



Client. National Trust

Job No. 20078 07

Date. 23/02//2022

**Biddulph Grange – Mrs Bateman’s Garden
Design Access Statement and Heritage
Statement**



Job Title: Biddulph Grange – Mrs Bateman's Garden Steps

Job Number: 20078 07

Report Title: Heritage Statement

Date of First Issue 23-02-22

CONTROL SHEET

Please ensure when referencing this document that you are using the most recent Issue in accordance with the table below and ensure previous issues of this document are destroyed or marked as Superseded

DOCUMENT APPROVAL

Author	Checked	Approved by
LT	JB	JB

DOCUMENT ISSUE RECORD

Issue	Date	Description of Amendment	By	Checked
1	28/02/22	Document issued as part of listed building consent application.	LT	JB
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Background**
- 3. Planning Policy Context**
 - a) National Planning Policy Framework 2021**
 - b) West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy**
 - c) Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan – Adopted September 2020**
- 4. Context and Historical Development**
 - a) Planning History**
 - b) Environmental Context**
 - c) Heritage Assets – Biddulph Grange**
 - d) Heritage Assets – Biddulph Grange Garden**
 - e) Biddulph Grange Conservation Area**
 - f) Other Heritage Assets**
 - g) Nature conservation**
 - h) Landscape**
- 5. Planning Policy Context**
- 6. Consultation**
- 7. Justification for the Proposed Works**
- 8. Design Objectives**
- 9. The amount, layout, scale, landscaping, and appearance of proposal**
- 10. Heritage Statement**
- 11. Access**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by TACP Architects Ltd on behalf of the National Trust to support a Listed Building Consent application for the proposed installation of new stone steps to connect the Parterre and Mrs Bateman’s Garden.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Government’s 2010 Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation states, “A design and access statement is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way.” The guidance also states that Design and Access Statements should be proportionate to the complexity of the application and need not be long.
- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework requires applicants to provide sufficient information to enable planning authorities to assess impacts on heritage assets. The PPS5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide suggests that this information should be included in the design and access statement.

3. Planning Policy Context

a) National Planning Policy Framework 2021

- 3.2 National planning policies are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework published in 2021. This document states that local planning authorities consider the following points regarding proposals affecting heritage assets:
- 3.3 In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. (NPPF, Pg. 56)
- 3.4 Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal

on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. (NPPF, Pg. 56)

- 3.5 In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. (NPPF, Pg. 56)

b) West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy

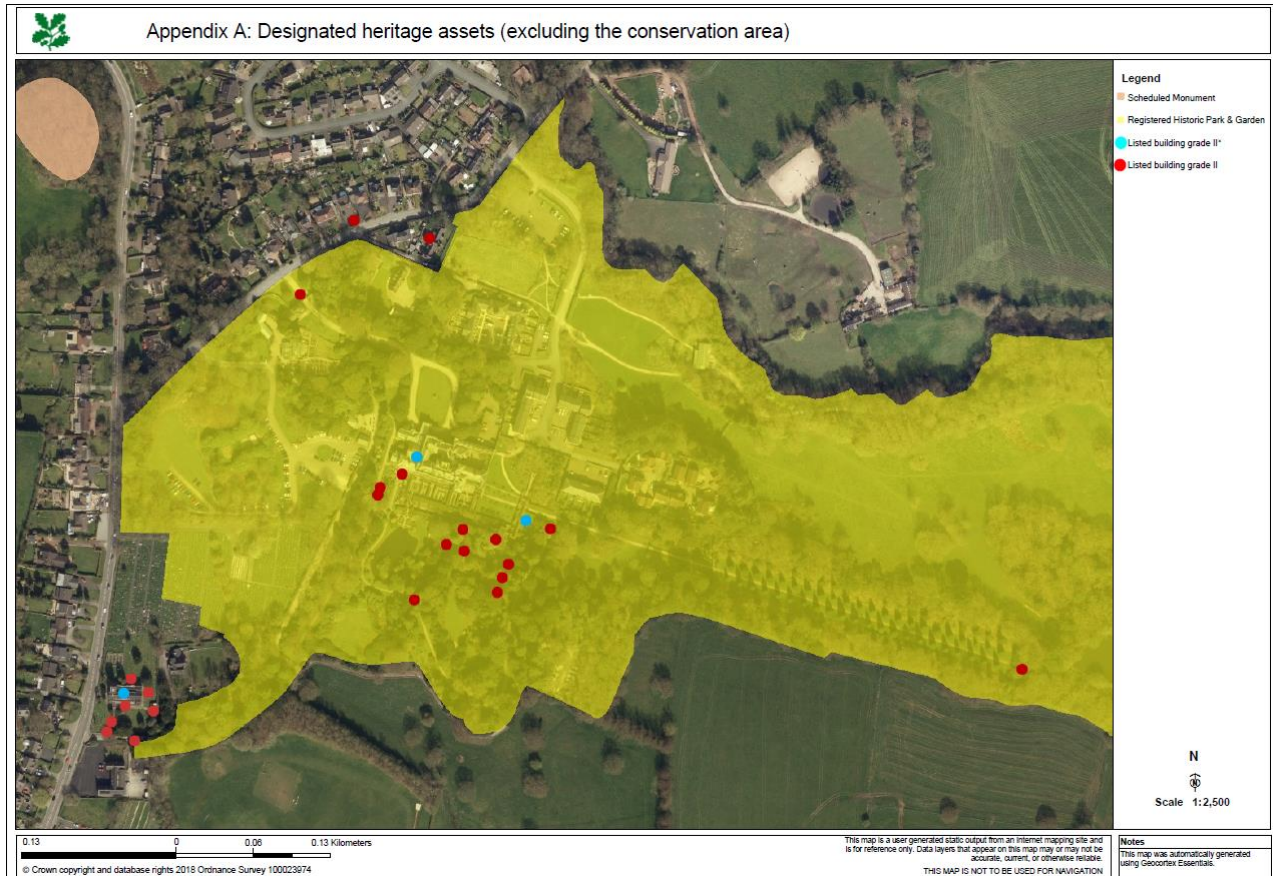
- 3.6 Policy QE1 urges Local authorities to protect and where possible enhance irreplaceable assets such as historic landscape features.
- 3.7 Policy QE5 seeks to protect, conserve, and enhance the Region's diverse historic environment and manage change in such a way that respects local character and distinctiveness.

c) Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan – Adopted September 2020

- 3.8 Policy S07 on support and enhance the tourism, cultural, recreation and leisure opportunities for the district's residents and visitors. (SMLP, Pg. 104)
- 3.9 Policy S08 on promoting local distinctiveness by means of good design and the conservation, protection, and enhancement of historic, environmental, and cultural assets throughout the district. (SMLP, Pg. 104)

4. Context & Historical Development

- 4.1 Biddulph Grange is a grade II* listed building set within a further grade I listed park and garden. The building itself was listed in 1974 (List Number: 1037835) whilst the park and garden was listed in 1984 (List Number: 1000115). The building, park and garden also lie within the boundaries of the Biddulph Grange conservation area and the Staffordshire Moorlands Special Landscape Area.



Designated Heritage Assets

a) Planning History

- 4.2 No planning applications or listed building consents have been previously applied for in this garden location. Though previous discussions have been undertaken with Melanie Morris - Interim Conservation Officer regarding this application.

b) Environmental Context

- 4.3 The area in question is between the parterre and Mrs Bateman's garden is situated at the end of a terrace which runs adjacent to the East elevation of the main house and overlooks the gardens from an elevated position.



View of Mrs Bateman's Garden and the Parterre from above, Red area is proposed area of steps



View from Mrs Bateman's Garden across to the Parterre. Steps intended to be cut at the end of the path shown

Job Title: Biddulph Grange – Mrs Bateman's Garden Steps

Job Number: 20078 07

Report Title: Heritage Statement

Date of First Issue 23-02-22



View of the area of hedge to be cut from the Parterre looking towards Mrs Bateman's Garden



View of top of hedge to be cut, showing depth of hedge and dense screening around

- 4.4 Due to the raised level of Mrs Bateman's Garden the difference in height is approx. 2.1m from floor level to floor level. With hedge either side of the proposed location of steps begin a further 1m higher.

c) Heritage Assets – Biddulph Grange

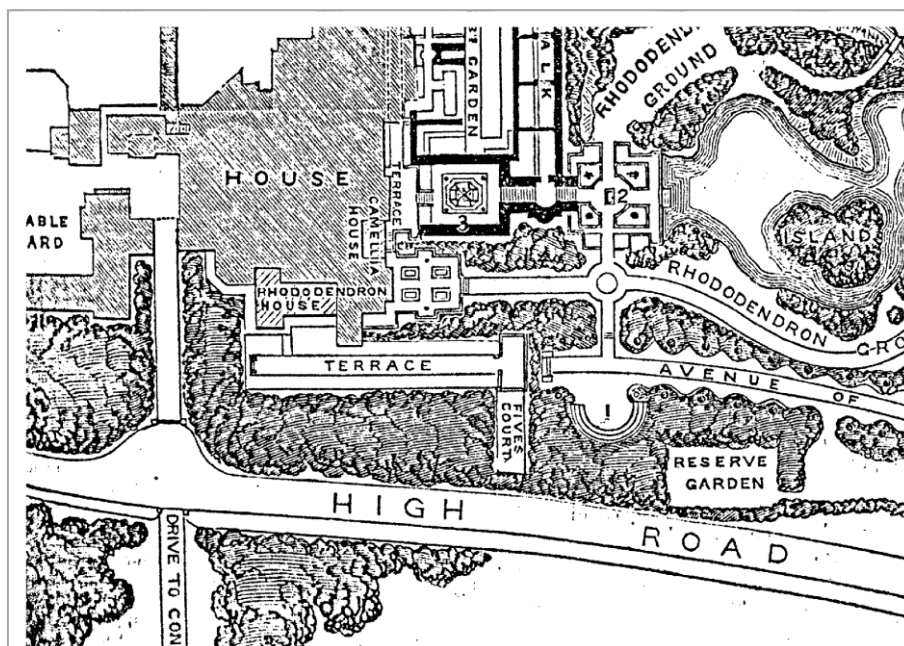
- 4.5 Biddulph Grange is a grand Victorian country house (listed grade II*). The style of Biddulph Grange is a revised English Baroque. It mostly replaced an Italianate building of 1848-60 following a fire in 1897. This in turn overlays an earlier farmhouse.
- 4.6 The house has both historical and architectural interest due to it being the former home of James Bateman, the well-known horticulturalist who created the gardens in collaboration with Edward Cooke.
- 4.7 The house is set at an elevated level. The west end of the house is covered by late 20th century rendering and is a mixture of the earlier Italianate house and 1897 rebuilt sections. The original house had a large greenhouse on this side elevation.
- 4.8 Biddulph Grange Garden was bought by the Trust in 1988 and opened to the public in 1991. Since then, it has welcomed between 57,000 and 100,000 visitors per year. Opening days and times vary throughout the year. We are open 7 days per week from February to November and from Fridays to Mondays in November and December.
- 4.9 Most of the Grange has now been converted to apartments, which are in private ownership. The Trust uses part of the building as a café, tearoom, exhibition space and offices.

d) Heritage Assets – Biddulph Grange Garden

- 4.10 The registered area of Biddulph Grange Garden (grade I) is some 42ha, including the park and grounds. The garden's inspired design was the vision of one man, James Bateman, who created the garden from 1841 to 1868. He was assisted in this by Edward Cooke, a well-respected, marine painter, who designed the buildings and rockwork. James' wife Maria was also influential and an active gardener, who had a particular interest in herbaceous plants, bulbs, fuchsias, and lilies.
- 4.11 James Bateman was a distinguished botanist, plant collector and garden designer, but above all a horticulturist, with a great knowledge of plants and the conditions they require to grow in. He was also a part of the horticultural world, and being a fellow of the Royal Society, he would have had numerous contacts and influences. He created a series of garden rooms, many based on individual countries and with unique features, each with their own character and micro-climate in which he grew an exceptionally wide range of plants which were being introduced from all over the world.
- 4.12 The imaginative series of garden spaces are linked with considerable ingenuity and provide surprises at every turn. Terracing, hedging, stumps, roots, rockwork, and earth

mounding create a unified layout ingeniously separating these spaces. To retain a natural feel to the garden native Ivy, Yew and Holly have been used to screen each area and provide shelter, the contemporary critic Kemp said, "They alone contribute very largely to impart a natural and furnished appearance to the place."

- 4.13 The drive eastwards past the reception / shop building is a former toll road shown as "High Road" in Kemp's 1862 plan of the garden (see below). The road/drive marked the historic western boundary between the gardens and the grounds. The area west of the road, was not part of the formal gardens. It is also an area that has been heavily modified when the Grange was a hospital and afterwards with the creation of the car park and installation of a sewage works.



Edward Kemp – 1862 Plan of the gardens

e) Biddulph Grange Conservation Area

- 4.14 The Conservation Area Appraisal published by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council shows that the conservation interest is focused on Biddulph Grange, its garden, pleasure grounds and related buildings.

f) Other Heritage Assets

- 4.15 The proposal will only result in limited ground disturbance within the area of the hedge between these two sections of garden. The Trust's archaeologist has advised that nothing of interest is likely to be affected by the proposal.
- 4.16 Biddulph Grange Garden contains numerous listed buildings but other than the hedge no others will be affected by the proposed works.

g) Nature conservation

- 4.17 Ponds near Biddulph Grange Garden are known to support populations of Great Crested Newts. The proposed works are unlikely to have any effect on the newt population or any other nature conservation interest.

h) Landscape

- 4.18 Biddulph Grange Garden lies entirely within the North Staffordshire Green Belt. The Garden also falls within a Special Landscape Area defined in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. The site is visually self-contained from the surrounding landscape by heavy hedge foliage.

5. Planning policy context

- 5.1 The development plan for the area comprises the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and saved policies of the Structure Plan and Local Plan. National planning policy is also an important consideration.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Following a site visit with Melanie Morris- interim Conservation officer the proposals were discussed and no major concerns were raised.

7. Justification for the Proposed Works

- 7.1 The proposed works are to provide direct access from the Italian Parterre section of the garden to Mrs Bateman's garden. The original design of the garden was to provide a two way entrance and exit to each section of the garden. This would reinstate this to these areas.
- 7.2 The additional access will stop a dead end area in the Parterre and greatly improve the visitor flow and also improve enjoyment to the two areas. Opening all areas of the garden to visitors provides a valuable opportunity for public appreciation of the heritage asset and contributes to outdoor recreation.
- 7.3 The impact of the steps in the immediate environment has been mitigated by matching stone steps which is proposed so as to tie into the historic fabric of the existing house and gardens. The guardrails will be provided to each side of the steps but will be laid into the hedge and not visible or used as handrails, again as elsewhere in the garden.
- 7.4 Biddulph Grange Garden is an important tourist attraction and heritage asset and contributes to the local economy, employing some 13 permanent staff and 26 seasonal staff. This proposal will ensure the safety of all staff and visitors and improve the visitors experience of the gardens and landscape.

8. Design Objectives

8.1 The Trust's design objectives have been:

- Improve access to both the Parterre and Mrs Bateman's Garden for the enjoyment of visitors
- Safeguard the special qualities of the heritage assets.
- Ensure good environmental performance.
- Keeping the cost of construction, proportionate to the contribution to our charitable purpose.

9. The amount, layout, scale, landscaping, and appearance of proposal

- 9.1 The proposal consists of a wrought iron balustrade with concealed fixings below ground. Reinforced concrete lintels spread across new masonry walls on new concrete foundations, will form the hidden structure of the new steps. With stone risers and goings being provided by matching stone face. (see Engineer's drawing 12416 01 P1).
- 9.2 A guardrail will be provided as edge protection only and will be laid in to the hedge to each side with the hedge grown over to obscure.



Typical Steps within Biddulph Garden, showing stone to match

10. Heritage statement

- 10.1 The proposed works involve the installation of new stone steps cut into an existing hedge to improve visitor access and connect two areas of the garden which we believe we original intended to be connected.
- 10.2 The proposed works are as minimal as possible and should blend in with the existing structures and landscaping seamlessly to have the least impact on the historic gardens, the conservation area, the setting of any other listed building / structure or any below ground archaeology.
- 10.3 Biddulph Grange has aesthetic value through the quality of its design and construction as well as its relationship with Biddulph Grange Garden. It has historic value through its associations with the horticulturalist James Bateman and the geological gallery (elsewhere in the Grange) is particularly significant in its demonstration of his support for theories that combined contemporary geological finds with the Christian story of creation. These are considered to be the primary significances of the buildings and gardens. A secondary degree of historic value derives from associations with Robert Heath and John Bower and the use of the Grange as a hospital from 1924-1988. The hospital use and subsequent public use enabled by the National Trust have created communal value. There is also evidential value relating to the various phases of construction, use and adaptation of the building, some of which can be linked to documentary evidence.
- 10.4 We consider that the proposal would not harm the heritage significance of Biddulph Grange or the gardens. If any harm was considered to arise, we consider that it would be outweighed by the vast improvement to visitor enjoyment.

11. Access statement

- 11.1 The National Trust is committed to enabling increased access to its historic built and countryside environments, and to developing and promoting inclusive access solutions that are creative and sensitive to the surroundings. Our approach to enabling inclusive access is set out in our Disability Access Position Statement 2005. We also publish a regularly updated book of information for visitors with disabilities.
- 11.2 The proposal will enable a currently disconnected section of the garden. The original idea of the garden was to provide a two access to each section so the visitors did not have to enter and exist from the same point,