkland, Wildlife Valley, Lower Arboretum, Upper Arboretum.

Mansion & War Memorial Area

The Southern end of the Park is more formal in appearance. The Soane Street entrance opens onto views of the Mansion and the oval lawn. To the west are the regimented footpaths to the war memorials. To the North of this area is the Round (Mirror) Pond and the new Visitor Centre. Several smaller gardens feature across the area including the Wolsey Gallery Garden and the Peace Garden.

Parkland

The majority of the main park is traditional parkland and landscape character is more open than other areas of the Park. Here the grassland is maintained for informal recreational purposes and large mature trees dominate the landscape, apart from the west-facing slopes of Snow Hill where there is a distinct absence of tree cover. Some of the oldest trees in the Park, the pollarded sweet chestnuts and oak trees that still stand alongside the central avenue are three for four hundred years old.

Wildlife Valley

The wildlife valley is in the centre of the Park and runs from the north to the south. At the southern end there is the Bird Reserve woodland and Wilderness, medieval and Bog ponds. The Bird Reserve comprises a mature mixed woodland area. The woodland has a clear defined character as a wildlife area in contrast to

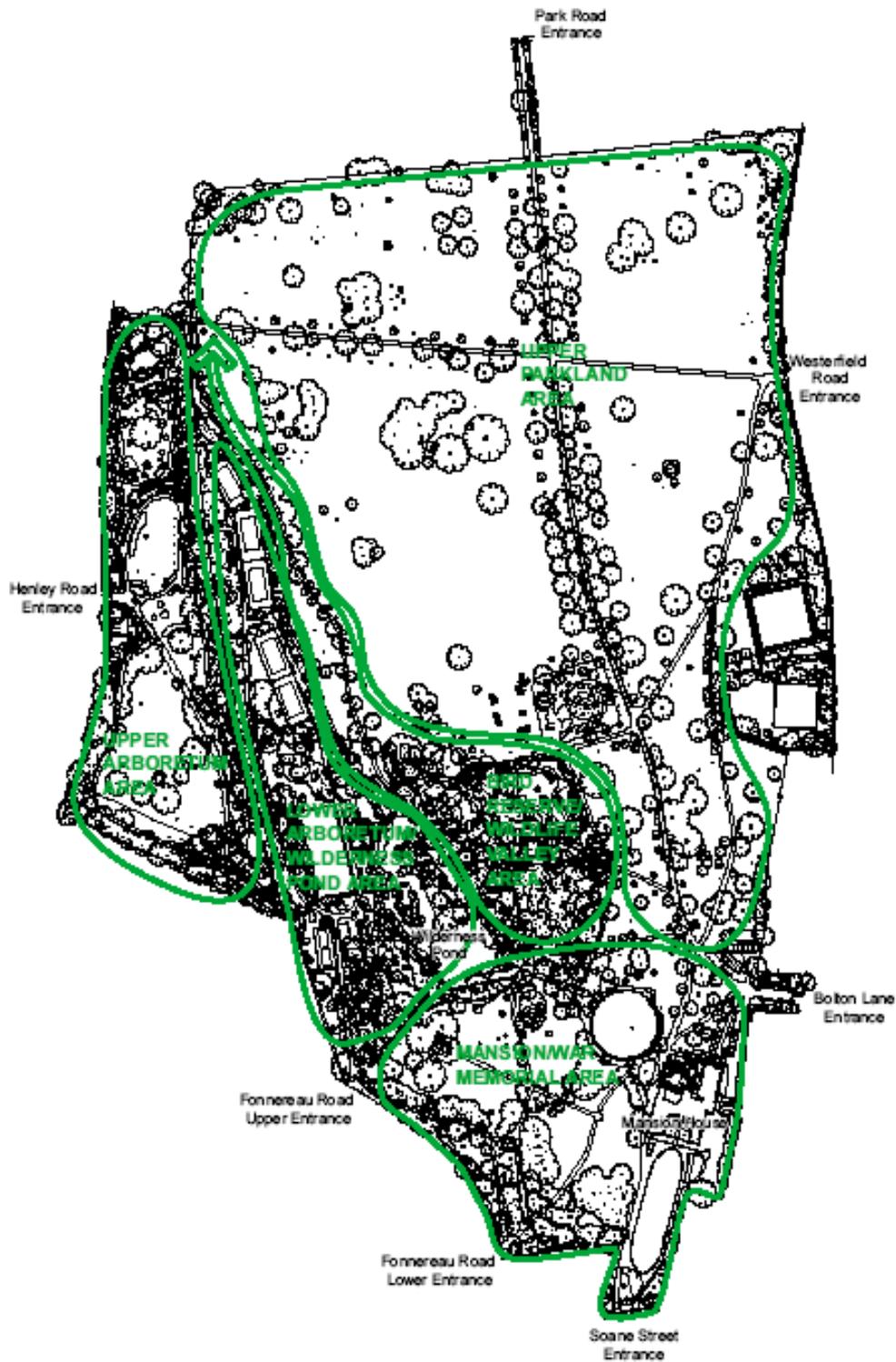
the rest of the Park. As you travel north woodland gives way to wet then dry meadows.

Lower Arboretum/Wilderness Pond

The Lower Arboretum is to the east of the Bridleway. At its southern end is the very formal Mayors Walk, which leads on to the Croquet Lawn and Rockery. The northern half of the Arboretum has mature shrubberies and tennis courts. The Wilderness Pond is connected to the Lower Arboretum by the Rack Garden which lies on its western bank.

Upper Arboretum

The upper Arboretum is separated from the rest of the Park, lying to the west of the Bridleway. To the north are formal shrub beds replanted as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund Project and to the south the Arts & Crafts shelter. The original 'arboretum' character of this area is obvious with its strong collection of specimen trees.



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LANDSCAPE DESIGN ASSOCIATES

Landscape Character Areas Plan

Christchurch Park, Ipswich

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