

Bramshill House and Gardens

Welcome to City & Country's Public Consultation about its proposals to restore the historic Bramshill House and Gardens.

Following exchange of contracts in August 2014, we are now working towards a vision for redevelopment which will seek to enhance the Estate's unique historic character, provide a new beginning that will secure this nationally important heritage asset for future generations and a direction that will also benefit the wider community.

Bramshill Police College will close in the Spring of 2015 and we wish to have a new future secured, so work can commence to deliver our vision as soon as possible following closure of the College.

We are at the beginning of an ongoing dialogue with Hart District Council, Heritage Specialists, Natural England and other important local community groups.

This Public Consultation is taking place to provide the community with an opportunity to feed in to the design process at an early stage.

Members of our team are on hand to answer your questions and feedback forms are available for you to share your comments with us.



About City & Country

City & Country is a family owned business, founded in 1962, which typically operates in the South and prime markets around key cities. Over the last 50 years the Group has evolved and embraced change to become an award winning, market leading niche developer; specialising in the restoration and conversion of historic and listed buildings into unique dwellings of exceptional quality and character. In recognition of its Vision, Values and market resilience, City & Country has recently featured in the Investec Hot 100 of Fastest Growing Private Companies and The Stock Exchange's 1000 Companies to Inspire Britain.

The business takes an entrepreneurial and design-led approach that is anchored by common sense, agility, an innate feel for markets and the creation of value.

The team are adept at spotting opportunities and evaluating them, allowing them to act quickly and decisively. The company's success has been founded on an unwavering respect for and understanding of some of Britain's most important heritage assets.

Working closely with heritage specialists, local authority planners, conservationists and its own team of experts, City & Country applies fresh and original thinking to space planning whilst preserving the original proportions, features and splendour of the prestigious buildings in which it works. City & Country is also a Benefactor of The Prince's Regeneration Trust, as it shares the same passion, core values and belief in the importance of heritage buildings and the positive benefits that can be derived for local communities through their regeneration.





AWARD WINNING HERITAGE DEVELOPER

2014 EVENING STANDARD AWARDS

BEST SMALL DEVELOPMENT
BENTLEY PRIORY, STANMORE
HIGHLY COMMENDED

2014 HARROW HERITAGE TRUST

ARCHITECTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS
BENTLEY PRIORY, STANMORE
WINNER

2014 RTPI AWARDS FOR PLANNING EXCELLENCE

BEST PLANNING FOR NATURAL AND BUILT HERITAGE AWARD
KING EDWARDS VII ESTATE, MIDHURST
SHORTLISTED

2013 LISTED IN THE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 1000 COMPANIES TO INSPIRE BRITAIN

2013 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST SMALL HOUSEBUILDER
SILVER

2013 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST APARTMENT SCHEME
THE GALLERIES, BRENTWOOD
GOLD

2013 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST RENOVATION
THE CHAPEL, GALLERIES, BRENTWOOD
BRONZE

2013 HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS AWARDS

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION
BALLS PARK, HERTFORD
WINNER

2013 EVENING STANDARD AWARDS

BEST FIRST TIME BUY
THE GARDEN QUARTER, CAVERSFIELD

2013 LABC AWARDS

BEST COMMUNITY BUILDING
BENTLEY PRIORY, STANMORE
FINALIST

2013 LABC AWARDS

BEST CONVERSION
BENTLEY PRIORY, STANMORE
HIGHLY COMMENDED

2012 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST SMALL HOUSEBUILDER
SILVER

2012 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST RENOVATION
BALLS PARK, HERTFORD
GOLD

2012 THE SUNDAY TIMES BRITISH HOMES AWARDS

CONVERSION AND RESTORATION
THE GALLERIES, BRENTWOOD
COMMENDED

2012 EVENING STANDARD AWARDS

BEST APARTMENT OVER £1M - WW1
BALLS PARK, HERTFORD

2012 EVENING STANDARD AWARDS

BEST RESTORATION
BALLS PARK, HERTFORD
HIGHLY COMMENDED

2011 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST SMALL HOUSEBUILDER
GOLD

2011 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST STARTER HOME
THE GALLERIES, BRENTWOOD
GOLD

2011 EVENING STANDARD AWARDS

BEST CONVERSION
OLD SAINT MICHAELS, BRAINTREE
HIGHLY COMMENDED

2010 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST SMALL HOUSEBUILDER
SILVER

2010 WHAT HOUSE? AWARDS

BEST RENOVATION
OLD SAINT MICHAELS, BRAINTREE
GOLD

2010 EVENING STANDARD AWARDS

BEST NEW CONVERSION
OLD SAINT MICHAELS, BRAINTREE
SPECIAL COMMENDATION

2010 EVENING STANDARD AWARDS

BEST NEW APARTMENT
THE LINEN STORE, THE GALLERIES, BRENTWOOD
HIGHLY COMMENDED

2010 EVENING STANDARD AWARDS

BEST NEW STARTER HOME
OLD SAINT MICHAELS, BRAINTREE
WINNER

2010 FIRST TIME BUYER AWARDS

BEST OVERALL SUBMISSION
OLD SAINT MICHAELS, BRAINTREE

2010 FIRST TIME BUYER AWARDS

MOST INNOVATIVE REDEVELOPMENT OF AN
EXISTING PROPERTY
OLD SAINT MICHAELS, BRAINTREE
HIGHLY COMMENDED

Our Experience and Expertise

City & Country

City & Country is known and respected as a company with a proven track record of achieving solutions that sensitively and creatively address the important heritage and ecological aspects of complex and challenging sites. We have a talented in-house team of specialists whose passion is to breathe new life and purpose in the often tired and dilapidated buildings. Through the delivery of our projects, the company has built up good working relationships with local Conservation Officers, Planners and Heritage Specialists.



Helen Moore - Managing Director

Having worked in the property development industry for 25 years, previously with Countryside Properties and Crest Nicholson, Helen was appointed as the first non-family Managing Director of City & Country in 2010. This experience with large housebuilders has made her value the creative, bespoke and sensitive approach adopted by City & Country across all its projects.

Helen heads the Community Consultation process in order to encourage the active participation of key stakeholders and to ensure their thoughts and aspirations play a key role in shaping our vision.



Simon Vernon-Harcourt - Planning and Technical Director

Simon joined the group in 2007. He is a chartered architect with an excellent eye for design talent, and great technical knowledge of historic buildings, construction techniques and planning rules. Simon has achieved a series of successful planning consents for challenging projects.



Richard Winsborough - Head of Planning

As a chartered town planner and a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, Richard has led our experienced in-house planning team since joining the group in 2011 having previously worked for large scale developers and run his own planning consultancy. Richard takes an active role in all the groups' projects, working closely with the local authority, local community and consultees.

The Consultant Team

We recognise the importance of working with highly skilled consultants with values similar to our own. Following an extensive interview process we have selected a team we believe has the skill, experience and local knowledge that will make them ideal partners to help us realise an exciting new vision for this complex and challenging site.

Our lead consultants for this project are Feilden+Mawson (Architects) and LUC (Landscape Architects); both experienced consultants with an in-depth knowledge of working with sites of this scale and historical significance.

Feilden+Mawson has been working on historic and listed buildings for over 50 years. Sir Bernard Feilden, one of the founding partners wrote the book “The Conservation of Buildings” which remains a standard text, and the practice has developed many of the techniques for working on historic buildings which are commonplace today.

The practice was founded in 1956, and is led by the fourth generation of partners who share these guiding principles. It is an acknowledged leader in the adaptation and restoration of historic buildings and has established reputations for delivering buildings that are designed with care and skill. They seek to make buildings that will add meaning to our changing lives and place the experience of individuals; as occupants, visitors or just passers-by, at the heart of their work.



LUC has extensive experience in the research, restoration and management of historic landscapes and has undertaken many commissions for Heritage Specialists, National Trust, the Royal Parks, local authorities, private and corporate landowners. They have guided the conservation and future direction of landscapes such as Stowe, Wilton, Grey's Court, open spaces within The Tower of London and all of the Royal Parks, including Regent's Park, Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park, Richmond Park and Bushy Park. Large scale projects have also included the Eden Project.

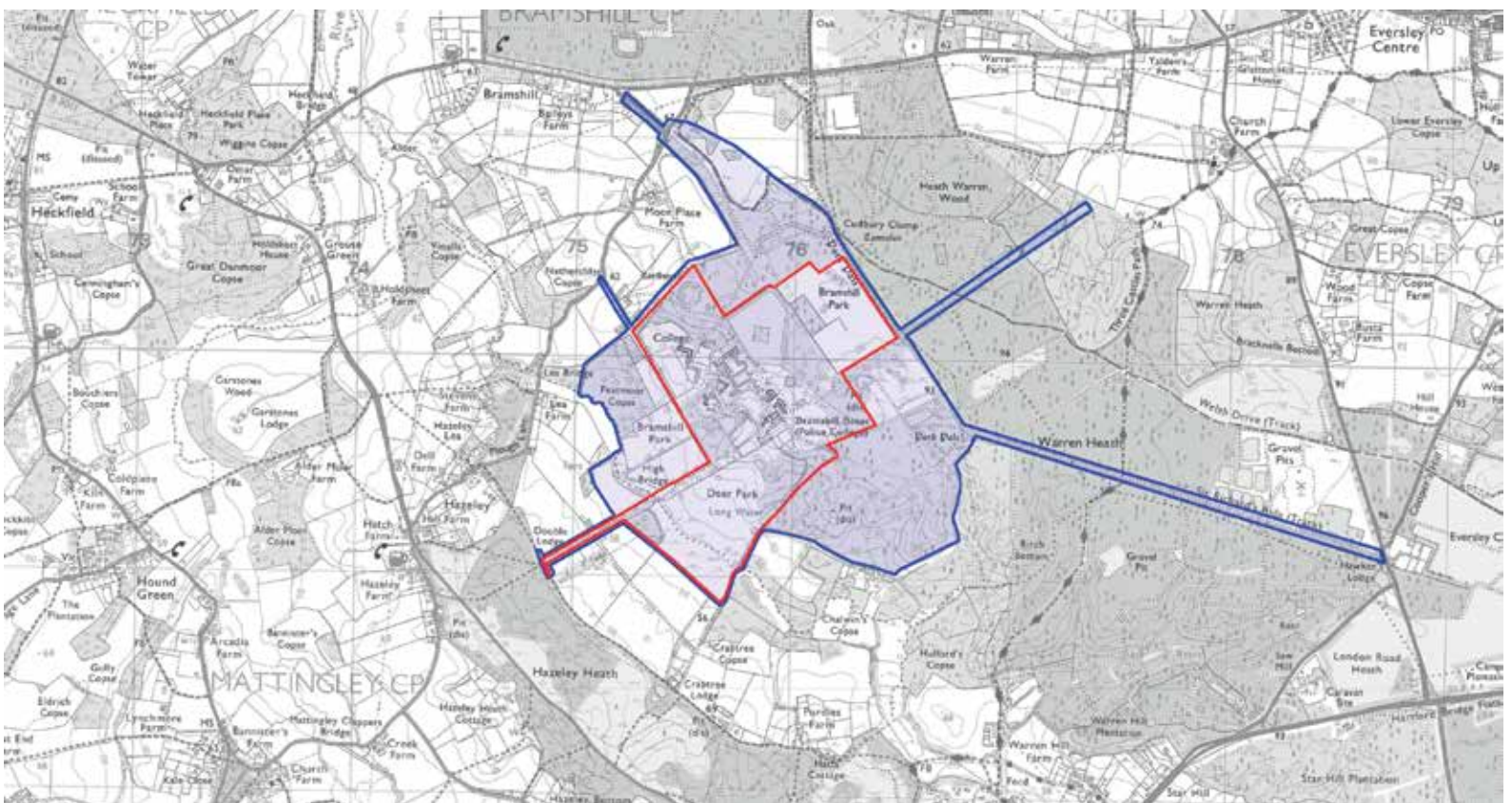


Bramshill House and Gardens

Site Context

Approached through an historic park, extending to over 106ha, and sitting at the end of a mile long drive, Bramshill House and Gardens is a truly exceptional property, a Grade I listed Jacobean mansion and one of the largest in England.

The estate currently comprises offices for the National Police College together with a range of purpose-built accommodation providing offices, conference suites, staff housing, dormitories, sporting facilities and extensive car parking. The majority of the buildings, which equates to approximately 360,000sqft, were constructed under Crown Immunity from the planning system.



The grounds comprise the deer park grazed by white fallow deer, formal gardens, kitchen garden, woodland, a lake (circa 15 acres), as well as sports pitches, tennis courts and parking for over 600 cars.

The location is highly accessible being within 10 miles of both the M4 and the M3, giving access to London and the national motorway network, as well as Heathrow (35 miles) and Gatwick airports (53 miles).

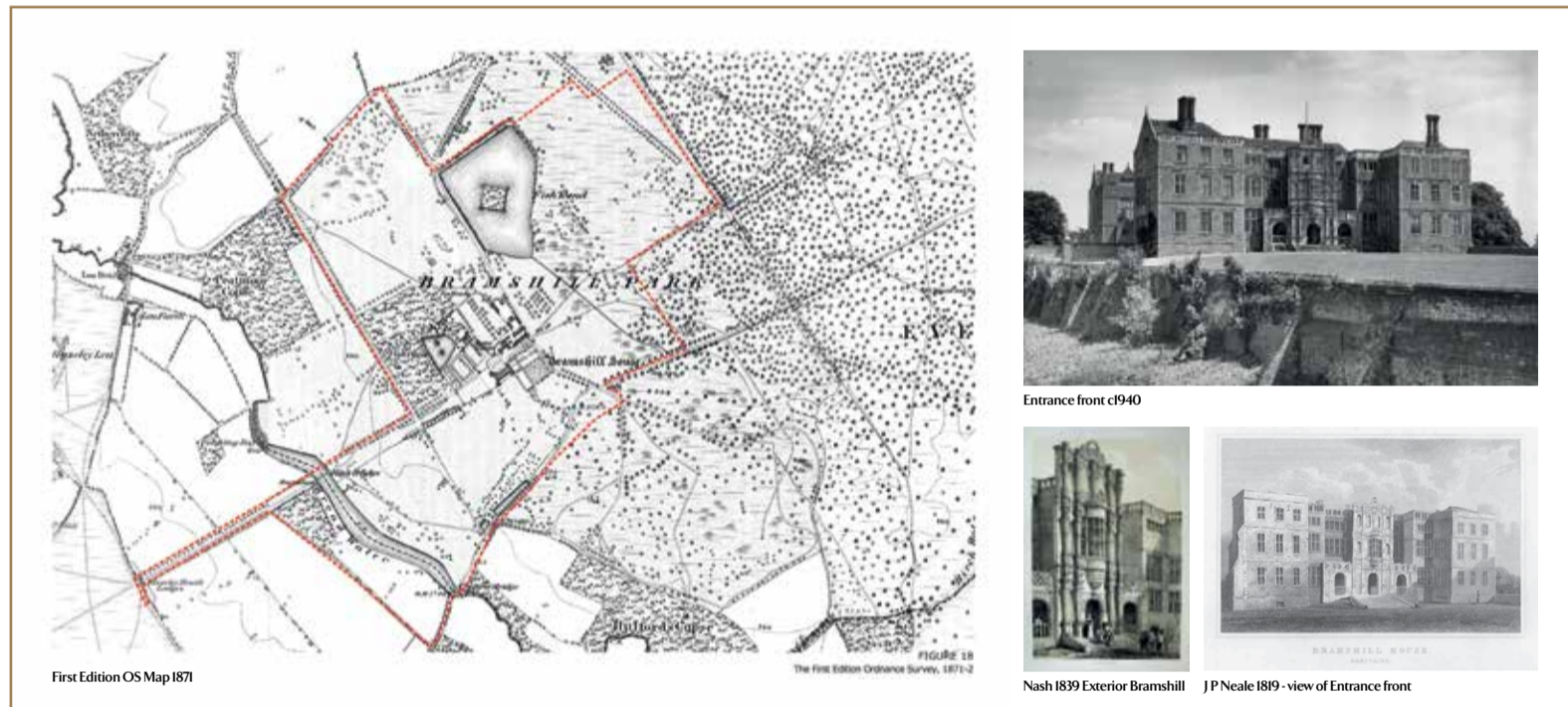
The closest village is Hartley Wintney which has a range of amenities and is just 3.5 miles to the South. The larger centres of Reading, Basingstoke and Camberley are easily accessible with a complete range of educational, retail and sporting facilities.

History

The present form of Bramshill House and Gardens dates from the early 17th Century and although it incorporates much of a 14th Century house, most of what we see today was built between 1605 and 1625 by Edward, 11th Baron Zouche of Harringworth. Perched on top of a South West facing escarpment, it overlooks the heathland of the valley of the River Hart.

It is one of the largest Jacobean 'Prodigy' houses and an exceptional collection of eccentricities, in that it is a re-design and re-organisation of a previous, substantial building. The internal arrangement seems largely determined by the previously existing building. In common with a number of other great houses of the period the general appearance is restrained with only one spectacular display of decoration on the South West elevation.

Zouche located the house at the crossing of two great avenues and surrounded it by walled gardens; two projecting wings which formed a separate entrance courtyard were demolished by Sir John Cope who purchased the building in 1699 from the Henley's who had lived there since 1640.



The Cope family occupied Bramshill House and Gardens from 1703 until 1935. The house was refronted in 1703; the mezzanine and Queen Anne stairs inserted early in the C18; and the main stairs replaced twice – in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In the early C19, the West pavilion was partly rebuilt and the courtyard corridor added. The original chapel in the middle of the house was also converted at this time and a new one created on the first floor. Further internal alterations occurred during the Brocket occupation of 1935 – 1953 until it was purchased by the Home Office.



Now listed Grade I, Bramshill House and Gardens stands in 106ha of grounds which are located in the centre of a Grade II* listed park which extends to 240ha over several ownerships.

The park retains many historic landscape features dating back to medieval times. Lord Zouche's 17th century park is still evident throughout the park, with notable elements including the gardens around the mansion and the main lake to the North East. Several additions have been made throughout the last four hundred years. It is still possible to read many of the historic tree avenues and axial rides laid across the estate, with some containing veteran trees thought to date back to before 1700.

The house is magnificently sited on a level plateau, dominating a southwest facing wooded escarpment overlooking the River Hart valley. To the North West there is a large man-made lake contained by embankments on two sides, and lawns with an abundance of splendid mature trees, surrounded by a belt of mixed woodland. The grounds immediately adjacent to the Mansion are partly enclosed to form walled gardens. To the South East and South are terraced areas run to parkland. These were previously formal gardens and referred to as Italian Gardens in 19th century documents.

During the Second World War the house was used by the Red Cross as a maternity home for evacuee mothers from Portsmouth, and afterwards as a home for the exiled King of Romania and his family.

More recently, the building and estate was acquired by the Home Office for a National Police Training College in 1953. A campus of new buildings has developed to the North West of the mansion over the area formerly occupied by the farmyard and estate buildings.



Opportunity



The site benefited from Crown Immunity between 1953 and 2002 and as such the site was developed largely under Crown Consultation Procedures. This has resulted in a large, unattractive and inappropriate array of buildings, which are institutional in character and appearance and therefore detract from the setting of this magnificent Grade I Listed Jacobean Mansion and the Grade II* Listed Park. This provides us with the opportunity to greatly improve the setting and develop the site in the sensitive and appropriate manner it so justly deserves.



Viability and Deliverability



The National Planning Policy Framework recognises the importance of finding a deliverable and viable solution, and both local and national planning policy accepts that heritage projects cannot always meet the usual provisions of S106 requirements such as affordable housing.



Therefore, as part of the consultation process, where different options will be considered, we will carry out viability appraisals to ensure a sensible balance is maintained in order to deliver the high quality solution befitting these irreplaceable heritage assets.



With heritage restoration projects there is always a delicate balance to be struck between the financial contributions that can be made, the quantity of new buildings a site can accommodate, and the impact on the heritage assets at the centre of the proposals. Therefore, before submitting the planning application for this site a development appraisal will be issued to Hart District Council, so they can review the viability and then balance this against our proposals and the impact on the historic buildings.



Time is of the Essence

Time is of the essence as historic buildings deteriorate rapidly if left empty; as they become prone to vandalism, theft and most catastrophic of all, fire.

It is therefore important that all key stakeholders and the local community work together to find a viable and deliverable solution for Bramshill House and Gardens, which can be brought forward as soon as possible following the vacation by the Police College.



Next Steps

Thank you for taking the time to visit our Public Consultation.

Your views are important to us and we would appreciate it if you could take the time to inform us of your vision, aspirations and any concerns you may have about securing the long term future of this exceptional heritage asset.

Over the coming weeks we will review all of the completed forms we receive today, as we believe these to be very significant.

We intend to host further Public Consultations, which will summarise the feedback that we have received and how we have responded.

Finally, we are always interested in hearing about your memories of the site and particularly welcome any information or photographs you may have about its history.

For further information and updates on the progress of our proposals, please visit our website.

