



CUTTS CLOSE OAKHAM

Management Plan 2016 – 2021 Year One



HM Queen Elizabeth II Bandstand

Oakham Town Council

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Cutts Close Management Plan 2016 – 2021

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Foreword

Oakham Town Council is committed to providing high quality parks and open spaces throughout Oakham for the benefit of both residents and visitors.

Oakham is a thriving market town which has expanded considerably. Its population in 2011 was 10,922 (source: Census 2011).

Cutts Close is the main park in Oakham, located only a short walk from the town centre. It is an important asset to both the Town Council and the local community. The aim of Oakham Town Council is to deliver a clean, green and safe environment for all those who use it.

The flower beds surrounding the refurbished Bandstand are designed, planted and maintained by local award winning volunteer group, Oakham in Bloom.

This management plan has been written as a strategic Town overview for the management of the park and also looks outwardly at the wider environmental, social and economic agendas affecting open space. The plan will also enable the Council and its committees to keep focused on future strategic aims and will be updated and amended annually to reflect developments and changing priorities.

Considerable improvements have been made to Cutts Close over the last few years:

A skatepark was initially installed in 2004, rebuilt in 2007 and again in 2015 at a cost of £40,000. Funding was received from Section 106 agreement with Rutland County Council of £30,500, a further grant from The Oakham Memorial Institute of £2000 and the Council contributed £7500 to complete the works

Electricity was installed to the Shelter in 2014 at a cost of £6000

Additional lighting was installed in 2010, at a cost of £10,000, with the help of a 50% grant from the Welland Sub-regional Strategic Partnership.

The refurbishment of the Bandstand was completed in 2010, at a cost of £25,000 and has since been named HM Queen Elizabeth II

A new toddlers' play area was built in 2008 at a cost of £68,000 and further equipment was added in 2010 for 8-13 year olds.

Section 1

Introduction

1.1 Frontispiece

This Management Plan is a statement of intent by Oakham Town Council to improve standards to ensure it provides the highest quality services possible.

1.2 Structure of the Management Plan

The plan is structured to provide easy access to information. It will be used as a first point of reference for those working within Cutts Close, whilst also providing information about the overall aims and objectives relating to the park. The Management Plan is split into the following sections:

Section 1 – **Introduction**

Section 2 – **Where are we now** outlines the baseline information relating to the park.

Section 3 – **Where do we want to get to** lays down the vision, aims and objectives for the park including analysis and assessment of park issues.

Section 4 – **How will we get there** identifies how the aims and objectives will be achieved.

Section 5 – **How will we know when we have arrived** sets out the proposed monitoring and review process.

1.3 Purpose of this Management and Maintenance Plan

- To inform any future, sustainable development of Cutts Close, and to confirm Oakham Town Council's aspiration to gain Green Flag Status.
- To set out a vision and a five-year action plan of improvement.
- To implement an evaluation programme following the Green Flag judging criteria, and to provide an assessment of strengths and weaknesses
- To identify management needs and future objectives to improve the park
- To act as a master reference document for key information
- To demonstrate quality management to the local community, funding bodies and potential sponsors and represent both best practice and best value
- To ensure the needs of conservation and recreation are balanced

1.4 Who is the plan for?

The plan is primarily a working document for the Council and its committees to ensure continuous improvement. The plan will also be of use to the wider community for information and anyone involved in activities, work, town conservation or events within Cutts Close. This includes:

- Rutland County Council
- Oakham Town Partnership
- Oakham In Bloom
- Discover Rutland tourism team
- Tree Warden
- Contractors and maintenance staff
- Event organisers
- Other officers who may become involved in work at the park
- Health and safety officers
- Highways services
- Other professional advisors and their contracted staff

1.5 Who will be responsible for the plan?

The Assistant Clerk will be responsible for the delivery and maintenance of this plan.

1.6 How and when will the plan be reviewed?

This five-year plan covers the period 2016 to 2021, although there will be a reassessment of the plan on an annual basis to ensure accuracy. The master plan will be in electronic format and will be maintained and amended as necessary. The Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk will oversee the park's operation and development under the direction of Oakham Town Council and its Parks and Planning Committee.

1.7 Government Guidance

In developing the Management Plan for Cutts Close it is important to recognise the current political and policy context local authorities are operating within. These national strategic contexts set out the framework and determine the aims and objectives for future management of parks and open spaces. Self assessing of the site will enable us to:

- Benchmark the quality across all of our sites
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each site
- Draw up an improvement plan for each site
- Strategically plan allocation of resources

A guide produced by CABI Space sets out a structure for writing such plans to help the future management of green spaces.

Section 2

Where are we now?

Asset	Current Facilities & Services
<p>Cutts Close Church Street Oakham Rutland LE15 6AA</p> <p>Contact details: Oakham Town Council Victoria Hall 39 High Street Oakham Rutland LE15 6AH</p> <p>Tel 01572 723627</p> <p>enquiries@oakhamtowncouncil.gov.uk</p> <p>Web www.oakhamtowncouncil.gov.uk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's (8-13 years) equipment • Toddlers' play area • Skatepark • Bandstand • Shelter with seating • Street Furniture • Established grass and bedding areas • Mature trees • Power and water supply • Events • Public toilets (Church Street) • Car parking (Burley Road and Church Street)

2.1 Location and Size

The park is five acres in size and situated a two minute walk from the busy town centre, which contains a mixture of retail premises, services, offices, pubs and restaurants.

Oakham is situated in the picturesque Vale of Catmose and is the county town of Rutland, England's smallest mainland county.

2.2 Site History and Name

The history of Cutts Close is inextricably linked to Oakham Castle which is next to the park's southern boundary.

Oakham Castle was originally a motte and bailey-style castle, with embankments forming the inner bailey and Cutts Close forming the outer bailey. Little now remains of this apart from the inner bailey embankments.

The building as it is today, a Grade 1 listed Norman Great Hall, was built by Wakelin de Ferrers between 1180 and 1190AD. It is widely considered to be the finest example of Norman domestic architecture of its type in the UK and as such is unique. The Great Hall is listed in the Domesday Book and a 14th Century document describes it in considerable detail with a garden, fishponds and a moat. Cutts Close was the original site for these fishponds and medieval gardens and the word Cutts is thought to derive from the ancient word "cutte" meaning water channel.

Both the grounds of Oakham Castle and Cutts Close were classified as Scheduled Monument 17018 in the Ancient Monuments and Architectural Areas Act 1979 as "Oakham motte and bailey castle and medieval gardens".

The ownership of Cutts Close was finally transferred, in 1943, from the Hanbury family to Oakham Urban District Council. This conveyance contained the covenant that "...the Council will use the said plot of land hereby conveyed for ever hereafter as an open space"

Subsequent changes in Local Government organisation finally saw ownership pass to Oakham Town Council in 1974.

The site was registered with the Land Registry in 2005 as Title Number LT375494

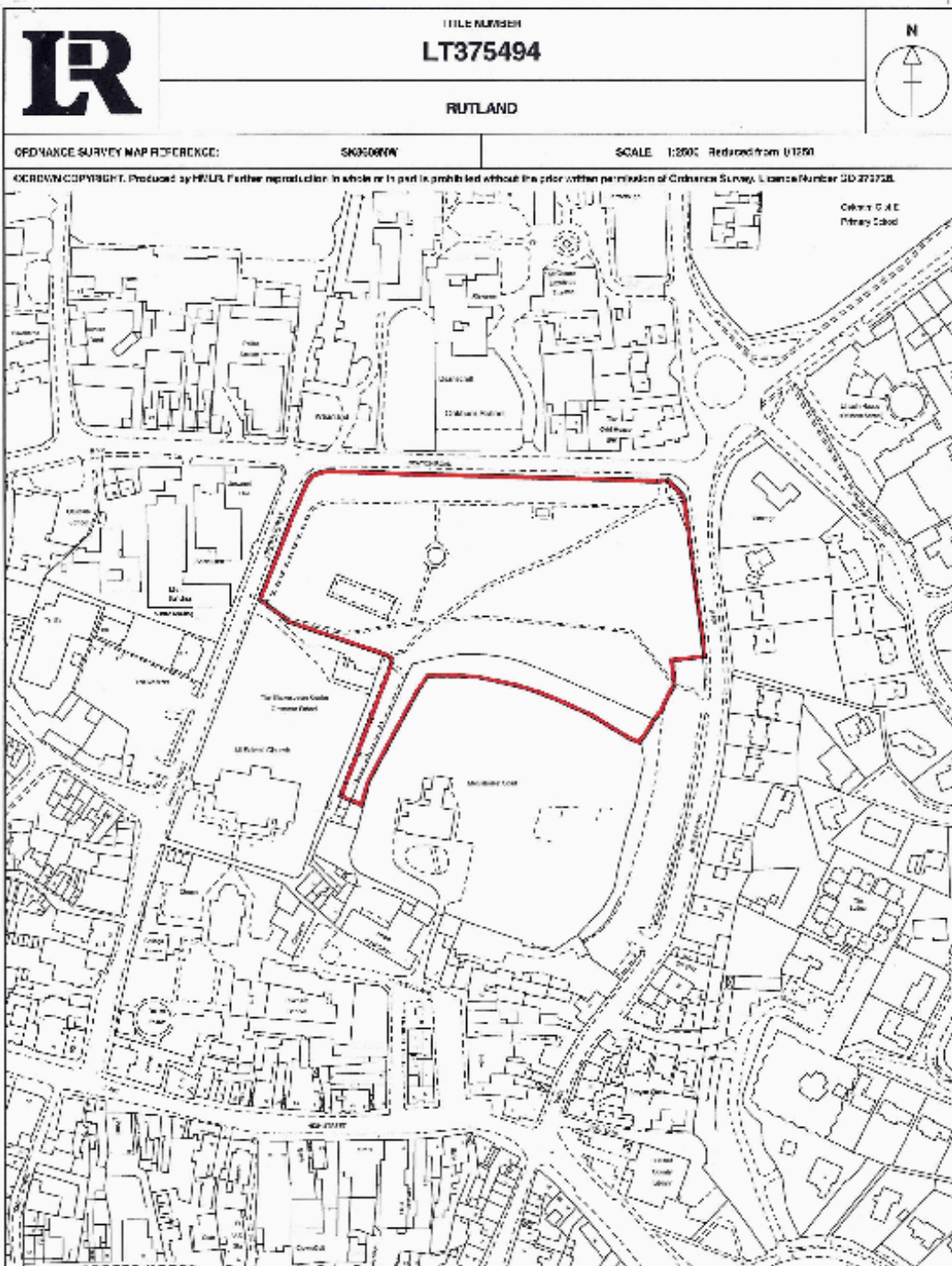


Cutts Close looking north east, with the original Old School in the foreground and the bandstand at its centre. Oakham Castle's site is out of the frame beyond the bottom right of the picture



Cutts Close looking north, showing the original bandstand and shelter. The wall in the foreground was later included in the enclosed toddlers' play area

Photography by Trevor Hickman
Reproduced with permission



This title plan shows the general position of the boundaries. It does not show the exact line of the boundaries. Measurements scaled from this plan may not match measurements between the same points on the ground. For more information see Land Registry Public Guide 7 - Title Plans.

This official copy shows the state of the title plan on **21 June 2005 at 12:56:22**. It may be subject to distortions in scale. Under s.67 of the Land Registration Act 2002, this copy is admissible in evidence to the same extent as the original.
Issued on 21 June 2005

This title is dealt with by the Leicester District Land Registry.



Title Number LT375494 Ordnance Survey Map SK8608NW Scale 1:2500

2.4 Access

The park is easily accessible by foot, by cycle and by car, from:

- Oakham's Market Square, via All Saints Church Passage (approximately 150m away)
- Burley Road (B668) (Nearest car park adjacent to Cutts Close)
- Church Street (Car Park 100m away)
- Railway Station (Station Road approximately 500m)
- Station Road (North eastern entrance)

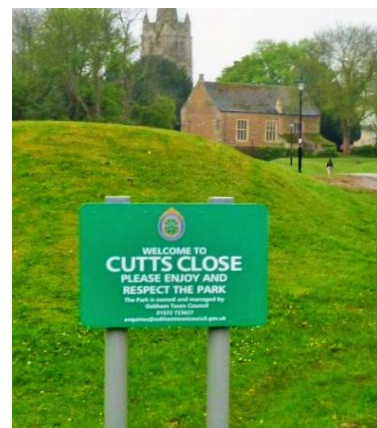
Vehicular access is not generally permitted within the park. However, if necessary for maintenance purposes, vehicles only traverse footpaths which are approved for vehicular use. When large events are taking place in the park, vehicle access is gained from the north eastern corner at the junction of Burley Road and Station Road.



Via All Saints Passage



via Burley Road & Car park



Signage

2.5 Park Hours

Due to the open nature of the park it is, in effect, always open and accessible; most people visit the park on a dawn until dusk basis.

The hours of work of any contractors are between 07.45 – 16.00.

Police officers also routinely patrol the area.

2.6 Description

The park is predominately a large, informal open space with grassy banks, floral displays and surrounded by impressive mature lime and chestnut trees. There is also a concrete and steel post and rail fence running around the perimeter which allows free pedestrian movement and does not impede sight lines.



2.7 Mature Trees and Wildlife

The treescape forms an integral part of the park. The lime, Sweet chestnut, and Ash trees help to frame a mature and aesthetically pleasing open space with a sense of history and belonging. In close proximity there is an abundance of Yew trees. The trees are considered valuable to the wildlife of the area. In December 2013, four Oak trees and two replacement lime trees were planted with archaeological supervision.

A comprehensive arboricultural survey took place in the winter of 2006 and, as a result, some *de minimis* work took place. The survey was repeated in 2012 and 2015. However, the removal of basal epicormics growth is undertaken on an annual basis by suitably qualified professionals. A full ecological survey of the park has never been undertaken but informal sightings of a wide variety of garden birds and grey squirrels have been reported. Also recent sightings of Treecreepers and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker have been reported. A badger sett is located in the northern banks of the grounds of Oakham Castle which also forms the southern boundary to the park.



2.8 Car Parking

The Park does not have a car park. However, there is a long term pay and display car park next to the park on Burley Road and a short term pay and display car park 100m away on Church Street.

2.9 Lighting

Paths in the park are lit by 5m lamp post columns spaced at approximately 30m intervals. This was further augmented by the introduction, in 2010, of additional lighting in the passageway running to the east of All Saints Churchyard.

The columns are maintained by contractors acting on the Town Council's behalf.

2.10 Picnic Area

There are two picnic tables on grass to the north of the toddlers' play area. The Town Council has never considered introducing a more formal picnic area as it believes it would detract from the open and informal style of the park.



2.11 Toilets

There are no toilet facilities onsite, but there is a separate free to use toilet block in Church Street car park about 100m from the park. This was completed in May 2008 and was jointly funded by Oakham Town Council and Rutland County Council. The toilets are managed and maintained by the Town Council. The toilets contain male and female facilities and a separate nappy changing area. There is also a RADAR key accessible disabled facility that, along with a toilet and hand wash basin, also contains a bench, hoist and shower for those with complex needs. The toilets are constructed from local Clipsham stone under a blue tiled roof. They are open from 8.00am to 6.00pm daily throughout the year except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

The toilets are unmanned but are cleaned five times a day by contractors.

The toilets received a maximum five stars in the annual Loo of the Year award for 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013

2.12 Play Areas

There is one main play area at the southwest side of the park. The toddlers' play equipment was installed in 2008 and replaced an existing facility that had become increasingly in need of updating. The site is a former paddling pool and incorporates fencing and safety surfacing and a wide range of equipment for those up to seven years of age. There is seating within the area and two self closing gates ensure maximum safety for young children playing in the area. There are various swings surrounding this area and in August 2010 Oakham Town Council was given permission by English Heritage to install some additional pieces of equipment for 8-13 year olds.



2.13 Skatepark

Originally installed in 2004, but was rebuilt in October 2007. The project cost £25,000 and was funded entirely by a grant from the Youth Opportunities Fund. In 2015 it was completely rebuilt at a cost of £40,000. Funding was received from Section 106 agreement with Rutland County Council of £30,500, a further grant from The Oakham Memorial Institute of £2000 and the Council contributed £7500 to complete the works

The design of the new facility was greatly influenced by a consultation process involving local schools and from those who use it.

The skatepark is positioned in a hollow on the south side of the park and during peak times in the summer is extensively used by skateboarders and BMX bike riders of all ages and abilities, but primarily beginners and intermediate users.

It is inspected regularly for any defects and the Town Council allocates an annual sum towards its maintenance. The Council, in collaboration with the police and users of the facility, installed a floodlight to enable the facility to be used during the winter months.



2.14 Bandstand

The refurbishment of the Bandstand was completed in 2010, at a cost of £25,000 and has since been named HM Queen Elizabeth II.

The Bandstand hosts band concerts and other events throughout the summer.



2.15 Shelter

There is a shelter situated on the north side of the park. This has a water supply and is used for storage. In 2014 electricity was installed to the Shelter at a cost of £6000, enabling more events to take place in the park and can be enjoyed by generations to come.



2.16 Land Tenure

The park is owned freehold by Oakham Town Council and registered with the Land Registry

2.17 Legal Factors, Bye Laws, Leases and Covenants

The land for Cutts Close was originally leased to Rutland County Council but its ownership was subsequently transferred to Oakham Urban District in 1943. This conveyance contains a covenant for the land to be used as an open space.

The overall maintenance and management of the park is undertaken under the Open Spaces Act 1906

As Cutts Close is classified as a Scheduled Monument, under the Ancient Monuments and Architectural Areas Act 1979, any new development requires the consent of English Heritage. The Town Council has built up a good relationship with the English Heritage officer responsible for the area. A condition of any new development is that an archaeological survey must take place and the Town Council has, again, built up a good relationship with the Archaeological Services team at the University of Leicester.

The park is not, as yet, covered by any specific laws or orders as the Town Council simply does not have the resources necessary to carry out enforcement. The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 gives a parish council the power to introduce specific measures if it considers they are appropriate. This Act covers such things as dog control, littering, flyposting and graffiti, and amended other previous Acts of Parliament. Guidance produced by DEFRA would be used if it was ever considered necessary to introduce measures to combat such issues.

The main path running from the north east corner to the southern boundary is a designated footpath, E206, and as such the riding of bicycles is prohibited on that footpath.

An Alcohol Designation Order is in force throughout Oakham which gives police officers discretionary powers to confiscate alcohol from over 18s. The Order was introduced in 2009 with the full support of the Town Council under the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001.

Leicestershire Constabulary carries out enforcement where appropriate.

Legislation	Relevance	Responsibility
Crime and Disorder Act 1998	Community safety, nuisance and antisocial behavior	Police
Highways Act 1980	Illegal access by motor vehicles Including motorbikes	Police
The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996	Fines, education and disposal	Rutland County Council
Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 (Alcohol Designation Order)	Community safety, nuisance and antisocial behavior	Police

2.18 Local Demographics & Current Users

The County of Rutland, which the park is situated in, has a population of 37,369 residents at the time of the 2011 census, this figure has increased by 2,806 since the previous census. Rutland remains by far the smallest region in the East Midlands, making up 0.8% of the overall population of the East Midlands

Today, the park attracts many visits each year. This provides these visitors with the opportunity to spend their leisure time in a quality, well maintained, biodiversity-rich green space.

The park caters for a wide range of uses:

- Informal recreation such as walking and light exercise
- Picnicking, relaxing and sunbathing
- Children's play
- Acts as a town centre thoroughfare for residents from the north east of the town
- Informal outdoor games
- Community events and musical performances
- Somewhere to sit, eat and meet
- Skateboarding and BMX biking



2.19 Tourism

Research was undertaken in 2009 on behalf of East Midlands Tourism, EMDA's regional tourism development body, by Global Tourism Solutions Ltd using the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model (STEAM)

Tourism generates approximately £85.79 million for the Rutland economy and approximately 1,800 people in the county are employed in tourism related industries.

Some 257,070 overnight trips were made to Rutland in 2009. The average length of stay in commercial tourist accommodation was 2.20 nights, equating to some 566,320 tourist days. Visitors who stay in serviced tourist accommodation represented the largest category of overnight staying visitors to Rutland (58%), albeit the average length of stay was 1.71 nights. Day visitors are the largest by far the largest category of any visitor making some 1.37 million individual trips throughout the calendar year.

Section 3

Where do we want to get to?

3.1 Introduction

Oakham Town Council has made a commitment to improve parks throughout Oakham and will be using the Green Flag criteria as a benchmark on quality and sustainability.

3.2 Vision

Oakham Town Council will seek to continually improve the parks and open spaces in Oakham where both appropriate and sustainable and wishes them to continue to be a focus for community activities.

3.3 Aims

- To provide a safe, healthy and secure park for all users
- To achieve a consistently high standard of cleanliness and maintenance
- To promote and demonstrate environmental sustainability
- To protect and promote the heritage and conservation value
- To enable community participation and involvement
- To promote the park by maximising marketing opportunities and tourism
- To ensure effective management and corporate support

3.4 Objectives

- To ensure that Cutts Close remains a special area for recreation and enjoyment for present and future users
- To ensure that the character of the park is respected and retained for the people of Oakham
- To ensure that the strong vegetation structure is retained for the future
- To encourage continued public use
- To ensure the park is safe for public use and does not feel intimidating

3.5 The Green Flag Criteria

The Civic Trust oversees the Green Flag Award. The scheme was first launched in 1996 and it has become a recognised national standard for publicly accessible parks and open spaces.

It is a quality award recognising well maintained green spaces and encourages high standards to be achieved and sustained.

The eight judging criteria are as follows:

- A welcoming place
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Well maintained and clean
- Sustainable
- Conservation and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing
- Management

3.6 A Welcoming Place

The park is at the heart of Oakham. It can be accessed by four main entrances.

Overgrown shrub areas have been pruned back, and flowering shrubs planted to create all round seasonal interest. A programme of painting has been carried out to improve the appearance of lampposts, bins and seating.

Play areas have been refurbished, providing a clean and safe environment with all conforming to current British Standards. Quarterly inspections are carried out by an external company.

There are four paths into the park including one vehicular access from Burley Road (B668). These tarmac paths are well maintained and run around and through the park. The paths are wide enough to accommodate most pushchairs and wheelchairs and those with mobility difficulties. However the topography of the park is not level and therefore some caution must be exercised.

There are numerous benches throughout the park. These are well maintained and repainted annually. Benches are gradually being replaced to ensure a uniformity of design.

Strengths

- Good and safe access
- Easily accessible site with good signage
- Seating areas
- Play areas for different ages
- Centrally located
- Well maintained toilets and parking nearby

Weaknesses

- No wheelchair access into the bandstand

Threats

- Anti-social behaviour as the park is open at all times

3.7 Healthy, Safe and Secure

Oakham Town Council has a legal responsibility and is committed to ensuring employees and visitors who visit or work within the park can do so safely.

The park has adequate lighting. An alcohol ban is in place and enforced. It is important that acts of antisocial behaviour are addressed quickly so they do not become the norm. This allows the public to feel safe and secure.

Street furniture (bins, benches and lamp posts) are uniform and well maintained.

In addition to the daily process for the area (entire area litter picked/dog bins emptied) the area is also checked by our contractor for boundary fencing security issues.

- Play equipment conforms to the appropriate British Standards and is inspected quarterly. Any work required as a result of these inspections is actioned as soon as possible
- Risk Assessments and safe working procedures are required and provided by our contractors
- All event holders are provided with the councils 'Terms and Conditions' for the use of the park
- Recognised First Aiders are in place during events
- Regular inspections of power to the bandstand are carried out
- Oakham Town Council does not operate an out of hour's service for emergencies

The grounds maintenance contract is with Cory Environmental. All employees are given a full induction which covers all aspects of the areas they will operate in and the equipment they will be using. Full one to one equipment use training takes place until the supervisor is satisfied that the new operative can be signed off as fully competent. As the operatives work in close proximity to the general public they are briefed on how to operate equipment when the site is crowded, this may result in termination of the work being carried out until the area becomes less crowded and manageable within agreed safety guidelines. During the initial induction staff are briefed on how to 'manage' members of the public in order to maintain a good relationship and solve problems with if necessary help from Cory Management team/and or Oakham Town Council for more contentious situations.

- **Anti-social behaviour**

The contractors when operating within the area are briefed as to how to handle incidents of anti-social behaviour that they may come across. In general the brief is one of non-involvement but to quickly pass by telephone to their supervisor details of the anti-social behavior being witnessed. Cory management team will then decide on the appropriate cause of action in consultation with Oakham Town Council. In the event of there appearing to be the threat of physical injury the operative will make direct contact with the Police.

3.8 Dog Fouling

Under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996, enforcement of this law is carried out by Rutland County Council.

The area is cleansed at around 10.00am Monday to Sunday and any dog fouling is cleared. Dog fouling that occurs after this cleanse is reported to our contractors and is dealt with immediately.

3.9 Toilets

The nearby Church Street toilets are managed by Oakham Town Council and have appointed a local cleaning company to maintain them. The toilets are cleaned five times a day to ensure an exceptionally high standard of cleanliness and hygiene. The toilets are open from 8.00am to 6.00pm daily throughout the year except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

3.10 Promoting Well Being

Good access encourages residents from the north west of the town to cut through to the town centre promoting walking and leaving the car at home.

- **Exercise** for people to walk their dogs, joggers and local workforce at lunch times
- **Relaxing** for people picnicking, sunbathing or just to sit. There are areas for peace in an attractive environment, so achieving a balanced stress-free lifestyle
- **Socially** for the community as a meeting place and music performances
- **Safe** play areas for children to play and stretch themselves

3.11 Risk Assessment for Cutts Close

Item	Hazard	Seriousness of potential injury	Likelihood	Measures
Paths	Slips and trips	Low	Medium	Paths are generally in good order
Trees	Falling branches	Medium	Medium	Trees are informally inspected regularly by the Tree Warden and contractors. Maintenance work carried out as necessary. Five yearly full arboricultural survey undertaken
Children's Play Area	Injury from playing on equipment	Low	Medium	The equipment and installation conform to current British Standards. Quarterly inspections carried out by qualified inspectors
Toddlers' Play Area	Injury from playing on equipment	Low	Medium	The equipment and installation conform to current British Standards. Quarterly inspections carried out by qualified inspectors
Skatepark	Injury from playing on equipment	Low	Medium	The equipment and installation conform to current British Standards. Quarterly inspections carried out by qualified inspectors

Dogs	Attack	Low	Medium	Dog safety is promoted by Rutland County Council
	Contact with dog mess	Medium	Medium	
Public Safety	Antisocial behavior and crime	Medium	Low	Police officers carry out enforcement where appropriate

3.12 Well Maintained and Clean

- **Litter and dog waste management**

Oakham Town Council employs a contractor who is responsible for the clearing of rubbish and emptying of bins and dog waste. This happens once a day, 7 days a week, all year round.

- **Grounds Maintenance**

Oakham Town Council awarded the Grounds Maintenance contract to Cory Environmental Ltd. (Cory) is one of the UK's leading waste management and environmental services companies. See Appendix 3

- **Building Maintenance**

Cutts Close prides itself on being safe clean and green. The Town Council views the park as a focal point in the heart of Oakham and its aim is to provide a positive image of the park.

Oakham Town Council has a good working relationship with local contractors G & R Gregg who can action minor repairs immediately

- **Equipment Maintenance**

All play areas are inspected quarterly by an independent, qualified inspector.

3.13 Sustainability

Oakham Town Council recognises the importance of ensuring that the methods used in maintaining the park are environmentally sound.

- **Resource Conservation**

To reduce water requirements Oakham In Bloom has designed a planting scheme that provides all year interest with no watering.

- **Environmental policies and Waste Minimisation**

Oakham Town Council employs Cory Environmental Management Limited for its grounds maintenance. Along with Oakham Town Council, the contractor applies the 'think globally', 'act locally' mentality. Cory has also developed a Corporate Environmental Strategy. Each site has its own environmental management system with Aims and Objectives and targets to the prevention of pollution and the continual improvement of the environmental performance of its operations. It has been agreed that the contract is reviewed on a regular basis with the contractor and the council to ensure compliance with relevant environmental legislation.

- **Proposed use of Herbicides and Pesticides**

Generally herbicide and pesticide use is kept to a minimum, but in difficult areas i.e. hard standing and around the bandstand some Glyphosate is used as a spot treatment.

Wherever possible, the company will endeavour to reduce the use of herbicides by the use of recycling tree. Any woody tree and shrub prunings will either be chipped on site and disposed of to existing shrub beds, or removed off site and chipped up.

3.14 Conservation and Heritage

- **Natural features, wildlife and flora**

Cutts Close is not believed to hold a high nature conservation value. However, the trees are a good source of habitat for birds and other wildlife and the council hopes to enhance this as a number of bird boxes have been introduced.

The formal horticultural character of the park is an important aspect of the site. An Arboricultural Survey of the trees on site was undertaken in January 2012 and 2015, to produce a schedule of works to return the tree stock to optimum condition.

- **Landscape features**

Today the mature trees, banks and walkways are a major feature of the area and well used for general relaxation. Current knowledge about Cutts Close is largely based on a few direct historical references. To the north of the main enclosure of Oakham Castle there is what appears to be a north bailey, defined by a north bank running alongside Station Road. A wide though less substantial east-west bank to the south divides the bailey into a flat north area (now known as Cutts Close) may have been used for gardens, from a lower south area that is believed to have been used for fishponds. See Appendices 4 (a) (b) (c)

Objectives:

1. Conserve landscape features and improve as necessary
2. Conserve existing boundaries
3. Initiate a programme of phased tree maintenance in line with the survey findings

- **Buildings and structures**

The park is surrounded today by residential and commercial properties. It is positioned adjacent to Oakham castle and separated by remains of the castle's walling and overgrown vegetation, therefore the park itself represents local heritage. Since the 1950s little archaeological evidence has been found but strong features indicate that Cutts Close probably was used as an ornamental garden.

The castle has been awarded a substantial grant by the Heritage Lottery fund for restorations, improvements and to carry out extensive work throughout the castle, grounds and castle walls and to host an enhanced events programme, as well as more regular re-enactments and living history events.

The whole emphasis of the proposal involves the following elements:

- Cultural centre
- History and Heritage
- Community events
- Improvements to accessibility
- Conserve Castle walls
- Tourist destination
- Increased sustainability

The Bandstand forms the main focal point of the park and is an important part of the heritage of Oakham. It was officially opened in 1948 and gifted to the people of Oakham by the Finch family of Ayston Hall, near Uppingham.

It is situated centrally and was completely refurbished in May 2010 at a cost of £25,000. The work entailed replacing the roof, the stone steps and the floor, and the removal and stripping back to bare metal of the iron railings prior to being repainted. The base was also re-rendered and re-pointed and capping stones internally bolted to the new flooring to prevent any movement. It is of stone and timber construction with black and gold traditional iron railings and surrounded by traditional mixed shrub borders. The Bandstand has since been named HM Queen Elizabeth II.

3.15 Community Involvement

The park is used by a wide variety of people, including young, older, families, local residents, those participating in events, shoppers, school students and tourists.

Oakham Town Council endeavours to promote and encourage public involvement and support in maintaining tidiness and reducing any environmental impacts. When events take place there is an excellent record of tidiness.

Oakham Town Council is working with and actively developing new relationships with a number of groups and organisations across a range of activities.

We have tried to improve information on the park's users and visitor numbers with informal 1 hour observations at different times of the week and day. During the summer months it was estimated at a weekend between 20/30 both adults and children. The skatepark attracts between 2/10 children and a Band Concert can attract between 150-200 people. In 2012 we held a Jubilee Party. This was a great success and we estimated approximately 2000 people attended. We have included at these events consultation and feedback sessions. The public were invited to provide their comments, ideas and suggestions. This was done by handing out questionnaire feedback forms at events. See Appendix 5

- **Oakham In Bloom**

Oakham In Bloom was formed in August 1997 - the committee consists of volunteers drawn from the community and works in partnership with Oakham Town Council, Rutland County Council, schools and youth groups, voluntary organisations, residents and businesses.

The committee and their gardening and fundraising volunteers strive to improve the environment for people who visit, work and live in the town; reduce graffiti, vandalism and litter; encourage the community to plant and care for flowers, trees and shrubs.



Oakham In Bloom volunteers

- **Oakham Town Partnership**

The Oakham Town Partnership includes representatives/volunteers from the community and businesses together with Rutland County Council and Oakham Town Council. Its overall aim is to create a vibrant town that provides an exceptional quality of life for Oakham's residents, businesses and visitors.

- **Provision for the Community**

Cutts Close offers the community a wide range of facilities for all ages including well equipped play areas, formal seating throughout the park and picnic benches.



3.16 Marketing

The park is well known to local residents, promoted mainly through word of mouth and their knowledge of the civic calendar of events. Various events are held throughout the year which is advertised in the notice board erected on the Bandstand, local media and on Oakham Town Council's website (www.oakhamtowncouncil.gov.uk) which has site-specific information. It also contains general information about the Town Council, contact details and information about how to comment, compliment or complain to the council.

The park has four signs. Each sign shows the name of the park and contact details. The Oakham Town Partnership is in the process of putting together a local strategic plan with a review of improving all the signage in Oakham. This will include appropriate signage in the centre of town with directions to Cutts Close. See Appendix 1

Throughout the year various events are held in Cutts Close, these include Oakham Carnival and Fun Day, Rutland Dog Day, Funfair and Animal free Circus. Various bands have appeared in the bandstand for many summers. The bandstand is licensed for musical performances.



3.17 Management

Parties involved in the management and development of the park. Representatives include:

1. The Parks and Planning Committee meet monthly and consist of all members of Oakham Town Council. The committee has delegated authority to deal with issues relating to the open spaces the Town Council is responsible for as well as spending money allocated to it in the budget. The committee may also make recommendations to the Town Council on such issues as it sees fit and these are considered by the Town Council prior to a decision being made.
2. Neighbourhood Safety representatives, comprising Rutland County Council, the police and the police community safety officer;
3. Oakham In Bloom
4. Tree Warden
5. Oakham Town Partnership
6. Tourism Team – Discover Rutland
7. The Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk

- **Finance**

Below are details of expenditure on the park

Expenditure Type	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Play Equipment Maintenance	3000	2000 Est.			
Other Maintenance	1200	2000 Est.			
Utility Services	250	250			
Grounds Maintenance	10,000	11,000 Est.			
Capital Expenditure	40,000	n/a			
Licences	70	70			
Play Area Inspections	180	180			
Insurance	<i>Included in Council's Public Liability Insurance</i>				

- **Financial Management**

Cutts Close receives some income from hosting events. This is relatively minor as community non-profit making events are allowed free use. The grounds maintenance is part of the overall contract for Oakham Town Council and equates to approximately 50% of the total value of the contract.

Section 4

How will we get there?

4.1 The Five Year Plan 2016 - 2021

[illegible]

Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake regular satisfaction surveys • Promote and encourage use of the park by local schools for educational visits • Ensure that the range of features and activities on offer are in line with local community needs • Social Media
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure high park profile locally • Develop a link from OTC web site to include site specific information • Annual review and update of Interpretation material • Press releases • Notice board kept up to date to allow for on park communication
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Management Plan is followed and regularly reviewed • Ensure suitable financial commitment • Ensure a fundamental review in 2021 • Attain and retain a Green Flag Award • Monitor annual revenue spending • Provide adequate training for all staff and volunteers involved in managing and maintaining the park • Set out and monitor key performance indicators

Section 5

How will we know when we have arrived?

5.1 Action Plan 2016 - 2021

- This section sets out the intended actions and improvements to improve Cutts Close over the next five years.
- This is the first management plan Oakham Town Council has written for Cutts Close. It will enable the Town Council to track progress and outline achievable targets in a realistic time frame.
- The contents of the management plan will be in line with the expectations of the community.
- Oakham Town Council will implement the action plan, with support from relevant partners.
- This plan will act as a working document and will be subject to change and improvement.
- New strategies and policies may affect the plan during the course of the five years and these will be incorporated if relevant.
- A fundamental review will be taken in year five (2021). A thorough investigation will be made to evaluate whether objectives were met.

Cutts Close Action Plan 2016 – 2021

Aim	Description	Estimated Cost	Action
Create a Welcoming Place	To replace fencing around the park perimeter	£37,500	Sourcing funding
	Clean Toddlers' Play area	£300	Annually
	Paint benches	£1000	Annually
	Ensure suitable planting	£0	Annually by Oakham In Bloom
Healthy, Safe and Secure	Quarterly inspection of play equipment	£180 per annum	Ongoing
	Ensure weekly informal inspections	Officer time	Ongoing
Well Maintained & Clean	Replacement of bins	£500 per bin	As required
	Cleaning of exterior litter bins	£19.00 per bin	Annually
	Replacement of benches	£500 per bench	As required
	Promote positive liaison with Community Officer	Officer time	Good links with the police and RCC
	Review maintenance schedules and tender	£10,000 p/a	Due for renewal April 1 st 2016
	Refurbish planted areas	£100 p/a	Rolling programme
Sustainability	Level of recycling	0	Completed
	Reduce the need of herbicides	Operational	
	Reduce the need for watering	0	Completed
Conservation and Heritage	Carry out tree survey	£525	Completed November 2015
Community Involvement	Conduct user and satisfaction surveys	Officer Time	2016 – 2021
	Consultation with the community	Officer Time	2016 – 2021
	Promote and encourage use by schools	Officer Time	2016- 2021
Marketing	Develop a site specific section on website	Officer Time	Ongoing
	Ensure notice boards are kept up-to-date	Officer Time	Ongoing
Management	Ensure this Management Plan is adhered to, and updated and regularly reviewed	Officer Time	Review every January
	Ensure a fundamental review of the plan	Officer Time	2021
	Monitor annual review spending	Officer Time	Annually

Conclusion and Summary

Cutts Close is the main focal point for leisure in Oakham Town Centre. The Town Council is committed to ensuring it remains as such. Much improvement has taken place in the park and the Town Council wishes to ensure this process continues. However, given its status as a Scheduled Monument any further development is unlikely. The overall management of the park has always been a part of the Town Council's work and this document is seeking to put this work on a more formal level. The Town Council believes this Management Plan will ensure the park continues to provide an important informal recreational space for residents and visitors and safe enjoyment for all those who use it.



APPENDICES





RISK ASSESSMENT

F.02.a
Version 4.0
September 2015

Reference Number: RUT-RA-001	Task: Ground Maintenance	Unit/Area/Plant: Ground Maintenance Operative	Location: Rutland
Assessment Date: 20 Aug 15	Review Date: 20 Aug 16	Compiled by (Assessors):	Persons Consulted:

Description of Task being Assessed (Including Limitations):

Ground Maintenance Operative.

Common Hazards						Plant Equipment/Mobile Plant/Vehicles/Machinery/Tug						Health/Environmental Hazards			
Hazards	Codes	No(s).	Hazards	Codes	No(s).	Non-Mechanical Hazards	Codes	No(s).	Mechanical Hazards	Codes	No(s).	Hazards	Codes		No(s).
	PA			PA			PA			PA			EA		
Slips & Trips (Access/Egress/Walkways)	A	5	Falls From Height			Noise			Ejection	A	5	Chemicals (COSH RA)			
Manual Handling (Lifting/ Pushing/Pulling)			Falling Objects			Vibration (HAVS & WBVS)			Trapping or Drawing In			Heavy Metals			
Manual Handling (Repetitive Strain)			Deep Water			Pressure (Air or Liquid)			Crushing			Non-Conforming/ Hazardous Waste			
Ergonomics			Rough/Tidal Water			Stored Energy			Impact	A	5	Dusts			
Inclement Weather (Sunlight/Ice/Snow/Wind)	A	5	Excavations (Subsidances)			Electrical			Friction or Abrasion			Liquids from Waste			
Temperature / Humidity	A	5	Fire/Explosion			Fire / Explosion			Entanglement			Noise			
Violence & Aggression			Electricity			Thermal Hot/Cold Surfaces			Shearing/Severing			Liquids			
Flammable Substances (COSH or DSEAR RA)			Sharp Objects			Radiation (Ionizing/Non Ionizing)			Cutting/Severing			Gases			
			Oxygen Deficiency/ Enrichment			Fumes Gases			Stabbing / Puncturing			Solids			
						Steam			Fluid Injection			Excessive use of Resources			
												Bacteria/Parasites Viruses Bio Aerosols	A		5
												Herbicides/ Insecticides/ Pesticides (COSH RA)	A		5

Persons Affected (PA):	A - Employees	B - Members of the Public	C - Customers	D - Children/Young Persons	
	E - New/Expectant Mothers	F - Contractors	G - Visitors	H - All PA's	
Environment Affected (EA):	H - Air	J - Land	K - Water	L - All EA's (H-K)	M - Visual



RISK ASSESSMENT

Reference Number: RUT-RA-001

Risk Rating - Severity (S) x Likelihood (L) = Risk (R)

Low (L) <8 - Risk acceptable with controls inform staff.
 Medium (M) 8 - 14 - Provide specific training &/or brief staff (Record on training plan).
 High (H) >14 - STOP & review controls in place via an improvement plan.

Hazard Description	Potential Risks	Existing Methods/Control Measures	Risk Rating			Risk (L/M/H)	Further Actions/Comments (Include Improvement Plan Reference)
			S	L	R		
Slips & Trips	Slipping on wet ground. Tripping on tree roots and fallen branches and debris. Slipping on bank inclines. Tripping on undulating ground. Tripping on stones.	1. Operators remain watch full and vigilant for trip hazards. 2. Operators employ greater care when working on undulating ground and on the banks. 3. PPE: mandatory: a. Safety Boots with good wide tread, oil resistant with ankle support.	3	3	9	M	
Impact	Moving public vehicles and trucks.	1. All operators employ green cross code at all times when crossing road. 2. PPE: Mandatory when working in the vicinity of traffic. a. High Visibility EN471 Vest: Class 2 Intermediate Protection.	3	1	3	L	
Viruses	Limes Disease from ticks. & Toxic Effect from Giant Hogweed	1. Operators informed of the risk posed by Ticks. 2. Poster in office notice board risk of giant hog weed.	3	1	3	L	
Viruses	Hepatitis B: Needle sticks injuries	1. If needles or syringes found operators trained not to touch, and to phone manager, who phones wardens. 2. If injured by needle stick operator encourages bleeding - don't suck wound, cover with dressing - report to A&E. 3. First Aid Kit available in vehicle.	3	1	3	L	
Temperature/Humidity	Hot Weather/Strong Sunlight/Glare: Causing Headaches, Heat Stroke/ Sunburn & Skin Cancer	1. Operatives advised to stay hydrated. 2. Welfare facilities: Water Taps around locations and water made available where no taps exist, water is taken by operatives. 3. More regular breaks in the shade where available in very hot sunlight, or very hot weather. 4. Sun cream available to operatives. 5. PPE: Baseball caps available, and employees encouraged to wear 6. PPE: Safety glasses with UV Polaroid Protection provided.	3	2	6	L	



RISK ASSESSMENT

Reference Number: RUT-RA-001

Risk Rating - Severity (S) x Likelihood (L) = Risk (R)

Low (L) <8 - Risk acceptable with controls inform staff.
 Medium (M) 8 - 14 - Provide specific training &/or brief staff (Record on training plan).
 High (H) >14 - STOP & review controls in place via an improvement plan.

Hazard Description	Potential Risks	Existing Methods/Control Measures	Risk Rating			Risk (L/M/H)	Further Actions/Comments (Include Improvement Plan Reference)
			S	L	R		
Inclement Weather	Wet Weather including Torrential Rain: - Causing poor health and fatigue.	1. Torrential Rain: Work stopped 2. Operators provided with PPE: a. Waterproof boiler suit and waterproof trousers and jackets with hoods.	2	2	4	L	
Parasites	Toxocariasis: The roundworm parasites responsible for toxocariasis (called Toxocara) live in the digestive system of dogs, foxes and cats. The worms produce eggs, which are released in the faeces of infected animals and contaminate soil. If small particles of contaminated soil get into someone's mouth, they may develop toxocariasis	1. Operators to wash skin if in contact with any animal faeces.	3	2	6	L	
Pesticides	Untrained persons handling Pesticides not familiar with safe handling and routes of contamination & personal hygiene, and causing illness to the public	1. COSH RA for each product. 2. All users to be PA1 PA2 & PA6A Trained.	3	1	3	L	
Ejection	Untrained Ground maintenance operatives injured by using machinery incorrectly.	All ground maintenance operatives to be trained in the use of all machinery before being authorised to use.	3	1	3	L	



RISK ASSESSMENT

Reference Number: RUT-RA-001

Summary of Internal Documentation Procedures/Guidance/Tool Box Talks etc. and parts thereof, used to train employees.	List other Risk Assessments linked to this one (i.e. Manual Handling)
	RUT-RA-002 Weed Control RUT-RA-003 Hand Mower RUT-RA-004 Strimmer RUT-RA-005 Ride on Mower RUT-RA-006 Chainsaw RUT-RA-007 Wood Chipper RUT-RA-008 Hedge Cutting Trimmer (Tractor)

I confirm I am the person responsible for ensuring the control measures are being complied with, and for implementing additional controls detailed on the improvement plan. I will inform the Compliance Department of any control measures that cannot be implemented within the timescales

Assessed By:	Signature: <small>Digitally signed by Darren Young DN: cn=Darren Young, o=Core Environmental, ou=CEMS, email=dyoung@coreenvironmental.co.uk, c=GB Date: 2015.09.14 11:11:39 +01'00'</small>	Date: Sep 11, 2015
Approved By:	Signature: <small>Digitally signed by Mike Lowe DN: cn=Mike Lowe, o=CEMS, ou=Runland, email=milowe@coreenvironmental.co.uk, c=GB Date: 2015.09.17 11:40:06 +01'00'</small>	Date: Sep 17, 2015

Compliance Section		
Reviewed by: Sue Forbes	Signature: Sue Forbes <small>Digitally signed by Sue Forbes DN: cn=Sue Forbes, o=Core Environmental, ou=Compliance Department, email=sforbes@coreenvironmental.co.uk, c=GB Date: 2015.09.11 16:26:33 +01'00'</small>	Date: Sep 11, 2015
Comments:		

APPENDIX 3

OAKHAM TOWN COUNCIL GROUNDS MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2015 – 2016 – Cutts Close

	Occ.	Comments	April 2015	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	March 2016
Grass Cutting	30 Cuts may be cancelled or added as per Contract	Weekly From April to end of October	6,13, 20,27	6,13, 20,27	1, 8,15, 22,29	6,13, 20,27	3,10,17, 24,30	7,14, 21,28	5,12,19 26	If required				7,21
Edge Trimming	30	As per grass Cutting	6,13, 20,27	6,13, 20,27	1, 8,15, 22,29	6,13, 20,27	3,10,17, 24,30	7,14, 21,28	5,12,19 26	If required				7,21
Banks Strimming	30	As per grass Cutting Banks at Northern boundary (Station Road side) to be left whilst daffodils in flower	6,13, 20,27	6,13, 20,27	1, 8,15, 22,29	6,13, 20,27	3,10,17, 24,30	7,14, 21,28	5,12,19 26	If required				7,21
Litter	362	Daily throughout year (Excl x-mas and New Year)	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
Waste Bins	362	Daily throughout year	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
Hard Area Sweeps Including Bandstand and Toddlers Play Area	362	Daily throughout year	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
Hard Area Weeds / moss		ALL HARD AREAS WEEED AND MOSS FREE THROUGHOUT YEAR												

Oakham Castle

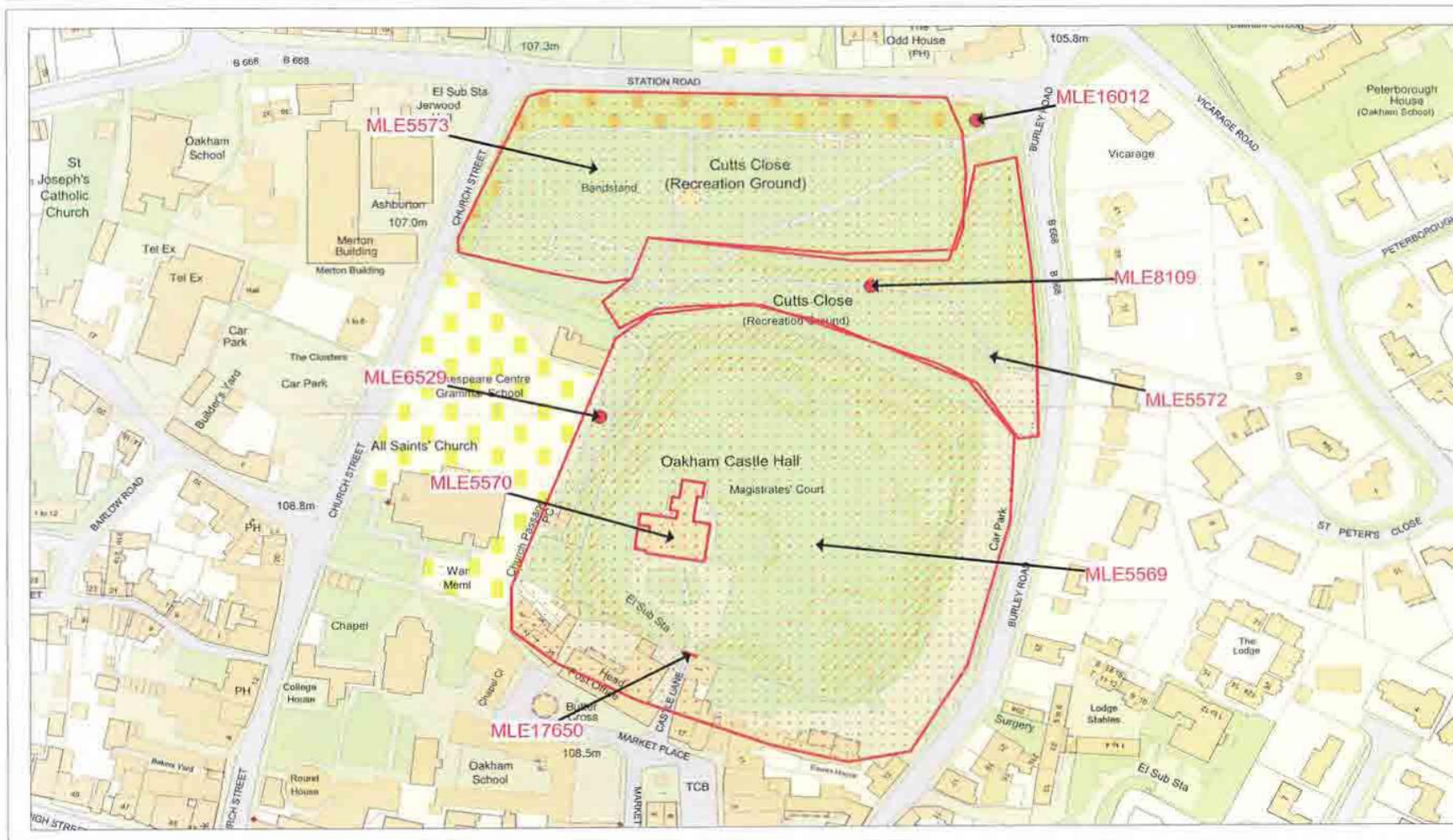
Compiled by Helen Wells on 24 February 2010

Historic & Natural Environment Team
Leicestershire County Council
Room 500, County Hall
Glenfield
Leicester
LE3 8TE



**Leicestershire
County Council**

Scale 1:2000



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APPENDIX 4 (A)



Figure 12: Aerial photograph showing part of the grounds of Oakham Castle with the former tennis court showing to the right of the Hall (NMR Ref. AFL03_Aerofilm_54416).



Figure 13: A later aerial photograph showing the grounds of Oakham Castle with the former tennis court now overgrown, a new extension to the Hall and ringed trees planted on part of the north bank. The arrow points to a cut through the rampart where cattle were brought into the Castle and, to the right, the motte has clearly been cut back where a dark shed can be seen (NMR Ref. AFL03_Aerofilm_A7499).

APPENDIX 4 (B)

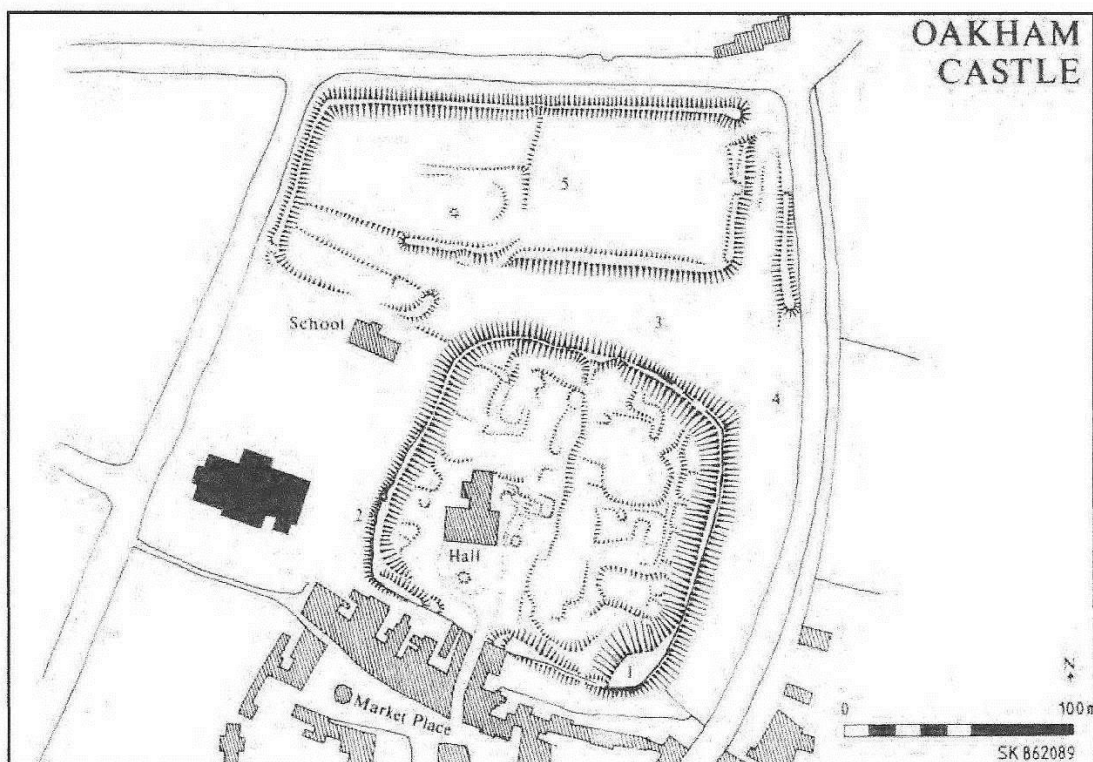


Figure 18: Hachure plan of Oakham Castle and Cutt's Close (Hartley's survey 1983).

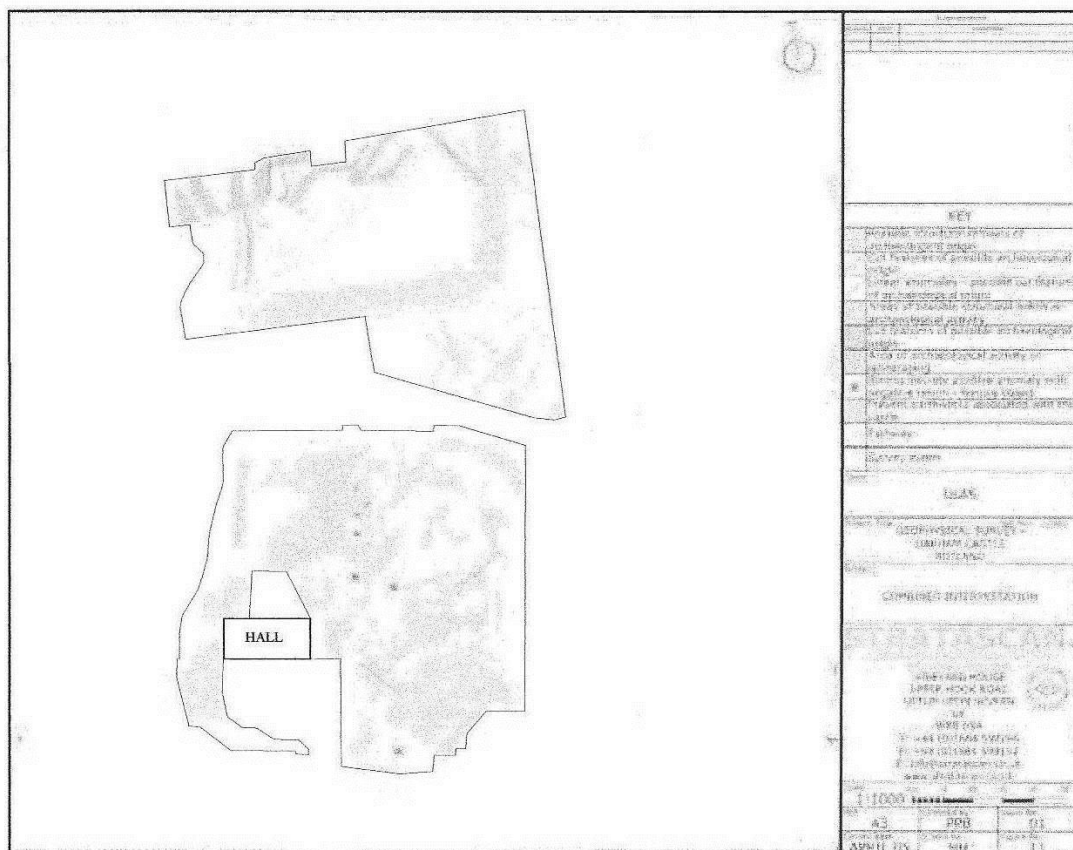


Figure 19: Combined interpretation plan of resistivity and magnetometry geophysical surveys within the grounds of Oakham Castle and Cutt's Close carried out in 2005 by Stratascan for University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS).

APPENDIX 4 (C)



Oakham Castle and Cutts Close, looking north-west



OCS: Oakham Castle Survey
Fig. 47: Perspective view of Oakham Castle grounds and Cutts Close,
No scale DW May 2011

CUTTS CLOSE QUESTIONNAIRE**How often do you visit the park?**

Once a year	
10 to 25 times a year	
Once a week	
Every day	

How long do you normally stay?

Less than 30 minutes	
30 minutes – 1 hour	
1 -2 hours	
2 or more hours	

If a first time visitor – How did you find out about the park?

--

Do you think Cutts Close is easy to find?

Yes	No
-----	----

How would you rate the appearance and design of the park in terms of it being a welcoming and accessible place which feels safe and secure?

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	No opinion
-----------	------	------	------	-----------	------------

How would you rate the maintenance and cleanliness of the park as whole?

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	No opinion
-----------	------	------	------	-----------	------------

Have you ever participated or attended any Park activities or events in the past?

Yes	No
-----	----

If there were more activities or events at the Park would you attend?

Yes	No
-----	----

If ticked yes - What type of new events/activities would you like to see at the park?

--

Which types of promotion would you use to find out about events in the park?

Local newspapers	
Website	
Local radio	
Posters	
Leaflets & Flyers	

Do you have any other comments about the park?

--

Which of these categories best describes your age?

Under 16	16-20	21-35	35-45	45-55	55-65	Over 65
----------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	---------

Are you Male or Female?

Male	Female
------	--------

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. We appreciate your feedback
 01572 723627 www.oakhamtowncouncil.gov.uk