

## *Mentmore Conservation Area Review*



*Designated by the Cabinet on behalf  
of the Council on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
following public consultation*

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Information contained within this report is correct at the time of going to print.

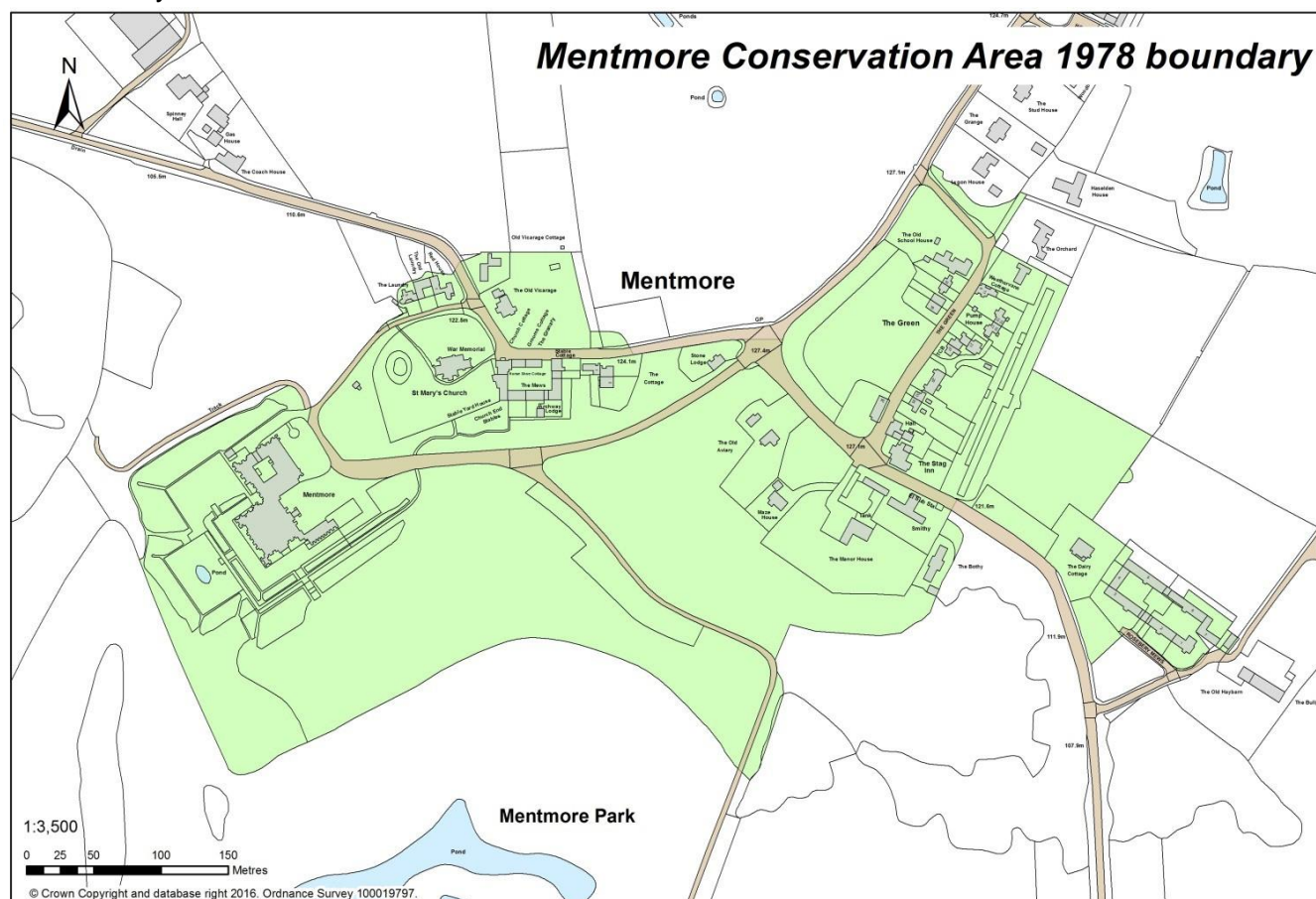
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## 1. Introduction

Mentmore Conservation Area was designated on 12 July 1978, at which time the only listed buildings in the Conservation Area were Mentmore Towers (the mansion), St Mary's Church and the Manor House. The original designation and Conservation Area appraisal resulted in a limited area designated and a very brief written appraisal. The Conservation Area has not been reviewed since. The plan below shows the original 1978 boundary.



Conservation Area designations should be reviewed from time to time (as required by planning legislation) to ensure that they are still appropriate and that boundaries are up to date. Several factors have prompted this review. These include advances in scholarship, and greater interest in Victorian architecture, designed landscapes and social conditions, recognised by the many additional listed buildings in the village, and the inclusion of much of the park in the Historic England *Register of Parks & Gardens of special historic interest*. Fourteen list entries apply to buildings, and the mansion's designed landscape is included at Grade II\* in Historic England's *Register*.

The revised extent of the Conservation Area is shown in Appendix 1.

In addition, the private country estate character of the area has changed with the advent of new houses in the village and residential conversions, the deterioration of the condition of the mansion and its designed landscaped setting, including the laying-out of a golf course with its clubhouse. The existing Conservation Area appraisal is so brief that the Area and its wider surroundings are vulnerable to further change which could be damaging to the distinctive historic character.

This review has considered an extended Area because there is now a better understanding of the integral character and development of Mentmore Towers, its designed landscape and estate village during the mid-late nineteenth century, and its wider setting. It has been carried out alongside two other documents which inform and amplify points made in this document:

- 1) Designed Landscape Appraisal report for the landscape at Mentmore by SR Historic Environment Ltd (2019)
- 2) Setting Study for Mentmore by Place Services and SR Historic Environment Ltd (2018).

No Conservation Area appraisal can be comprehensive. If buildings, spaces or other features are not mentioned in this document, it should not be assumed that they are of no significance. However, the accompanying Asset Sheets in Appendix 4 cover the majority of structures.

### Acknowledgements

The individuals below have been very helpful in preparing this document, and their input is greatly appreciated.

- Historic England for funding this review, the Designed Landscape Appraisal, and the Setting Study. Special thanks is given to Nicola Lauder.
- Dr Sarah Rutherford, SR Historic Environment Ltd, who led the production of this review, the Designed Landscape Appraisal, and the Setting Study.
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- Karen Thomas, local historian
- Richard Gem
- Aylesbury Vale District Council Heritage Team
- Any persons responding during the consultation period

## **2. Planning Policy**

### **2.1. Legislative Requirements**

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that the local planning authority must:

- determine which parts of their district are of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.
- designate those areas as Conservation Areas.
- review past designations and determine whether they are still appropriate.
- designate any further areas which are now considered to be of interest.

Under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019), Conservation Areas are defined as Heritage Assets. Paragraph 184 of the NPPF states that 'Heritage Asset range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

When considering the designation of Conservation Areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

The Aylesbury Vale District Council's Local Plan (January 2004) contains a number of policies relating to heritage and the historic built environment. This document may be found here:

<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/adopted-aylesbury-vale-district-local-plan-avdlp>

The Aylesbury Vale District Council's Emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan similarly contains policies relating to built heritage and may be found here:

<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/vale-aylesbury-local-plan-valp>

### **2.2. Purpose of Designation**

The purpose of Conservation Area designation is to acknowledge the special character of an area. Designation is not intended to prevent future development of an area, nor would it be desirable or constructive to do so as it would inhibit the natural growth of the settlement. However, new development should not obscure the special interest of a place. Conservation Area designation, along with other forms of protection, must inform planning decisions relating to the historic environment.

### **2.3. The Review Process**

The review and designation of Conservation Areas adopted by AVDC is laid out in the AVDC Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (March 2011):

<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/aylesbury-vale-conservation-spd>

The process is in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

It also has regard to general principles in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (and associated guidance): [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

#### 2.4. Purpose of Conservation Area Appraisal Documents

As part of the designation and review a Conservation Area appraisal is produced. This appraisal seeks to:

- Explain the reasons and justifications for the designation.
- Define the special architectural and historic interest of the area.
- Increase public awareness of the historic built environment.
- Inform decisions relating to design and development, and the management of the area.
- Guide the form and content of new development.
- Aid decision making in relation to planning appeals.

#### 2.5. Requirements for Planning Permission in Conservation Areas

In the UK householders have Permitted Development Rights which allow them to undertake certain works to their homes without the need for Planning Permission. Within Conservation Areas some permitted development rights are restricted. This means that applications for planning permission will be required for certain types of work not normally needing consent.

More information can be found on the planning portal and also on this leaflet:

[http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page\\_downloads/Conservation%20Areas%20Advisory%20Guide%202.1\\_1.pdf](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page_downloads/Conservation%20Areas%20Advisory%20Guide%202.1_1.pdf)

### **3. Summary**

This Appraisal explains the features and characteristics of the Mentmore estate and village that make them special, give them a sense of place and justify their status as a Conservation Area. Although the history of Mentmore is summarised in this document, it is not intended to be a comprehensive history of the development of the mansion, designed landscape or village. A detailed analysis of the estate and to some extent the village too is given in Designed Landscape Appraisal report for the landscape at Mentmore by SR Historic Environment Ltd (2018), with further information in other documents noted in the references section of this document.

The key characteristics of the area are summarised below.

#### **3.1. Landscape Setting**

Mentmore Towers, Park and Village are sited some 4 miles south-west of Leighton Buzzard, overlying a low ridge at the heart of the Vale of Aylesbury (4903621972) with extensive views over the surrounding countryside. This ridge is a key feature in defining the character of the Conservation Area. The road approaching from Leighton Buzzard to the north-east rises steeply before entering the village, with the quadrangle of buildings comprising Manor Stud on the left. This approach culminates in an axial view of the main entrance to Mentmore Towers, comprising an iron gateway supported by impressive stone pillars and an ornate lodge built of stone with a tiled roof. However, the main approach for the Rothschild family was formerly from Cheddington Station, up the unique Grand Avenue (probably designed by Paxton), entering the park at Cheddington Lodge.

The area is primarily rural and outside the Conservation Area, is sparsely settled with a mosaic of scattered farmsteads, villages and hamlets, many associated with former Rothschild estates, with the major towns of Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard located at some distance. The land is predominantly arable over the drier hill tops changing to a pastoral landscape of smaller fields on the lower slopes. Distinctive to this area is the extent of tree cover, particularly on the upper slopes of the Mentmore ridge.

#### **3.2. Settlement Type and Plan Form**

Mentmore village is a nuclear estate village with linear extensions along two of the three main approach roads that originated from medieval times. It is characterized by a strong sense of unity of building origin and purpose on the village green, based on a residential settlement for estate workers largely in Old English style of the 1870s. There is a wider variety of styles and types of buildings along the two approach roads.

The open space of The Green forms the pivot point around which the estate village clusters, together with various buildings serving the mansion including the imposing main entrance to the park. It is also the terminus of the two roads along which the rest of the village straggles.

#### **3.3. Historic Development**

Archaeological finds suggest that the area has been settled for a significant period of time. However, little is known about Mentmore pre the Domesday Survey of 1068.

Medieval remains and buildings are few except for the church which was heavily restored in the nineteenth century. The identified key landscape aspects lie most significantly in Roman and Anglo-Saxon finds and sites and features of the medieval and post-medieval period up to 1840, such as lost roads, buildings,

industrial and agricultural features, ancient trees, and features associated with the church and churchyard. Other than the church the most important building predating the Rothschild period is the seventeenth/eighteenth century Manor House at the west end of the Green, set back behind a high brick wall. By 1850 the landscape and village consisted of a few cottages on The Green and along the roads to Wing and Cheddington with farmsteads scattered in the surroundings. There was no major estate owner or other influence uniting the appearance of the area.

The Rothschild family had a huge impact upon the visual appearance of Mentmore. From the 1840s until the 1870s Baron Mayer Amschel de Rothschild embarked on an extensive programme of acquisition of all the numerous farms and other properties that formerly lay within the village and present park. He must have had a strong vision of how he wished to develop the estate as immediately he began to alter roads and plan his new showcase mansion and extensive grounds.

He employed the most famous architect of his day, Joseph Paxton in 1850 (then deeply immersed in building the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park for the Great Exhibition in 1851) to design the mansion with his son-in-law, architect George Stokes. Based on the Elizabethan Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire, itself a prodigy house, it cost at least £44,000 to build, without the furnishings and decoration, and housed one of the greatest connoisseur's collections of furniture and art. Paxton, originally a gardener and an accomplished garden designer, apparently designed the grounds too, which were then laid out until the Baron's death in 1874 by the foremost nurserymen of the day, Veitch of Chelsea at a cost of c.£7,500, a large sum.

The house was completed by c.1860, but a delay followed in building lodges until the late 1860s when George Devey, the architect who became the Rothschilds' preferred and most prolific architect in the Vale, built three Picturesque lodges at the park entrances and a riding house. While the pleasure grounds and park turned their back on the village, the most impressive public feature was the 2/3-mile-long Grand Avenue linking Cheddington station to the park entrance including trios of recently introduced and prestigious Wellingtonia conifers. The Baron incorporated the south end of the village green into his pleasure grounds, including the Manor House, and built a new road as the south boundary linking the Wing and Cheddington roads between the main park entrance and The Stag inn.

In 1874 Mayer died and his only child, Hannah (1851-90) inherited Mentmore. She continued to develop the estate according to the vision established by her father. Hannah, between 1874 and her marriage in 1878, concentrated on developing Mentmore village alongside other estate settlements and villages including Wingrave. At Mentmore a few buildings were retained and remodelled but most were built anew in the type of Old English vernacular style popularized by Devey.

By 1875 ornamental features included the Fountain Garden, Italian Flower Garden (attr. Nesfield), Big Wood, Herbaceous Garden, the Sub-Tropical Garden; a variety of greenhouses, dairy, Crafton and Cheddington Drives (but not the Wing Drive), three lodges, and the village houses north of the Wing road had gone. Her father's hunting stables and associated kennels and other structures were removed from the former south side of the Green in 1877, so that the main drive entering at the Green could be extended east and a new lodge, Stone Lodge, was built with a large stone gateway and ornate iron gates. The remainder of the cleared area was incorporated within the pleasure grounds.

The village was designed by the estate clerk of works John Aspell who competently borrowed Devey's style, as he also did for the contemporary rebuilding of Wingrave for Hannah and other estate buildings. Durley was the builder. The village was designed around the east side of The Green between The Stag to the south and the school to the north, leaving the north-west side open over the valley to the view of Wing, Wing Park and Ascott. The south-west side of The Green remained undeveloped against the main gateway and Stone Lodge, and the pleasure ground boundary. The upper storeys of the manor house remained part of the ensemble at the far south end although it became the Head Gardener's house and the garden the glasshouse yard.



By the time of Hannah's marriage in 1878 to Archibald Primrose, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Rosebery (1847-1929), the character and framework of the village and park were firmly established and the pace of change slowed considerably. After this it was mainly confined to the erection of a number of additional buildings, most notably the great Boyd domed conservatory in the newly completed kitchen garden prominent in the view from the nearby mainline London to Birmingham railway (c.1880s-92); and less obviously Laundry Cottages by MP Manning (c.1880) and the large gardeners' bothy by Aspell in Old English style (1890). After World War I little else was built, and the estate began to decline.

The outlying estate land was sold by the Rosebery estate in 1944 and in 1977 the remainder including the mansion, contents, park, pleasure grounds and much of the village. The park was partly developed into a golf course with a large club house and car park; the empty mansion became a religious retreat centre until the late 1990s when it was sold privately with the pleasure grounds to the present owner. The village has been sold into multiple ownership, but the Rosebery estate still owns part of the kitchen garden, including the derelict conservatory and Stokes's pretty Dairy (1859). A small group of houses has been built north of the Green, well screened from it, and another next to the Wing (now Honeysuckle) Lodge, with the model farmsteads converted to residential use. This has not significantly damaged the ensemble as envisaged by Rothschild and completed by his daughter Hannah, and her husband Lord Rosebery.

A detailed appraisal of Mentmore's historic development and archaeology is provided in Appendix 3.

### 3.4. Building Form

Mentmore is significant within the Vale of Aylesbury because it is one of a number of villages and settlements where the majority of the historic buildings surviving were built or renovated during the late 19th century and commissioned by members of a single family, in this case the Rothschilds.

Although the higher status buildings within the village are individually designed, they nevertheless share architectural features and detailing with other buildings of similar standing within the village. The use of traditional historicist village styles and common construction materials with a particular colour palette transcends buildings of different social status within the village. The result is a characteristic consistent quality to the built environment unique to Mentmore, which is nevertheless recognizable as part of the Rothschild estate oeuvre, imparting a consistency of form and style over a much wider area within the Vale. The only building which contrasts with this is the Vicarage (William Theed, 1851).

Buildings of lower status within the village are united by common plot sizes, materials, form, scale massing and to a large extent, orientation. Uniformity in form and design is particularly evident along The Green. There are few modern alterations to individual buildings and the few later buildings are clustered near the north of the Green and well screened from the most important vistas.

### 3.5. Settlement Identity

The identity of modern day Mentmore is inextricably linked with the development of the Mentmore estate and in particular the ownership of the Rothschild family. This is clearly visible in the form of buildings, and the ornamentation of many with plaques associated with the Rothschild and Rosebery families.

While Mentmore is not the largest of Rothschild estate villages, it is one of the best-preserved and least altered of this extensive group. It retains the picturesque variety of scale, materials and irregular layout established by 1880 and common to the other Rothschild villages, with the essential village green setting and contributions by buildings adjacent in the pleasure ground. It is part of an extraordinary concentration of estate buildings in such a small area of the country.

In this building programme aesthetic considerations were of equal importance, and in their styles many villages, settlements and individual buildings complemented the group of large designed landscapes that the Rothschilds were creating. The unity of building style across the Rothschild properties in the so-called 'Old English' manner is a major feature. As such the number of Rothschild estate buildings in the Vale, possibly in the hundreds, may rival those of well-known model and ornamented villages such as Bournville. As model villages they are the most distinctive C19 estate buildings in Bucks (Pevsner, 1994) but are seldom considered as a group for their contribution to the historic environment.

### 3.6. Trees and vegetation

Mentmore Conservation Area is dominated by the pleasure grounds and park that surround Mentmore Towers and the village. The role of formal and informal open spaces as well as trees and woodlands are therefore crucial to the character of the area. Trees and planting are used to define the landscape, emphasise individual buildings or sculpture, focus views and form screening. Trees along the edges of Mentmore Park and pleasure ground contribute to the character of the village, both the nucleus and along the Wing and Cheddington roads. They act as visual backdrops to buildings, truncate views, contain space and their soft organic forms provide a strong visual contrast with the hard lines of the buildings.

Unlike other Rothschild landscapes in the Vale where major exotic planting is confined within the park, two avenues along public roads form key features. Paxton's Grand Avenue (Tree Preservation Orders cover it along with the Chestnut avenue linking it with Mentmore village) is the dominant formal feature, enhancing the Rothschilds' favoured approach via the railway from Cheddington station, and probably the most significant historic landscape feature in the area. Less imposing is the north avenue between the roundel at the Wing Crossroads and Wing (Honeysuckle) Lodge at the entrance to the former Wing Drive.

The golf course planting has significantly damaged the characteristic pattern of parkland planting established by Baron Rothschild by 1875. The former field boundary trees that characterised the <sup>1</sup>North Park and were important in the approaches from Wing and Leighton Buzzard have gone.

### 3.7. Views

Mentmore Towers occupies a commanding position at the end of the Mentmore spur, dominating the surrounding landscape for miles, but largely invisible from the adjacent village. The building and in particular, its roofline, can be seen from up to 10 miles away making Mentmore, along with Halton and Waddesdon one of the key visual landmarks within Aylesbury Vale District. Mentmore was the first Rothschild property in the Vale, establishing the model to contrast the external dominance of the mansion in distant views with screening the nearby village in this manner. This was later adopted at nearby Ascott, and more distant Waddesdon and Halton.

Views within the grounds of Mentmore Towers are numerous and each has been carefully manipulated, mainly through the planting of trees, to emphasise individual buildings, formerly statuary or other ornamental features. Views from the mansion are spectacular to the west and south, across the Vale to the Chiltern scarp and almost unaltered since the C19.

Within the village the linear nature of development along the Wing and Cheddington roads tends to contain views and channel them along the roads which lead to the Green at the heart of the settlement. Curves in both roads throw the visual focus on individual buildings located at bends including the Dairy (Stokes, 1859), church (medieval), vicarage (Theed, 1851) and Church Cottage (Devey, c.1870). At the entrances to the Green the eye is drawn to two individual buildings (The Stag Inn and the Stone Lodge and gateway) which command attention because of their scale, form, position, and architectural flamboyance. The linear

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1. The term North Park is not an official designation, but terminology used within the appraisal document to help identify a specific area that is characterised as ornamental agricultural landscape and which was maintained within the ownership and control of the Rothschild/Rosebery management.



nature of the street on The Green channels views west along it towards the upper levels of the Manor House above its garden wall. The vista however, is narrow and irregular as the village buildings are arranged apparently haphazardly alongside the street, evoking a long (but spurious) history of development.

The open space of the Green is framed on the south side by the adjacent main street, and on two other sides (west and north) by lines of lime trees, probably early C20 in origin. It enjoys a fine view of distant Wing and Ascott Parks over the North Park to the north from the Leighton Buzzard Road. The north side of the ridge is prominent from the Wing Road as it leads out of Wing, and from Ascott Park, with the Towers poking up above the pleasure ground trees, and the line of limes along the Green forming a strong feature. The other key designed view towards the village is from the railway, across the now disused kitchen garden, formerly dominated by the flamboyant domed conservatory (derelict), with the irregular line of the roofs of the village houses on The Green behind the conservatory. Other than this, views into Mentmore village are restricted.

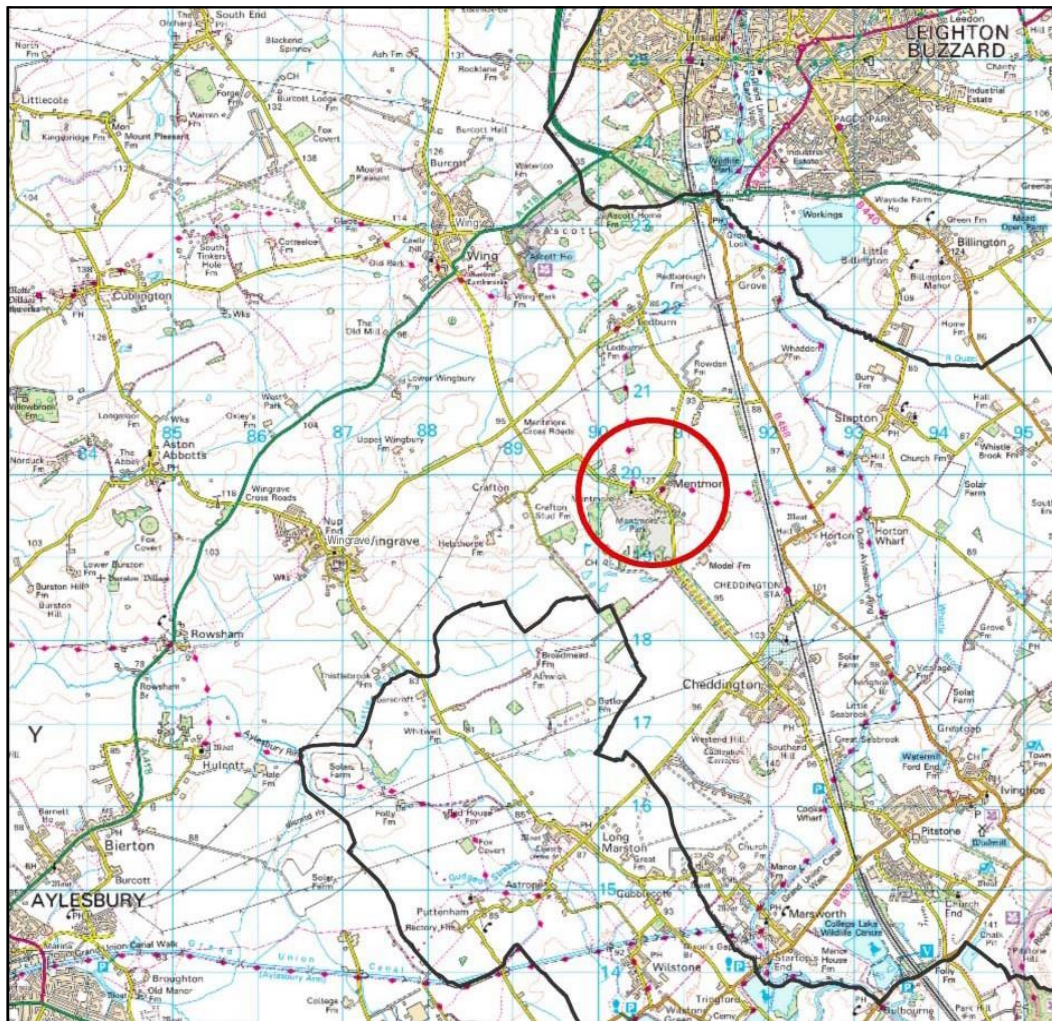
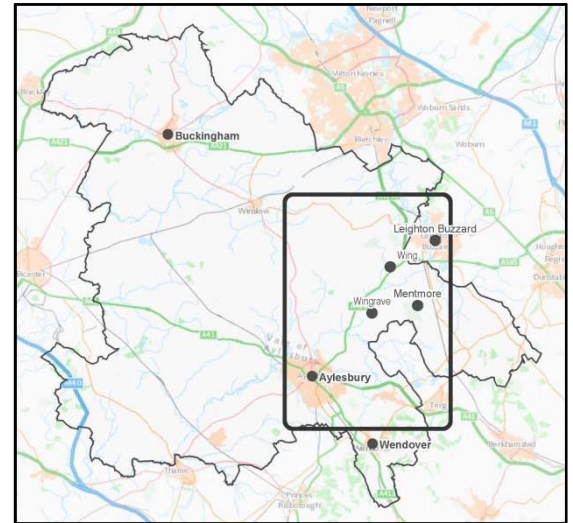
The wider setting in the rural Vale of Aylesbury is of the highest significance, particularly views relating to the Wing and Ascott scarp to the north and the 15 mile long Chiltern scarp to the south.

## 4. Location and Context

### 4.1 Location and Context

Mentmore village lies 11km (7 miles) north-east of Aylesbury and 6km (3.75miles) south-south-west of Leighton Buzzard. The Conservation Area is divided between two parishes, with the majority, to the east in Mentmore, and the c.140 ha. West Park, including the golf course and Crafton and Honeysuckle (formerly Wing) Lodges, and the north avenue in Wing.

The core of the Conservation Area, the mansion and village, overlies a small hill which rises abruptly from the surrounding countryside reaching a spot height of 127m just north of The Green. To the north the countryside is rolling, so that Mentmore's hill reads more as an accentuated form of the prevailing terrain.



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*Location of Mentmore between Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard, also showing the Buckinghamshire county boundary with Bedfordshire to the east and Hertfordshire to the south.*





*Mentmore skyline viewed from Wing*

In contrast, to the south the land is almost level until it reaches the scarp of the Chilterns, 5.5km (3.5 miles) distant, affording fine panoramas from the village and rendering Mentmore's elevated location and the complex roofscape of the mansion more spectacular in return. Mentmore's distinctive and varied skyline as seen from the south runs from the mansion on the west, past the site of the glasshouses and the chimneys of the village houses across to the prominent and exposed former stud farm in the east, all set within plentiful mature tree planting.

Mentmore's historic, architectural and aesthetic interest is divided between the village with its attractive estate cottages, and the massive mansion erected in the 1850s by Mayer Amschel Rothschild, then Lord of the Manor and a member of the famous, rich and historically significant Rothschild family. It was deliberately sited in a commanding position on the hilltop adjacent to the west of the village, along with ancillary lodges, walled garden and formidable conservatories and the 270 ha. designed landscape. The outlying fields and mid-C19 farmsteads and stud farms also formed a key element of the country house estate ensemble.

#### 4.2 Landscape Setting

Mentmore Park and village is sited in the heart of the rural Vale of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire amongst a mosaic of scattered villages and hamlets, with the major towns of Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard located at a considerable distance.

- In order to understand the subtleties of the Buckinghamshire landscape, detailed Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs) have been produced jointly by the County Council and Buckinghamshire's District

Councils. Each LCA describes and records what makes parts of the county distinctive or different, and what is special about them. The assessments can be found on the Buckinghamshire County Council website: <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/environment/landscape/landscape-character-assessments/buckinghamshire/>

Mentmore is associated with the following characters areas:

**Cheddington Vale:** <http://old.buckscc.gov.uk/media/1976464/LCA-87-Cheddington-Vale.pdf>

Key Characteristics

- Flat clay vale
- Large open arable fields
- Area split visually by the wooded drive of the Mentmore Road
- No discernible woodland cover
- Trimmed hedgerows

Distinctive Features

- Lack of settlement
- Local roads run in straight lines
- Cheddington crossroads
- Woodland scrub follows line of dismantled railway

Intrusive Elements

- Cheddington Station and west coast mainline railway
- Pylons
- Industrial use of airfield

**Ouzel Valley Catchment:** <http://old.buckscc.gov.uk/media/1976284/LCA-83-Ouzel-Valley-Catchment.pdf>

Key Characteristics

- Wide shallow valley
- Meandering stream in valley fed by ditches
- Large open arable fields
- Mosaic of pastoral fields running parallel with the canal corridor
- Well-trimmed hedges with occasional mature hedgerow trees
- Sparse distribution of settlements

Distinctive Features

- Ascott House parkland
- Grand Union Canal
- Orchards
- Circular clumps on low hills
- “Train Robbery” Bridge
- Three small settlements at Ledburn, Slapton and Horton

Intrusive Elements

- West coast mainline railway
- Pylons
- Traffic on A505

**Wingrave Mentmore Ridge:** <http://old.buckscc.gov.uk/media/1976106/LCA-414-Wingrave-Mentmore-Ridge.pdf>

#### Key Characteristics

- Shallow ridge with settlement
- Wide valley between the ridge and the clay plateau
- Aston Abbots-Wingrave watershed drains into Ouzel and Thame catchments
- Large arable fields in valley bottom
- Smaller paddocks and pastureland on steeper upper slopes
- Long distance views over the Vale and the Ouzel Valley
- Parliamentary and earlier fields

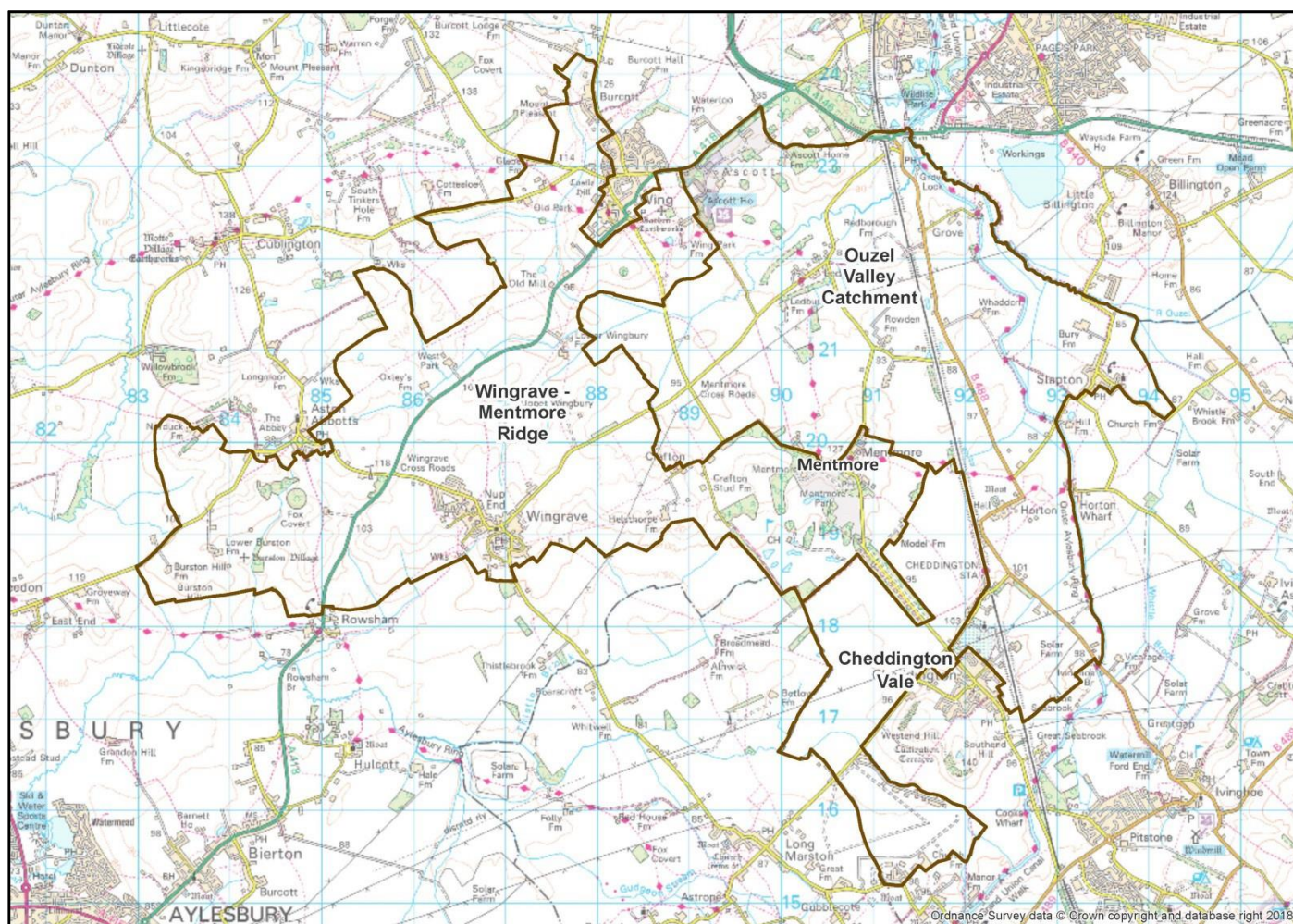
#### Distinctive Features

- House and parkland at Mentmore
- Historic earthworks
- Incised valley west of Wing-Burcott
- Distinctive circular woodland coverts
- Mature tree cover along highway network between Aston Abbots and Wingrave
- Ornamental highway trees with historic connections
- Rothschild influence
- Low levels of ecological interest

#### Intrusive Elements

- Traffic on A418
  - Pylons
  - Golf course at Mentmore
- Mentmore mansion and park is one of many Rothschild properties in the Vale of Aylesbury. There are significant inter-connected views visually linking the properties, most notably between Mentmore and Ascott Park, and also from the Chiltern scarp to Mentmore, and some of the other Rothschild properties. This inter-visibility was deliberate, forming a significant element in the interactions and internal rivalries of the Rothschild family. These make a major positive contribution to the setting of the heritage asset.
  - Many of the settlements in the Vale of Aylesbury, including Mentmore village, were remodelled by the Rothschilds as estate villages, and bear a strong visual relationship between each other. These make a major positive contribution to the setting of the heritage asset.
  - The wide landscapes of the Vale of Aylesbury and the Chiltern ridge to the south was key to the siting of the mansion and park on an elevated ridge, and remains so today with very little visual intrusion into the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century designed views both to and from the site. These make a major positive contribution to the setting of the heritage asset.
  - The survival of historic features that pre-date the Rothschild era is also generally good, including villages and hamlets, deserted medieval settlements, ridge and furrow, farmsteads, fields and parkland, linked by a network of historic roads, footpaths and bridleways. These varied assets make a major positive contribution to the setting of the heritage asset.
  - The landscapes are still overwhelmingly rural in nature, with the only major visual and aural intrusion being the London-Birmingham rail line. However, the rail line forms part of the setting of the site, being the means by which the Rothschilds accessed Mentmore from London. There are significant views from the railway line and from Cheddington Station.





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### Landscape Character Areas

In summary the largely rural setting of Mentmore park and village enhances its significance by placing it within its historic landscape context and preserving the links between it and the wider communities of both the Vale of Aylesbury and the Rothschild properties in the Vale.

#### 4.3 Use

The historic agricultural basis of the village economy was modified in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century by the vast Mentmore country house estate which united the area into an ensemble of the mansion and designed landscape, estate village and model farmsteads, and associated large areas of agricultural land.

The whole was managed to the highest standards for self-sufficiency and as a varied aesthetic ensemble in its own right. In the formerly unremarkable small village, a school was created from an existing Non-Conformist chapel and new houses were interpolated into the existing layout around The Green conserving the mainly residential character of the little settlement and uniting it in a distinctive Old English style.

The south-west-facing slope of the hill was utilised from the 1860s for a large productive walled garden with a huge conservatory on the brow above it.



*Old School (E) from NE*



*Walled Garden from N*

Thus, from the 1850s Mentmore as a country house estate provided many opportunities for associated employment in domestic service, agriculture, horticulture and other roles servicing the family and their property. However, in the C20, with the gradual decline of the family association (since 1878 the Rosebery family), culminating in the 1977 sale of most of the family property, this employment disappeared, leaving little in the way of opportunities in the village and its environs. Redundant formerly functional estate buildings have been converted to residential use rather than for employment opportunities.

#### 4.4 Plan Form

##### 4.4.1 Overview

Until the arrival of Baron Meyer Amschel Rothschild in the 1840s, Mentmore was a small agricultural settlement with no single major landowner with either a country seat or a united approach to land management or the village. From the 1840s the Baron carried out a singularly focussed campaign to unite a large area into a single, high quality country house estate by buying up many parcels of land. This he did in a concerted campaign over several decades and employing designers of the highest quality to implement his vision in an ornamental manner. He gradually imposed the designed landscape plan form that survives today which strongly reflects his vision for the estate, retaining the existing village, slightly modified in plan form, within the new layout.

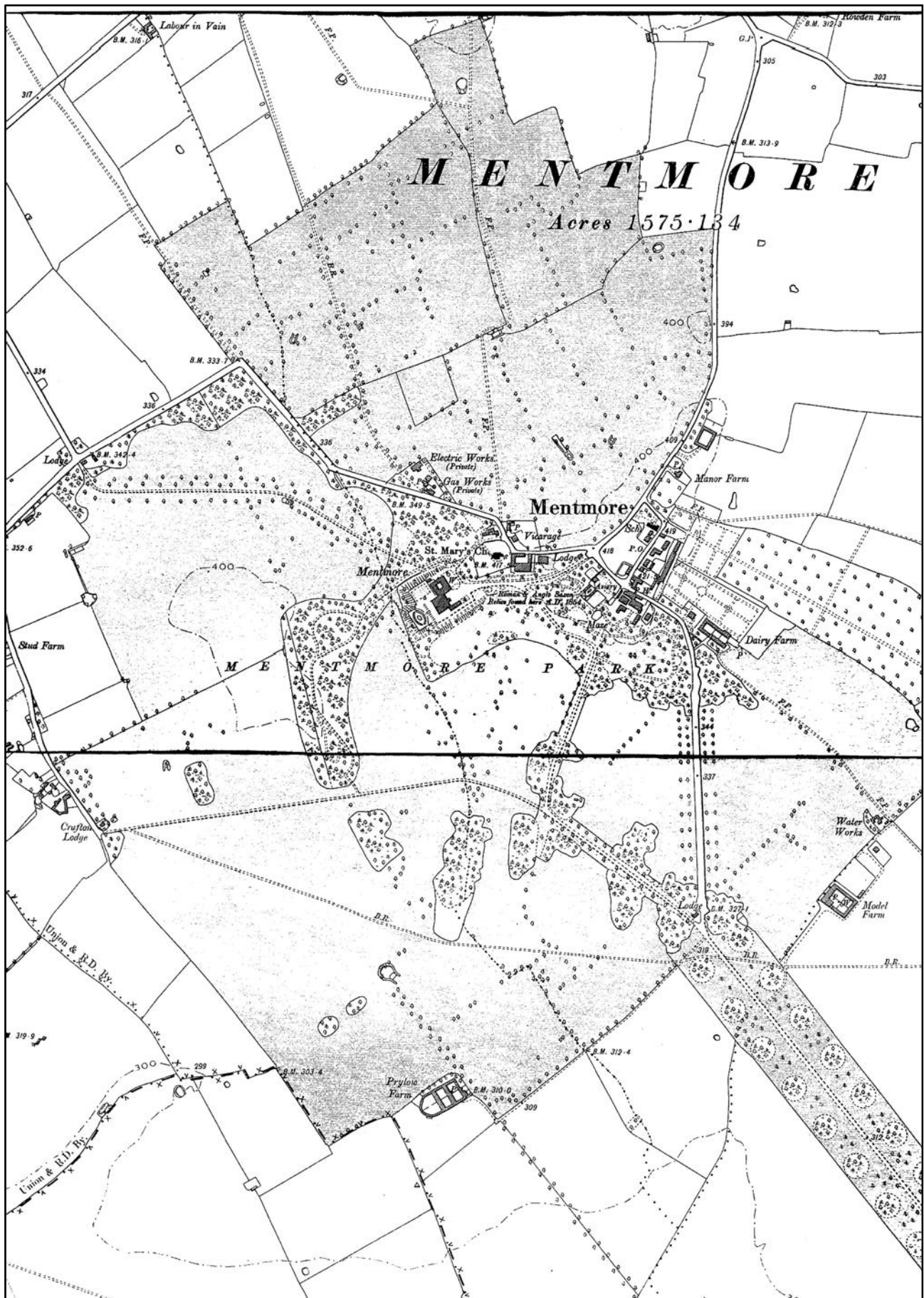
While the village is relatively modest in scale and simple in layout, the designed landscape plan form is on an heroic scale with a complex layout. Together they encompass the conventional elements of a typical magnate's estate of the period, but in this case this specific example, as always, is uniquely adapted to the requirements of the creator (in the case the Baron), and the specific 'genius of the place', i.e. local topography, the form of the existing village and other circumstances.



The Conservation Area as extended is composed of two seemingly disparate and mutually dependent halves. It comprises firstly the nuclear estate village, largely clustered around The Green, and also extending out along approach roads, and secondly the extensive mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century country house mansion and park. The interface is the north-east boundary of the park (i.e. the pleasure grounds and main entrance) against the village and green. Here the church and the manor house with its former garden and the glasshouse yard straddle the divide historically, physically and visually and were included in the original Conservation Area designation along with the mansion itself.

Areas previously excluded include other buildings along the Wing and Cheddington roads which link the park and village stylistically, physically and visually. Key productive estate areas are more closely related physically and visually to the village than the park, e.g. the former glasshouse yard by the manor, kitchen garden, conservatory, orchards and Dairy. A series of outlying former mid-C19 farmsteads and associated agricultural land are scattered around the edges of the park and village, along with peripheral small estate buildings including three park lodges and the buildings of the former gas, electricity and water plants.





Ordnance Survey 6" 1898 The grey shading indicates the extent of the designed landscape.



#### 4.4.2 The Village

By the 1840s, the village stood on its prominent hillside grouped around a green with some outliers such as Manor Farm on the road north-eastwards towards Ledburn. A straggle of house and farm buildings lined the road north-westwards towards Wing extending only as far as the church. The mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Manor House was the most significant secular structure, standing at the south corner of the Green between the two roads that at that time connected the village with Cheddington to the south, but even this was relatively modest in scale.

Layout alterations achieved by 1860 by the Baron included:

- Annexation of the south-west side of The Green by detaching it with a new village road.
- Realignment of the road to Wing, as well as the straightening of the Wing road beyond the church.
- Stopping up of the northern part of the western roads to Cheddington to incorporate it into the estate as the southern approach to the mansion.
- Redirection of the other Cheddington road across to the remaining public element to create the current kinked road alignment.

The Green was reduced in size when a strip of land on its south-west side on which stood the 1840s hunting kennels and stables was incorporated in to the pleasure grounds of the mansion. The Green was further reduced by the extension of the Non-Conformist chapel at its northern end on conversion as a village school and by the erection of two pairs of semi-detached cottages close to the school. This may have formed part of an earlier campaign. However, throughout these various alterations, the village has retained its essential plan.



*The Manor House  
viewed from the north*



*Nos. 10 & 12 The Green  
viewed from  
north-east*



*Nos. 14 & 16 The Green*

#### 4.4.3 The Mansion and Park

The siting and design of the mansion for maximum visual effect and the layout of the designed landscape around it reflects outstanding expertise in these aspects. The mansion occupies the most prominent position in the park, and is framed by the contemporary layout of the formal gardens, terraces, informal pleasure grounds and park that enclose it and buffer it from the wider world, including the former North Park beyond the Wing Road. This form of layout is a typical approach to such country houses of the period, and is unique in its application to Mentmore through being the product of the owner's wishes and designers' flair adapted to the local conditions and circumstances. In addition, a key characteristic feature is the use of the public roads and the Green for impressive approaches. This projected the designed landscape into the public realm and heralded the influence of the owners in the area, particularly the Grand Avenue believed to be designed by Joseph Paxton and planted by Veitch Nurseries in the 1860s.



*The Grand Avenue, Cheddington Road looking southwards from Cheddington Lodge and the gateway*

This planting pattern is unique and adopts an heroic scale comparable with the two great roadside avenues leading to Stowe (1760s). This plan form survives largely intact, but with considerable disruption within the C19 boundaries of the parkland of the south and west park areas from the 1990s golf course layout and club house.



## **5. Development of Mentmore Estate Village**

See also Appendix 2: Building Periods.

### **5.1 Mentmore Village prior to the Rothschilds**

By the late eighteenth century (Jefferys 1770) Mentmore village was a typical Buckinghamshire enclosure settlement. A small group of buildings clustered around The Green and manor house east of the church, set in an agricultural landscape crossed by various public paths and roads and punctuated by scattered farmsteads. The heart of the later park and site of the mansion was occupied by the farmland of Berrystead Farm (itself covering c.230 acres by 1843), with a public road from Cheddington to Wing across the west side (closed by Mayer). The mansion was not built on the site of the old Berrystead farmstead, but to the north-west on the crest of the ridge. Crafton hamlet was strung out along the west side of the future park and includes the remains of a considerably larger settlement which survives as earthworks. There was no single major landowner and owners varied from aristocratic estates such as those of Villiers and Cavendish to local farmers such as Warner who owned the crucial Berrystead Farm.

The rural peace was somewhat interrupted by the arrival of the London to Birmingham Railway opened in 1838 along the east side of the later Rothschild estate with a station at Cheddington, 1.5 miles south-east of Mentmore village. In 1839 the Cheddington to Aylesbury branch line was opened along the south edge of the later park against Cheddington. The coming of the railway gave easy access from London to a corridor of exciting hunting country (the Vale of Aylesbury featured wide ditches and formidable hedges) and was attractive to the Rothschild children who had enthusiastically taken up hunting at an early age. At this time many landed estates were being broken up. In Buckinghamshire the outlying portions of various aristocrats' estates were sold including Waddesdon by the Duke of Marlborough, Eythrope by the Comte d'Harcourt, Stowe by the Duke of Buckingham.

Thus, by the 1840s the small village was focussed around the Green, dominated by the modest C17/C18 Manor House at the south corner (superseded by the mansion to become the Head Gardener's house), with scattered cottages, the church and vicarage to the west. Outlying farmsteads were characteristic including Berrystead. It had it seems developed piecemeal with no great architectural merit or cohesion of the building layout. The greatest asset for a wealthy London-based aspiring landowner was the fast railway service. More challenging was the absence of a single estate of any substance in single ownership. The parish was split between many owners.

### **5.2 The Effect of the Rothschilds on the Village**

Baron Mayer Amschel (1818-74), the youngest of the four sons of the English branch of the banking family and Master of the Barons' Rothschild stag-hounds, was advised by James James, a leading Aylesbury solicitor, to concentrate his land acquisitions rather than scatter them over a wide area.

From 1842 Mayer began his concentration of purchase on Mentmore, and a rash of further acquisitions occurred from various owners in the 1840s and 1850s, with further purchases into the 1860s-70s. This included much of the village, the main exceptions being the parish church and vicarage (rebuilt by the Diocese in 1851). Roads and paths were moved, considerably changing the approaches to the village to their present lines and stopping up those that ran too close to the site of the new mansion, leaving it in splendid isolation in its park. Shortly after 1842 a village farmhouse was converted into a hunting box. New and substantial kennels for the stag hounds, and hunting stables were quickly built on the west side of the village green, but were demolished by Hannah in the late 1870s.

This, the first of seven magnificent Rothschild country estates and mansions in this area, set the pace for its successors in representing a supreme expression of wealth, political power, taste, and influence in the area. The Rothschilds had major barriers to overcome socially and politically, both as recent immigrants to England from Europe and for their Jewish religion. This they set out to overcome, including by assimilation as closely as possible to the way of life of the English landed family, drawing on financial resources comparable to only the wealthiest of aristocratic families.

As Pevsner points out, C19 landlords and benefactors were ceaselessly active in providing cottages, lodges, schools and village halls. In Buckinghamshire the Rothschilds were among the most philanthropic and provided the largest number of settlements and some of the most distinctive buildings. Architect George Devey set the pattern for half-timbered cottages in the so-called Old English style which was widespread in Rothschild village buildings.

At Mentmore, existing cottages were swept away and the piecemeal village character was replaced over several decades from the 1850s as a model estate village with a strong unity of character based on historicist styles. Mayer made only a small contribution to the existing village buildings, with pairs of cottages by Stokes and the revised plans for the school. The main consolidation was by his daughter Hannah in the 1870s after his death with the houses on The Green, with a few further buildings added in the later C19 for her husband Lord Rosebery, such as the Bothy.

In the 1850s the parish church was restored for Mayer and made more architecturally impressive, and the Vicarage was rebuilt by the Diocese in Tudor style as an impressive statement of the vicar's status. Stokes' few early cottages and the school for Mayer were scattered among Devey's Old English style cottages for Hannah. The main village buildings for the Rothschilds adopted more formal styles (e.g. the Stag Inn for Mayer and the Stone Lodge for Lord and Lady Rosebery in Jacobean style). Estate buildings were scattered among them on the roadside in various styles (Gas and Electricity Houses, Laundry Cottages, the stable yard and Church Cottage, the Bothy and Dairy, Dairy Farm). The village was heralded on public approaches by two picturesque lodges by Devey: Cheddington and Wing Lodges (1868-70). The hunting stables and kennels would have been prominent at the south side of The Green until removed by Hannah when the village was completed, although the kennelman's cottage apparently survived to become Aviary Cottage.

### 5.3 Mentmore Village in the Rothschild and Wider Context

The rebuilding of Mentmore as an estate village, begun by Mayer in the 1850s and completed by Hannah in the 1870s, was part of an important movement by the Rothschild estate owners in the 1860s-1900s to improve tenants' living conditions in existing villages in the Vale of Aylesbury which peaked in the 1870s. This established them as benevolent landlords driven by philanthropic motives. This resulted in an extraordinary concentration of estate buildings in such a small area of the country. Aesthetic considerations were of equal importance to practicalities, and in their styles many villages, settlements and individual buildings complemented the group of large designed landscapes that the Rothschilds were creating.

The unity of building style across the Rothschild properties in the so-called 'Old English' manner is a major feature including its use in Mentmore in the 1870s and later. As such the number of Rothschild estate buildings in the Vale, possibly in the hundreds, may rival those of well-known model and ornamented villages such as Bournville. As model villages they are the most distinctive C19 estate buildings in Buckinghamshire, but are seldom considered as a group for their contribution to the historic environment.

The Rothschilds were not the only improving landlords in the area though. Pevsner (1994) lists a number of other estates on which minor schemes were carried out, but none adopted the scale of Wingrave, Mentmore or Waddesdon. More closely comparable, on the adjacent Ashridge estate the Earl of Bridgewater had rebuilt many farms in the early C19 in Pitstone in the Vale. The village of Little Gaddesden

(just into Hertfordshire) was developed along The Green into another estate village in Old English style to fit with existing houses. Like Mentmore and Waddesdon, The Green marked the edge of the park (Ashridge) and formed the setting of one of the main entrances. Little Gaddesden also survives intact as an ensemble.

#### 5.4. The Old English Style

The vernacular Old English style, pioneered by Devey in the 1850s at Penshurst in Kent, was not native to the Vale of Aylesbury, but presented a Picturesque vision that fitted easily into the locality. The adoption of this historicist by the Rothschilds helped to assimilate them with the local social scene, and convey the illusion to their peers and others that they and their estates were long established in the area.

The Old English style came from a tradition of C16-C18 Wealden and Surrey buildings and evoked a character redolent of benevolent association with the area that the Rothschilds wished to establish. This mixed tile hanging, timber framing, brick and sandstone elevations in various permutations and in broken outlines of deep roofs, bays, hipped gables, Tudor-style chimneys, gabled porches and much ornamental woodwork. The historic models were depicted, with some romanticism, in the later C19 by artists such as Helen Allingham, whose images were widely known and became associated with typical architecture of the south-east of England. Thus, the Wealden style, as adopted by improving owners, gained and retains an affectionate place in popular imagination. The appearance of the estate buildings was important beyond just the style of architecture. They were maintained in good condition and presented as model settlements for the estate workers, enhancing the impression of the estate owners' reputation as caring landlords.

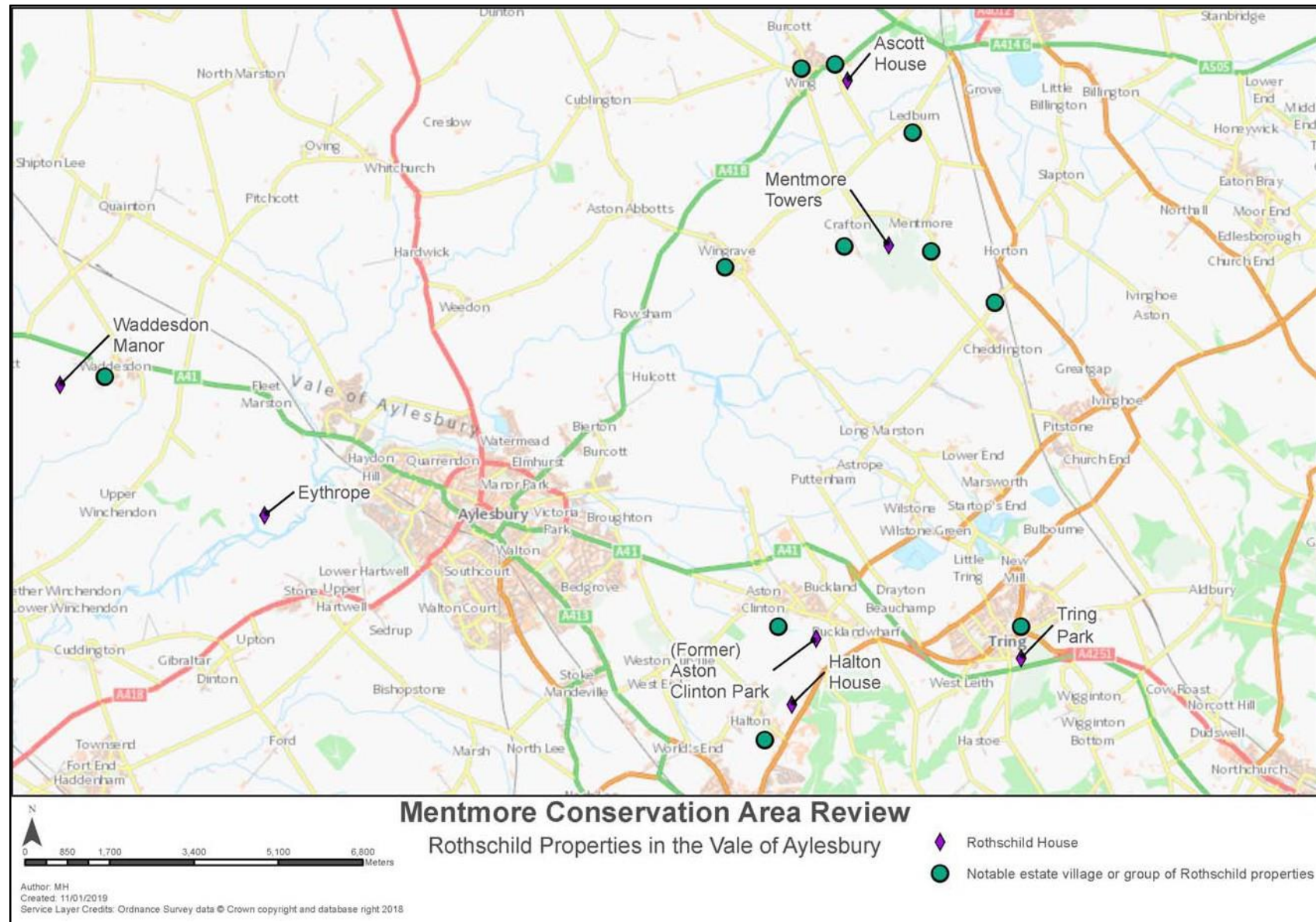
The 'Old English' style was relatively expensive with the exteriors considerably ornamented. It was almost universally adopted on Rothschild estates for cottages, including at Mentmore, via several designers. This indicates both a united taste of the family in this respect (although various styles were adopted for their country houses) and their extraordinary level of wealth. This was an innovative use of the 'Old English' style in estate villages, where other estate villages of the time were not generally so ornamental. The style had by the 1870s generally been used for lodges and other park buildings, e.g. by Devey at Cliveden, since the 1850s.



## 5.5 Rothschild Estate Villages and Hamlets Relevant to Mentmore

The following list indicates settlements built or rebuilt by the Rothschilds as estate owners, rather than individual structures or scattered houses.

Place	Dates of construction	Designer/ notes
Mentmore	Late 1850s	Stokes for Mayer Rothschild. Two pairs of cottages on The Green, not Old English style.
Hulcott	1860s	For Lionel de Rothschild. Devey paid 1867 and 1875. New rectory and school.
Aston Clinton	1860s-80s	For Anthony and daughter. Next to Aston Clinton park. Cottages renovated, public buildings inc. school and hall (Huckvale).
Halton	c.1870s, by 1880	For Lionel. Next to Halton House park.
Waddesdon	1874-90s?	For Ferdinand by WF Taylor. Next to Waddesdon Manor Park.
Wingrave	c.1875-80 Bought c.1875	Hannah's greatest memorial: 35 cottages, school, reading room
Ascott Green	1876	Devey for Leopold. A few large cottages scattered next to Ascott House Park.
Tring	From 1872	Huckvale for Lionel; large number, near Tring Park.
Hamlets around Tring	From 1872	Cottages at Hastoe, Buckland Common, Wigginton for Lionel
Crafton	1870s	Some houses built or rebuilt for Mayer. Not Old English style
Cheddington	c. 1870	Devey for Mayer; several cottages, school master's house and Rosebery Arms
Mentmore	1876-79	Aspell for Hannah, groups of cottages on The Green
Wing	1890s-1900s	Cottages, village hall, cottage hospital for Leopold.



*Distribution of principal Rothschild country houses and key estate settlements in the Vale of Aylesbury*

## 5.6 Rothschild Estate Villages in Relation to Mentmore

From the 1840s to 1873 the Rothschild family acquired over 14,000 acres of land in the area, and collectively became the second largest landowners in Buckinghamshire.<sup>1</sup> They owned few properties in towns, with the exception of Tring. In Waddesdon and Mentmore they acquired almost all the properties in each village, but in other places such as Wing and Aston Clinton they had a lower proportion.

The Rothschild estate villages were of typical size with the number of cottages and lodges in each location typically between 15-40<sup>2</sup>. Mentmore typifies this, at the smaller end of the range. The position of the new buildings in each village often followed the existing layout of roads without major new areas on previously undeveloped land. Again, Mentmore is fairly typical, although various roads were moved on the approaches to The Green. The main effect on The Green was that the south part of the village green was cut off and taken into the pleasure ground in the 1850s (with a small addition to the north), creating a new focal village junction marked by the new Stag Inn (c.1840s). New and extensive model farmsteads formed part of the wider estate infrastructure.

The Rothschild estate buildings form an extensive group of the Old English architectural style adopted for village buildings. It was copied by many later architects, and formed a prelude to the Arts and Crafts Movement. The Mentmore buildings represent a major group of estate buildings in this style that survive largely intact, although with alterations to some individual buildings.

The interiors adopted a standard, if relatively spacious layout with well-built good-sized accommodation. Internally the plans for those at Mentmore reflect those for model cottages published by reformers such as the Central Cottage Improvement Society (CCIS). Often the latest services and utilities were provided appropriate to the contemporary social standing of the residents.

The building style introduced by Devey in the Vale in the 1860s continued with few variations over the next 40 years, giving a picturesque visual uniformity to a group of villages in the area that survives largely intact. This was further extended in a more piecemeal way in the Vale into other Rothschild-funded buildings in towns and villages with 'improving' initiatives such as the Literary Institute in Princes Risborough and Aston Clinton village hall, often larger scale and not so successful in design terms.

## 5.7 Contribution of Mentmore village to the Ornamental Landscape

The estate village lies at the gates to the landowner's demesne evoking a typical medieval and subservient position. It is integral to the designed landscape ensemble, with contributions successively for Mayer (late 1850s) and Hannah (1870s) Rothschild. The focus is the village green and adjacent buildings. The buildings are grouped picturesquely around one half of The Green as a backdrop for the open area at the gateway to the main entrance to the park and mansion (at the Stone Lodge). Together the open green, the buildings and their associated gardens cover c.2.5 ha.

Houses of varying sizes and models and in irregular positions are set back from the gateway on the further east half of The Green, glimpsed in the approaches from Cheddington and Wing/ Aylesbury. They are not clustered around the gateway in the more obvious manner of some other estate villages such as

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<sup>1</sup> Soughton (2015), 263.

<sup>2</sup> Soughton (2015), 263.

Waddesdon. By contrast at a contemporary country estate, Bearwood, Berkshire, the estate village of Sindlesham was built right at the gates, linked by an imposing *Wellingtonia* avenue through the park.<sup>3</sup>

The old Manor House is the only historic link between the public green and the private park and pleasure grounds, marking the former southerly extent of the village and green. This link is reiterated visually, with the upper floor and roofscape visible from the main village street and Stag Inn. The red brick walls of the old garden, re-used for the former C19 glasshouse yard, indicating the presence of a more socially important part of the village. No other structures survive from before 1850 apart from the church and this too was heavily restored in the 1850s. The vicarage was rebuilt opposite the church in a different style and materials that does not altogether fit with the rest of the village in 1851 by Benjamin Ferrey for the Church authorities. The adjacent cottage was the coach house to the vicarage which has subsequently been converted to a domestic dwelling. They form a group framing the entrance to the village from Wing.

The open green, with spectacular views over the valley towards Ascott and Wing, is most important in framing the main entrance to the park and mansion. The rearrangement of the south-west end of The Green in the 1850s included incorporating the area into the grounds, and leaving the new road boundary and that to the north-west clear of houses. This is a deliberate design feature. It is unusual as it might be expected that a green would be enclosed by village buildings, but in this case the open aspect is preserved, with the Stone Lodge and gateway as the dominant feature, set back from the public highway and green. Instead the houses are ranged along the more distant south-east and north-east sides, keeping dwellings and occupants well away from the imposing gateway. They are in various vernacular styles, including a few early and simpler buildings by Stokes of the late 1850s, cottage and school, supplemented in 1877-78 with cottages reputedly by Clerk of Works John Aspell in a good imitation of Devey's estate village style. He is also thought to have built 35 half-timbered estate cottages in Wingrave at the same time for Hannah.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> At exactly the same time, in the 1860s-70s, John Walter III built large portions of the estate village of Sindlesham, including a public house The Walter Arms, a school, and houses arranged around a green, in Jacobean style. Sindlesham Conservation Area demonstrates a similar pleasing relationship to Mentmore between a country house and its associated settlement. Walter built further houses, schools, farms, etc throughout his extensive estate.

<sup>4</sup> Soughton (2015), 266-67, suggests that Aspell was too young to have built the cottages at Mentmore and Wingrave, and instead suggests M. Manning as a possible candidate, who built Laundry Cottages in 1881.



## **6. Key Views & Vistas**

The mansion is one of the key visual landmarks in Aylesbury Vale, along with the 1870s-80s Rothschild Waddesdon Manor. The mansion occupies a commanding position at the west end of the Mentmore ridge. The irregular roof line, punctuated by prominent corner towers, and the pale stone elevations dominate the surrounding rural landscape from the south-east to the south-west for many miles around. It is visible from many elevated points in the Vale of Aylesbury and from the Chiltern scarp. However, externally beyond the park the mansion is only ever distantly seen. It was never intended to be seen more closely from the village pleasure ground boundaries or other nearby public vantage points.

Public rights of way that formerly passed close to the site of the mansion were moved well away, as far as possible. It is notable that the mansion, its immediate approaches and pleasure grounds are invisible from the village, screened from the villagers and passers-by by pleasure ground trees and shrubs, ensuring privacy for the family and their guests, including the highest in the land. This included views from the adjacent churchyard, which was screened by an earth bank and evergreen planting. The main key external view of the mansion is from the Horse Chestnut Avenue lining the Cheddington Road across the south park and this is a distant glimpse.

Views within the grounds are numerous and carefully manipulated, mainly through the planting of trees, to emphasise individual buildings, formerly an extensive sculpture collection, and other features (some now lost). In particular important views are obtained of the mansion from the north end of the Cheddington Drive and from the gardens and pleasure grounds. Conversely the mansion and designed landscape enjoy spectacular external views in a panorama clockwise from the south-east to the west over the Vale, stretching and drawing the eye to the Chiltern scarp. The north and east prospect from the mansion and grounds is screened by trees. The intricate outline of the towers is framed in views from the south along the Grand Avenue from Cheddington and in the northern approach from Wing, although these are now somewhat obscured by the growth of nearby trees.

Views relating to the village are focussed on the compact green and its linear public approaches. The Wing approach is framed by the straggle of village buildings. It is dominated and framed by the important medieval church on a rise and set back in the churchyard, and Ferrey's 1851 former Vicarage opposite. At this point the view is terminated by the 1860s-70s former stable yard and Church Cottage before the road turns up the slope past The Cottage to reach The Green. Other less prominent estate buildings are visible including the former gas and electricity works and Manning's Laundry Cottages (1880).

Estate buildings form the key features in the approach from Cheddington as it nears The Green, including the now converted Dairy/Home Farm, Stokes's 1859 picturesque Dairy and Aspell's Bothy (1893) all of which adopt a similar character.

Local views around The Green focus on the linear ensemble of estate buildings along the east side, and also on the group at the south corner of the Stag Inn, village hall, the upper levels of the old Manor House and the brick wall enclosing the former garden/glasshouse yard, with Aviary Cottage visible nearby. The Stone Lodge and gateway are the focus of the most impressive views on The Green, heralding the invisible mansion and grounds, framed by impressive cedars and other mature trees. Views along the roads around The Green to the west and south-west are framed by lines of early C20 limes. The most spectacular views are from the west side of The Green, north-west towards Wing village, the former Wing Park and abandoned gardens of the lost C17 Ascott House, and the 1870s Rothschild Ascott House estate on the scarp opposite marked prominently with a sweep of mature ornamental trees. Less significant but still more impressive views extend south-east from the rear of the village green houses and associated gardens on the south-east side looking towards the Chilterns and Dunstable Downs. Broad views in this direction are highly important from the derelict conservatory on a terrace on the scarp below the village, beyond the kitchen garden and level Vale countryside.

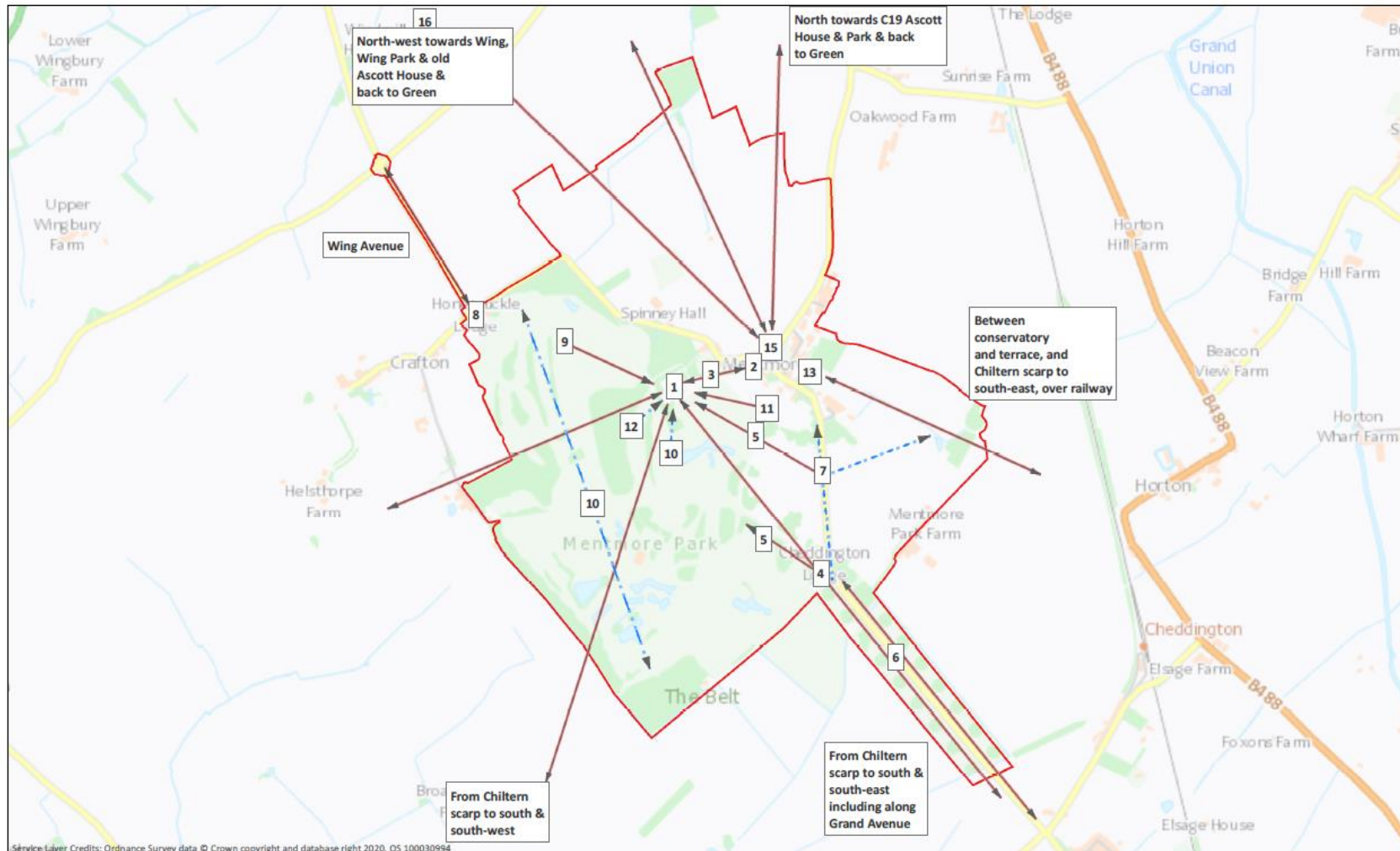
Views into the village are restricted, but from the approaches from Wing and from Ascott estate the limes are prominent vertical features, and the mansion towers are visible above the woodland that leads west beyond the limes.

There are many views into Mentmore from the wider landscape and there is high intervisibility between the numerous Rothschild properties within the Vale of Aylesbury. It is probable given the extent of the Rothschild land-holdings in the Vale that there are many more such views from one Rothschild estate to another, even when the houses themselves are not intervisible. There are also wide views across the Vale of Aylesbury towards Mentmore from along the length of the Chiltern escarpment.



*Panorama of Mentmore Towers and surrounding landscape*

The following plans set out views representative of the many that exist.

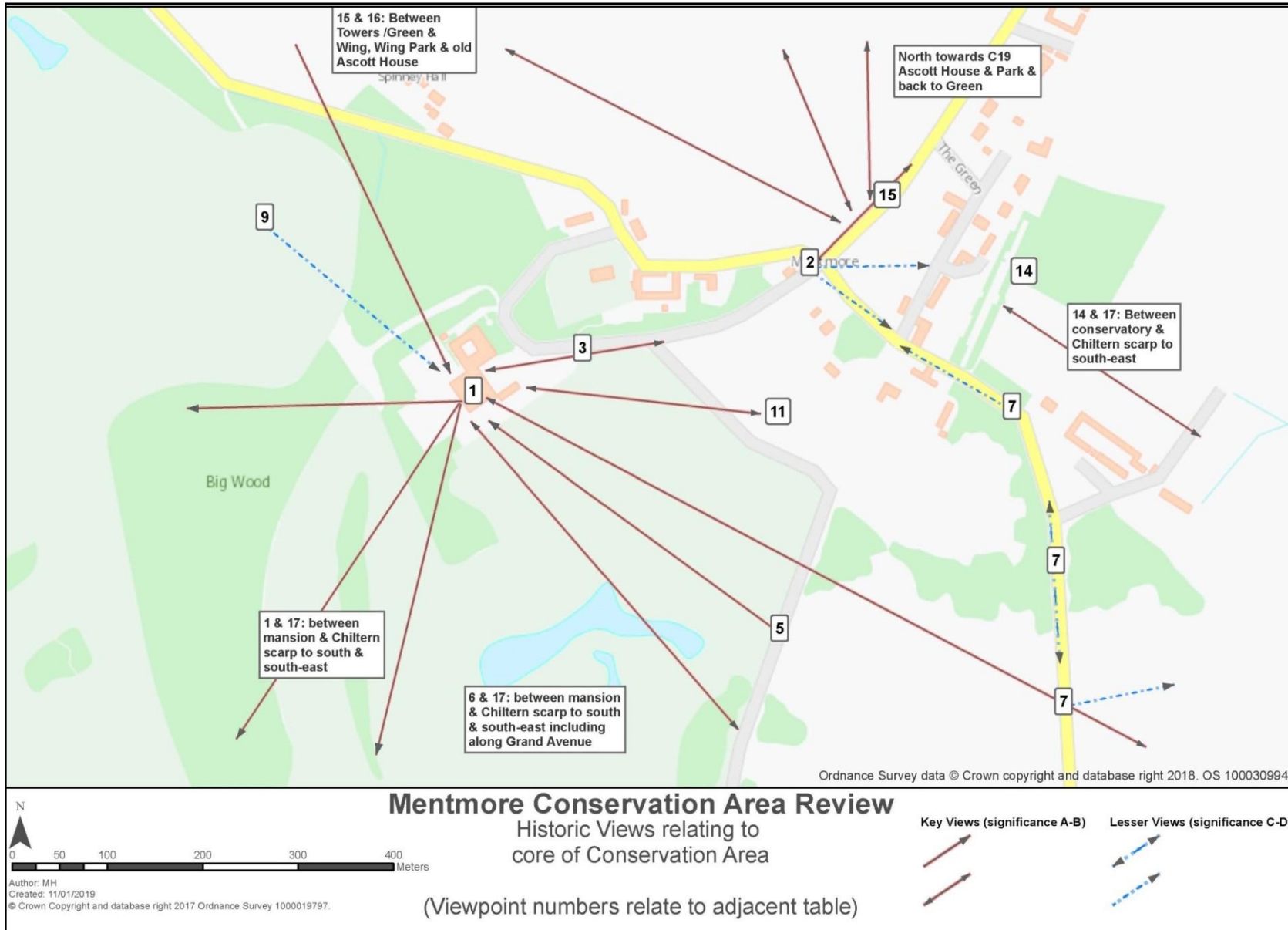


### Viewpoint references

- 1) Mansion
- 2) Stone Lodge gateway
- 3) Main Drive
- 4) Cheddington gateway
- 5) Cheddington Drive
- 6) Cheddington (Grand) Avenue
- 7) Cheddington/ Mentmore road to village
- 8) Wing gateway
- 9) Wing Drive
- 10) Crafton Drive
- 11) East Pleasure Ground
- 12) Big Wood
- 13) Conservatory & terrace
- 14) Conservatory & terrace
- 15) Village Green
- 16) Wing Park & Wing Park Road
- 17) Chiltern Scarp



*Historic Views relating to Mentmore Park & Wider Conservation Area*

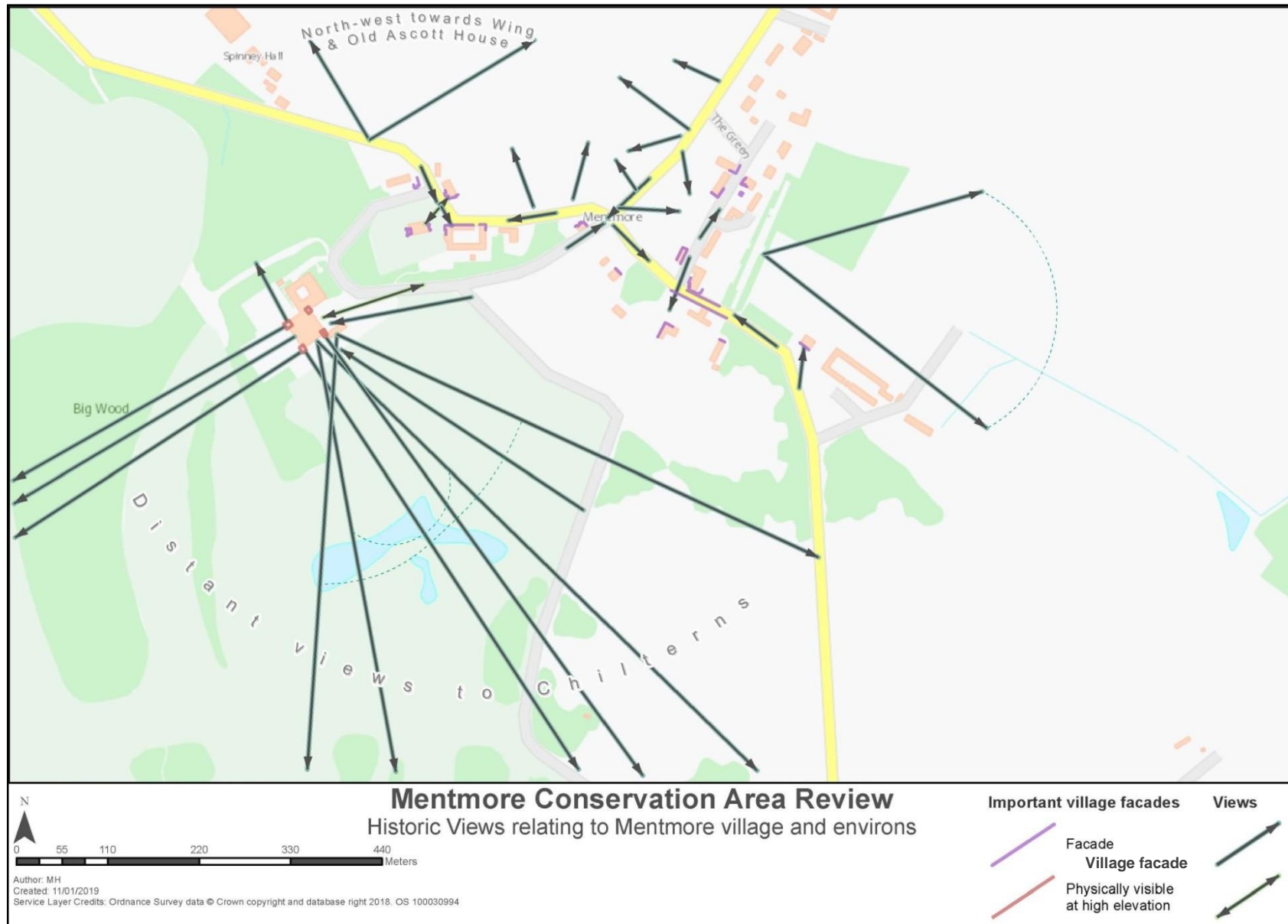


### Viewpoint references

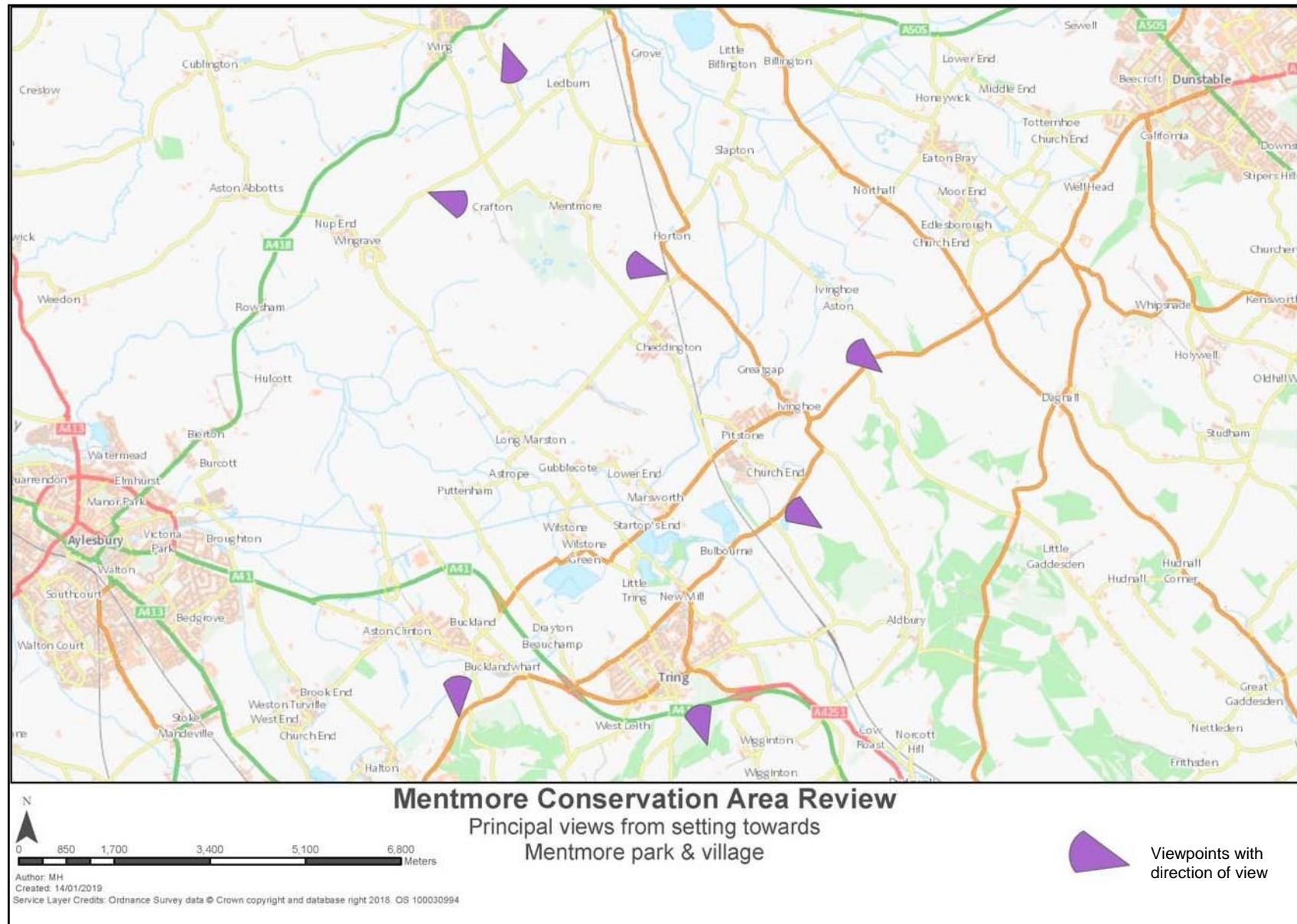
- 1) Mansion
- 2) Stone Lodge gateway
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- 12) Big Wood
- 13) Conservatory & terrace
- 14) Conservatory & terrace
- 15) Village Green
- 16) Wing Park & Wing Park Road
- 17) Chiltern Scarp

*Historic Views, relating to the core of Conservation Area*





Historic views relating to Mentmore village and environs



*Views from setting*

## **7. Open Spaces and Trees**

### **7.1 Ornamental Trees**

In distant views, particularly from the south-west, the Mansion stands out on its open terraces and in contrast the village is shrouded in mature tree planting. The ornamental trees planted in the pleasure grounds of the mansion are largely responsible for this effect. They provide a screen to views west from The Green and are an essential element of the Conservation Area. The mature tree setting of the village is assisted by the lines of limes planted on the open west and south-west sides of The Green, providing a welcome sense of enclosure on this exposed hilltop location. Trees on the west side of The Green make their first appearance by 1879 (OS). The trees enhance views into The Green, and frame the fine views northwards from The Green over the countryside towards Wing and Ascott.

Other important trees include a fine group of pines at or near the north end of The Green and in the front garden of No. 29. A specimen ash towards the centre of the kitchen garden apparently predates the Rothschild work, probably originating as a boundary tree, and was incorporated as a focal point on the main axis below the conservatories.

The trees in the park and pleasure ground filled many different roles. They screened the park from the outside world, and framed longer views and created interest and as ornamental specimens they provided variety and interest. Those planted by notable guests added an historic element and added lustre to the highly organised and maintained parkland landscape. The scale of the taller specimens acted as an attractive frame and a backdrop for views of the mansion for which their foliage provided a welcome contrast and a softening of the starker elements of the exposed position chosen for the mansion. Many of these trees survive, although the planting of a commercial conifer plantation occurred in Big Wood in the later C20, damaging the intended ornamental character.

A woodland, North Wood was planted as a screen between the north side of the mansion and the Wing Road by 1899 (OS), but the interior has been partly cleared since 2000.

A strong visual contribution is made by the ornamental trees along public roads. Examples include Paxton's unique Grand Avenue (2/3 mile long) on the route from Cheddington Station leading to the Cheddington Lodge and Drive to the mansion. Here it diverts off the line of the Grand Avenue along the road lined by the double Horse Chestnut Avenue leading to the village and ultimately to the row of limes around two sides of the Green. North of the park a less flamboyant avenue of limes and horse chestnuts lines hedgerows along the Wing Road approach from the Wing crossroads. The limes all seem to be of an age (later 19<sup>th</sup> century/early 20<sup>th</sup> century) and make a particular contribution, especially around the Green, but are not as important as the mid-C19 avenue trees from the south of the village.

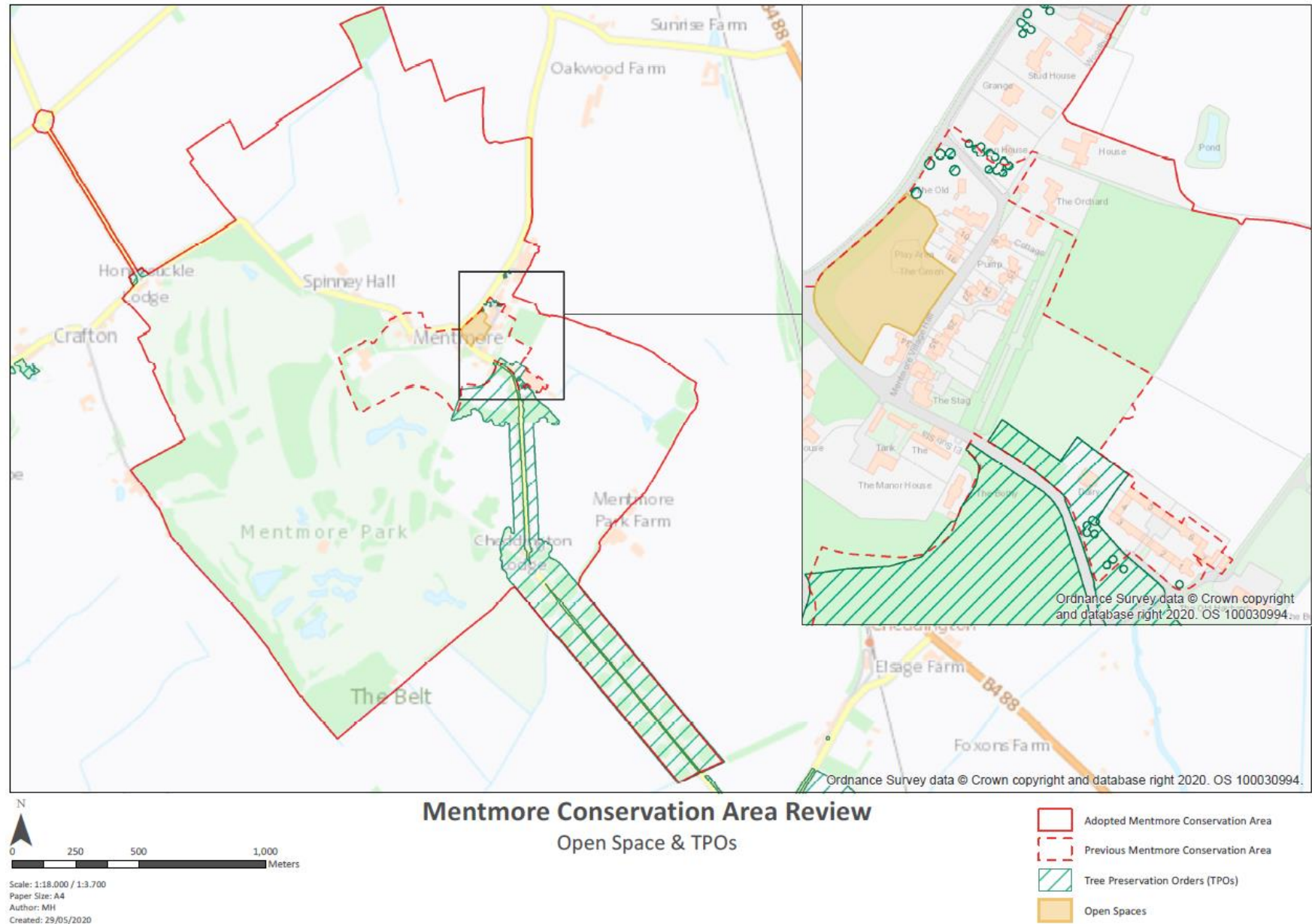
The application of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in Mentmore reflects localised development pressures rather than aesthetic importance and, as such they are piecemeal rather than systematically applied to all trees that merit the designation. The earliest (1955) covers avenue trees lining the Cheddington Road. Later TPOs cover trees north of the former School and the area opposite it across the village road, both areas being considered as 'important to the village scene' in the Conservation Area designation proposal in 1978. Further TPOs have followed as modern houses have been built north of the former School and covering the varied trees on the Cheddington Road frontage of the former Dairy/Home Farm. More distantly a TPO covers a small group of trees on the north-east corner of the junction in front of Wing/Honeysuckle Lodge, but not a similar group opposite to the west.

## **7.2 Orchards**

The orchards laid out for the Estate have fared badly in the intervening years. The vast extent of orchards to the north-east of the kitchen garden have disappeared without trace under the plough. The surviving fragment of orchard, which lies close to the village, is currently in an overgrown and derelict state and was noted as such in the Mentmore Conservation Area Consultation Document (1979). This fragment was replanted in the 1940s and is designated an area of Priority Habitat by Natural England for its mixed orchard habitat.

The contributions of trees and open space within the designed landscape of the Mansion are covered below in the descriptions of its various character areas and as set out in the accompanying Designed Landscape Appraisal.



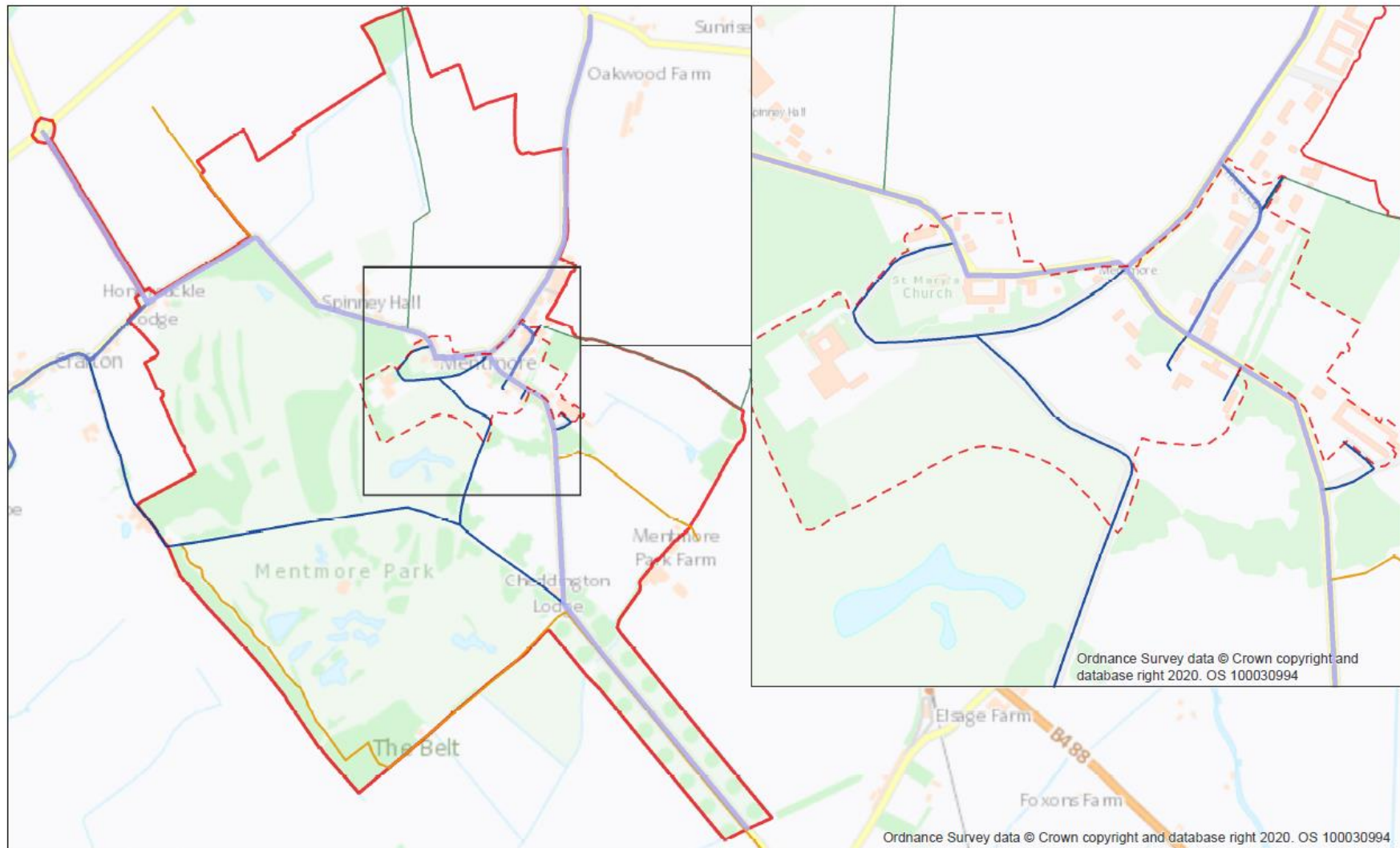


Maps 17a & 17b: Open Space and Tree Preservation Orders

## **8. Permeability & Road Layout**

Mentmore's road layout is essentially a loop surrounding The Green and serving houses on its perimeter and the few built or extended within it, along with three connecting roads to the north-east (to Ledburn and Leighton Buzzard), north-west (to Crafton and Wing) and to the south (to Cheddington, Marsworth and Tring).

A spur from the Wing road leads to Crafton and diverges south along part of the west park boundary to Crafton Lodge, at which point a public footpath continues south, enclosing the park and turning along the south boundary back to the Cheddington road. Thus, the park is largely enclosed by public routes, whether roads or footpaths. Permeability is largely restricted to these public routes with footpaths leading between the village and open country to the south, and north over the former north park. A drive constructed c.1990 leads off the Cheddington road through the south park to the golf club house. There is currently no public access to Mentmore grounds or the golf course.



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Meters  
Scale: 1:18000 / 1:3700  
Paper Size: A4  
Author: MH  
Created: 29/05/2020

### Mentmore Conservation Area Review Roads & Rights of Ways

- Adopted Mentmore Conservation Area
- Previous Mentmore Conservation Area
- Primary Routes
- Secondary Routes
- Residential & Access Routes
- Outer Aylesbury Ring
- Footpaths & Bridleways

*Roads, Rights of Way, etc. for the village core and wider Mentmore Conservation Area*

## **9. Key Buildings**

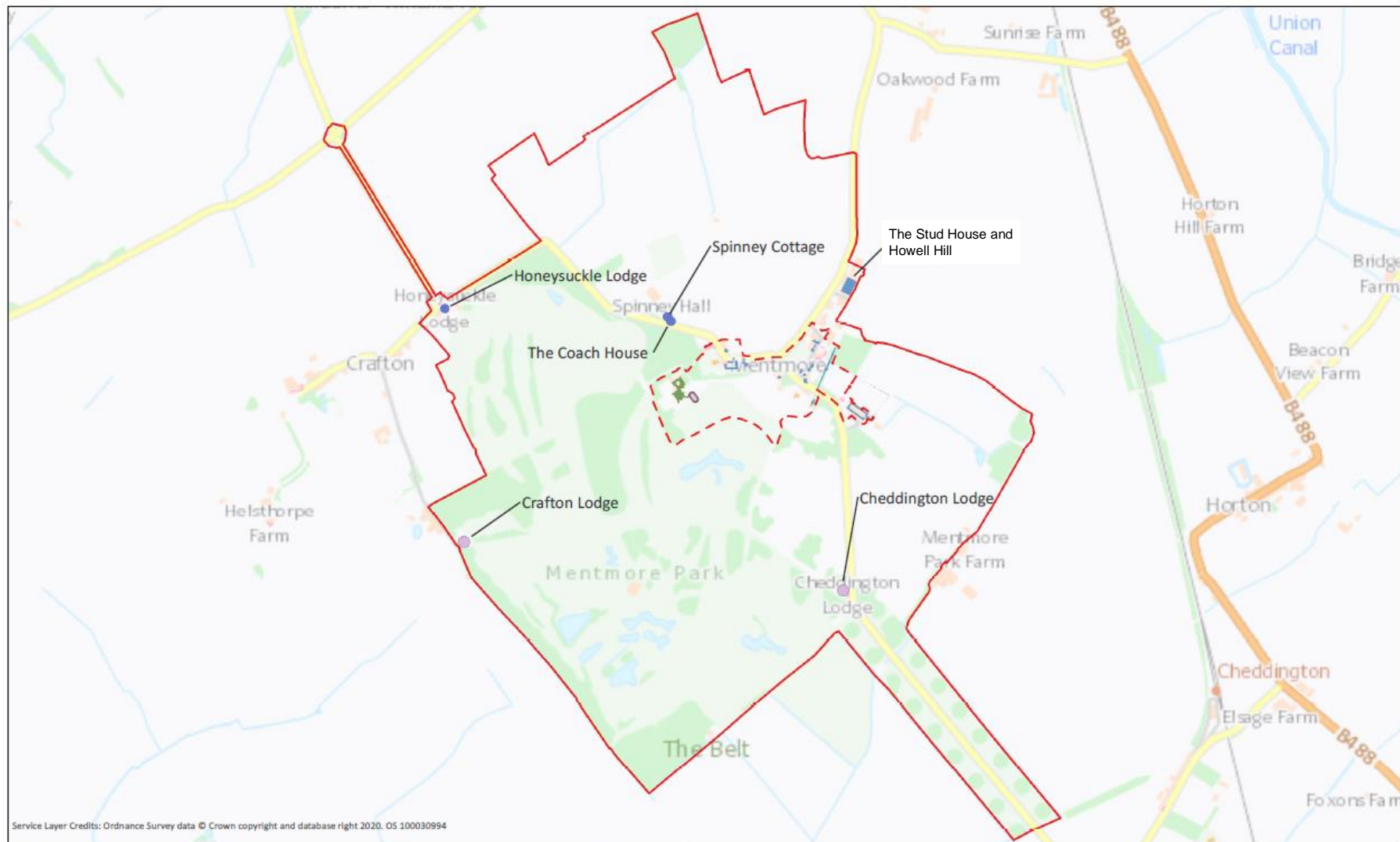
### **9.1 Overview**

The most prominent buildings in the Conservation Area are a varied collection because of their historic origins and their relative prominence. However, they are generally united by their historicist architectural styles, particularly those with features reflecting Tudor and Jacobean periods, and also rustic and picturesque styles. Among these (not all listed as of historic or architectural importance) are:

- The vast secluded mansion including a service wing of similar size to the family wing (listed Grade I).
- Fine 1879 gates and Stone Lodge (both Grade II) prominent at the main entrance.
- The Stag Inn (unlisted).
- C18 Manor House (Grade II\*), reduced from its original prominence since the corner of the former Green on which it stood was incorporated into the pleasure grounds in the later C19.
- Medieval and later Church of St Mary (Grade II\*).
- Ferrey's 1851 Vicarage (unlisted) opposite the Church.
- Stables with Church Cottage (only the latter Grade II),
- Secluded Laundry Cottages (Grade II).
- All houses either side of the village street (odd Nos. 9 - 27 The Green are Grade II).
- Stokes's 1859 Dairy (Grade II).
- Devey's Cheddington and Crafton Lodges (both Grade II).

It is a testimony to the quality of the Conservation Area that only a few buildings fail to contribute to its character or appearance. Further information on individual buildings can be found Appendix 4: Asset Sheets.



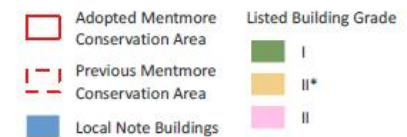


Service Layer Credits: Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2020. OS 100030994

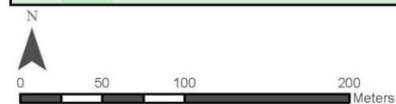
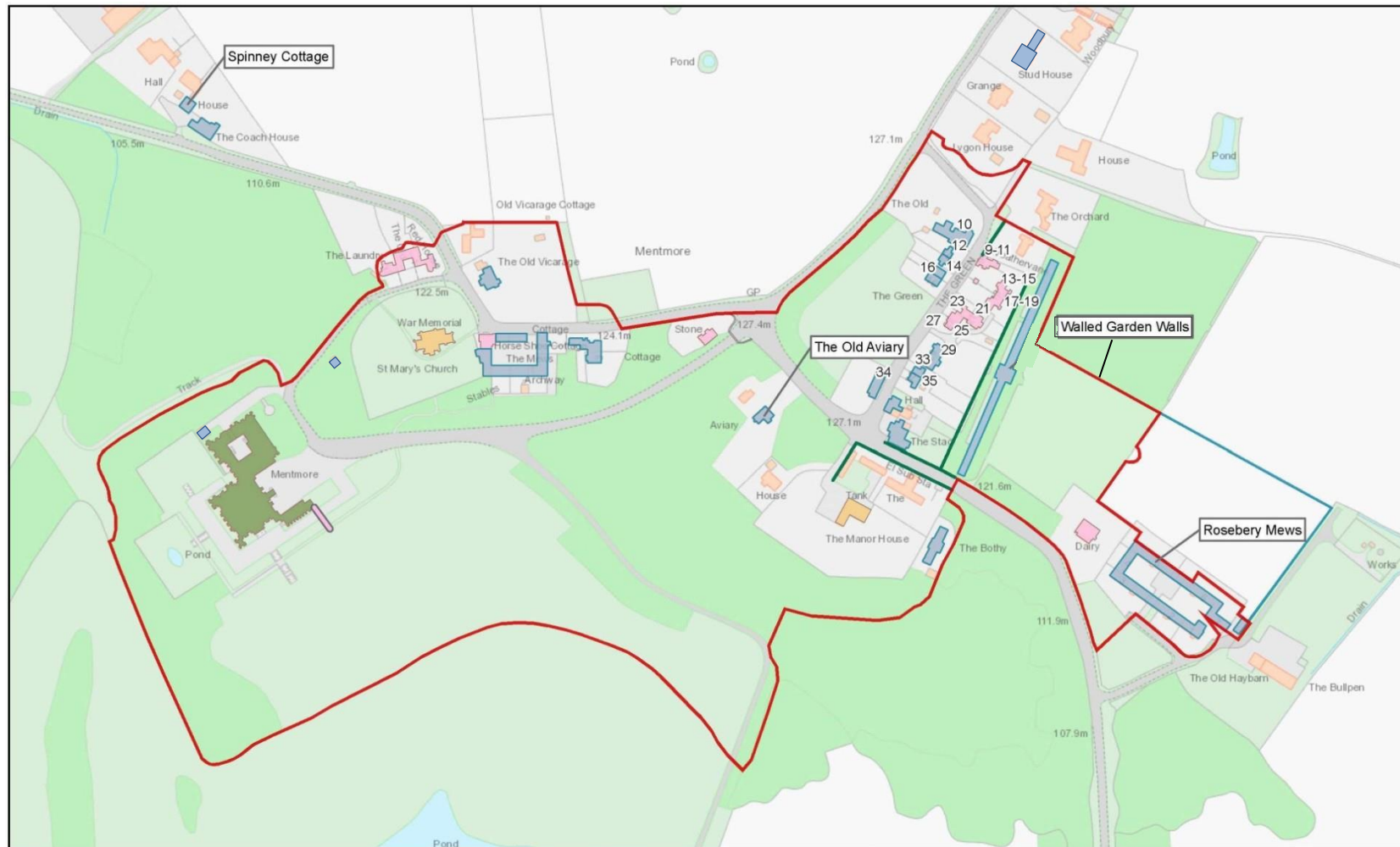


## Mentmore Conservation Area Review

### Key Buildings



*Key Buildings in the wider Conservation Area*



Author: MH  
Created: 05/08/2019  
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## Mentmore Conservation Area Review

### Key Buildings at Core of Mentmore

- Previous Mentmore Conservation Area
- Important Masonry Boundaries
- Local Note Buildings
- I
- II\*
- II

*Key Buildings in the core of the Conservation Area: The village*

## 9.2 The Mansion

Given its size and design, the mansion cannot be considered architecturally under the same convenient headings as the remainder of the buildings in the village and around the estate. Its quality and great historic significance merit additional consideration. It is notable, however, that it shares an architectural attribute with most of the other buildings in the Conservation Area as they are derived from English historical styles.

The design of the mansion by Sir Joseph Paxton and his son-in-law George Stokes, borrows heavily from Wollaton Hall, near Nottingham, designed by Robert Smythson for Sir Francis Willoughby, constructed between 1582 and 1588. It is unclear to whom this choice is attributable, whether the architects or the client. Wollaton also provided the inspiration for Lewis Vulliamy's more overblown design for Westonbirt House (1864-74) in Gloucestershire.



*Mentmore Towers*  
(Historic England Archive OP 13728)

The starting point for the facades at Wollaton were Smythson's own designs for the elevations at Longleat and use again a high basement with pilasters carried consistently around the four sides of Wollaton Hall. While Longleat is three-storeys throughout, Wollaton has a more romantic and castellated air with three-storeyed towers at the corners of a two-storey main block. The compact outward-looking form adopted at both locations followed a number of many late Medieval and Tudor residences, though the consistent classical treatment of their elevations was at that time still something of a novelty. The towers at Mentmore are almost exact copies of those at Wollaton, except merely for the omission of niches between the pairs of pilasters at exterior corners.

Otherwise the main differences are found in the treatment of the central hall, in the layout of the elevations and in the addition of the kitchen court. Firstly, the hall at Wollaton projects above the surrounding roofs in order to have clerestory windows to light it from a high level. In addition, there is another huge room above it, a 'Prospect Room' with circular bartizans at its corners, adding to an already fanciful skyline. In contrast the central hall at Mentmore fills the two storeys without additional height and also derives its light from above, in this case through a ceiling of the 'ridge and furrow' riveted wrought-iron and glass construction designed by Paxton for the Crystal Palace (1851). Secondly, the principal elevations at Wollaton have recessed centres, further emphasising the relative projection of the corner towers. At Mentmore the facades are flatter, interest being created by the centres of each elevation being given a slight projection. Something of the enveloping effect of the recessed entrance elevation at Wollaton is however provided by the long low projecting wings either side of Mentmore's entrance courtyard, serving to screen the conservatory (to the south) and the service wing and kitchen court (north). Finally, while Wollaton stands alone on its hilltop site, Mentmore is accompanied by an extensive service wing placed to the north away from the pleasure grounds on the south side of the mansion.

Houses of this date required large service wings as the myriad tasks for staff became more technologically efficient, requiring greater specialisation and needing their own areas of operation. In addition, landowners became more sensitive at this time to the working conditions of their staff and could no longer expect them to work or sleep in the raised basements or attics of the earlier grand houses. On the other hand, they craved greater privacy from their servants. All these influences came together to create the kitchen court at Mentmore. It is treated as a small plainer single-storey version of the Mansion, with generally blank walls enlivened by niches to the south (towards the entrance court), the west (towards the Italian Garden) and the north overlooking the service approach. It was however given a grand entrance to the service drive from the north side of the churchyard. A small brick hut had been built by 1879 (OS) for a watchman overlooking this drive, close to the west boundary of the churchyard which survives in a derelict state.

Mentmore was built just after sheet glass became commercially available c.1838 (a million square feet of it was used in Paxton's Crystal Palace). The Elizabethan style chosen for Mentmore with its numerous square-headed windows somehow seems to fit the use of large quantities of this new product. As well as its advanced use of glass, the mansion was one of the earliest houses to be built with hot water and central heating systems, and a gas plant.

Another innovation was the fire engine house built by 1899 immediately north of the service wing. The rectangular block of cream brick has garage doors facing east, topped by stone balustrading.





*Fire Engine House*

A further subtle but telling difference occurs between 1580s Wollaton and 1850s Mentmore. At Wollaton (and Longleat) the first-floor windows are taller than those of the ground floor, advertising the location of the Hall's principal rooms on the upper floor – the Long Gallery and the Great Chambers at Wollaton. Instead at Mentmore there is no such difference because the reception rooms are located on the ground floor, principally the Morning Room, Drawing Room and Dining Room. Their great windows to the south and west ensure an uninterrupted relationship between interior and the exterior with its terraces, parterres and widespread vistas. The first floor is given over to suites of bedrooms with windows of the same size and proportion.

The mansion contributes to the character of the Conservation Area principally by dominating the south park. It provides a well-treed boundary with the village supplemented by the listed gates and Stone Lodge. The designed public approaches affording glimpses of the corner towers and occasionally the whole mansion. More distantly it is a spectacular eye-catcher from many places in the Vale, particularly from the south and from the Chiltern scarp.

### 9.3 The Southern Approach

#### 9.3.1 Cheddington Lodge

The scale of the mansion is such that can be seen in widespread distant views, with tantalising glimpses through trees from closer locations. Typical is the approach from Cheddington to the south along Paxton's Grand Avenue. At the north end of the Avenue, Devey's enchanting Cheddington Lodge (Grade II) brilliantly announces the choice between the private road to the Mansion and the re-aligned public road to the village. Its angled wings take their cue from the directions taken by the various routes on either side of the boldly projecting central section, with thatch being a picturesque choice and a practical one, mastering the varied angles required for the roof.



*Cheddington Lodge*



*Dairy Cottage*

### 9.3.2 Dairy Cottage

Taking the village road along the chestnut avenue, there are still glimpses of the mansion to be had until Stokes' Dairy Cottage (Grade II) is reached at another bend in the road. This is a simpler design made more picturesque through its 'cottage ornée' styling. Designed to process the milk rather than for milking the cattle, a rustic veranda on one side of the principal gable is balanced by a projecting gable towards the entrance front, designed to afford shade to keep the interior cool. Windows with cambered heads and sills supported on a dentil course are glazed with lozenges in the centres of the casements. The original brickwork is now sadly painted white. Many of the interior details for the dairy processing survive.

A slight bend prepares for the climb into the centre of the village. The walls of the former glasshouse yard of the Manor house and the retaining wall of the Stag Inn are prominent features on either side of the slope. There is a strong sense of arrival outside the Stag, with a glimpse of The Green and the fringe of tall limes on its northern side.

### 9.4 The Green

The Green is the heart of the village Conservation Area. Unusually it is not completely surrounded by village houses, and is open to the west, an arrangement preserved by the limited and characteristic interventions by the Rothschilds and Roseberys. This may have been in part due to the position of the Leighton Buzzard road along the edge of the scarp and its northerly aspect. In any case it makes a strong contribution to the characteristic layout and appearance of the village.

Instead enclosure is provided by the splendid line of limes on the outer edge of The Green, which are not shown on OS sheets until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The limes also allow fine views northwards towards Wing and Ascott, which a line of residential enclosures would have screened.

### 9.5 The Stag Inn

Away from the limes, one of the most distinctive buildings in the village is the Stag Inn, appearing first on road realignment proposals in 1852 and the Tithe map of the same year. It replaced a building that stood right on the corner between the road from Cheddington and the village road. Instead, the Stag sits back from the corner creating a tiny square, allowing a little breathing space at the top of the climb from Cheddington. It is ideally suited to its distinctive role in the village scene, being unusually of stone in a



vaguely Tudor style in a faint echo of the style chosen for Meyer's mansion. Its many re-entrant angles faultlessly manage the corner into the village street.



*The Stag Inn viewed north-west*

## 9.6 The Village Street

### 9.6.1 Village Hall and No. 34 The Green

The village street, known as The Green is entered through the 'pinch point' formed by the Village Hall and No. 34 The Green. The first was designed as a club for Lord Rosebery, the latter built on a separate plot on The Green by Mayer, to be first mapped at the same time as the Stag.



*Village Hall (and Manor House) viewed from the north*



*No. 34 The Green*

The Hall's large gables built on the road frontage give this modest building the visual significance to match its important role in the social life of the village. No. 34 The Green is slightly set back behind a hedge, its elegant timber projecting porch articulating its long brick façade. Its rear façade, various extensions and rear hedging are important features when viewed from The Green.

Beyond No. 34 The Green opens up on the north side of the street. Its original estate fencing has been replaced at some point by a knee rail. Opposite, estate houses line the south side of the street, enclosing

this side of The Green. Their neat front hedges that have grown around the original estate fencing provides a consistent theme along the village street. Those closest to the Village Hall are among the latest to be constructed.

#### 9.6.2 Nos. 33 and 35 The Green

The symmetrical pair Nos. 33 & 35 The Green were not shown on the OS first edition (surveyed 1879). Their brick and half-timbered finishes participate in the estate style generated by Hannah.



*Nos. 33 to 35 The Green viewed from north-west*



*No. 29 The Green viewed from north-west*

#### 9.6.3 No. 29 The Green

No. 29 is the largest house on The Green and may have been workshops prior to conversion to domestic dwellings in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It looks like a pair of semi-detached houses: only the central porch showing that it is one house. It was delineated only in outline on the OS first edition and may have been under construction at the time of the survey in 1879. Again, it displays brick and half timbering. All the above houses overlook The Green because there are no buildings opposite and are therefore important in views across The Green.

#### 9.6.4 No. 27 The Green

Earlier than these and further to the north east is the interesting 'square' built for Hannah in 1877-8. Closest to No. 29 and similarly positioned facing The Green and behind estate fencing with hedging, is No. 27 (Nos. 21-27 are listed Grade II).

Here a simple arrangement of roofs and gables is made more picturesque by the addition of a hipped front porch, and a pretty projecting window under a catslide roof. The gable towards No. 29 and to the lane that runs to the rear of the group is treated in a delightful way with panels of herringbone brick nogging under the window.





*Nos. 25 & 27 The Green*



*No. 27 The Green brick detail on gable.*

#### 9.6.5 Nos. 21, 23, 25 The Green

The interest is maintained to the corner by the large half-timbered gable of No. 25. Nos. 25 and 27 The Green were originally the Smithy and the Post Office, but were later converted to a single dwelling and later still into two dwellings. The gap between Nos. 27 & 25 The Green is surprisingly filled by a flat roofed section with a parapet of timber balustrading. Gables take the eye round the corner of this fascinating group. A smaller and less ornate gable set back and turning the corner to face the 'square' belongs to No. 23 where a long open gabled porch reaches out over its front garden supported on fat decorative columns.



*Porch to No. 23 The Green*

Another large gable emerges again this time sheltering a projecting bay window – all half-timbered. Further round the corner is the similar gable of No. 21 projecting further so that it can be fully appreciated in the three-quarter view from the village street. These two gables answer the more modest twin gables of Nos. 9 & 11 on the other side of the square.

**9.6.6 Nos. 13 & 15 and 17 & 19 The Green**

Providing the rear face of the square are Nos. 13 & 15 and 17 & 19 two pairs of brick estate cottages built for Hannah in 1877 (all listed Grade II). The fronts of these are much plainer than their neighbours on either side, but their gables and tall and prominent chimneys partake in the strong estate image. Timber porches are their most decorative feature.

Their rear and side elevations are more varied than their fronts to the square. They are given added interest by the pumps (listed Grade II) housed in a 'gatehouse' built like a church lych gate in front of them.



*Lych gate to Nos. 13-19 The Green*



*Nos. 13-17 The Green*



#### 9.6.7 Nos. 9 & 11 The Green

Closing the north side of the 'square' are Nos. 9 & 11. They are listed (Grade II) as of late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century, possibly a former public house, and altered for Hannah and dated 1876.



*Nos. 9 & 11 The Green*

The list description does not mention the interior and but some external alterations have been undertaken in the last 20 years. Given that the gable stands right on the edge of the village street, Nos. 9 & 11 are prominent in views along the street from The Stag and effectively form the entrance to The Green from views in the opposite direction.

#### 9.6.8 Nos. 14 & 16 and 10 & 12 The Green

Opposite the square are two pairs of semi-detached cottages, Nos. 14 & 16 and 10 & 12. Both pairs were built for Mayer on The Green. The former pair are simply and pleasingly detailed and their single massive central chimney stack is an imposing element when viewed from The Green. Apart from the cream render on the rear elevations (also distinctive from The Green) the elevations are muted in colour, moulded stone surrounds blending with the brickwork, an unusual combination of pink brick in Flemish Bond and cream headers.



*Rear Elevation of Nos. 14 & 16 The Green*



*Nos. 14 & 16 The Green*

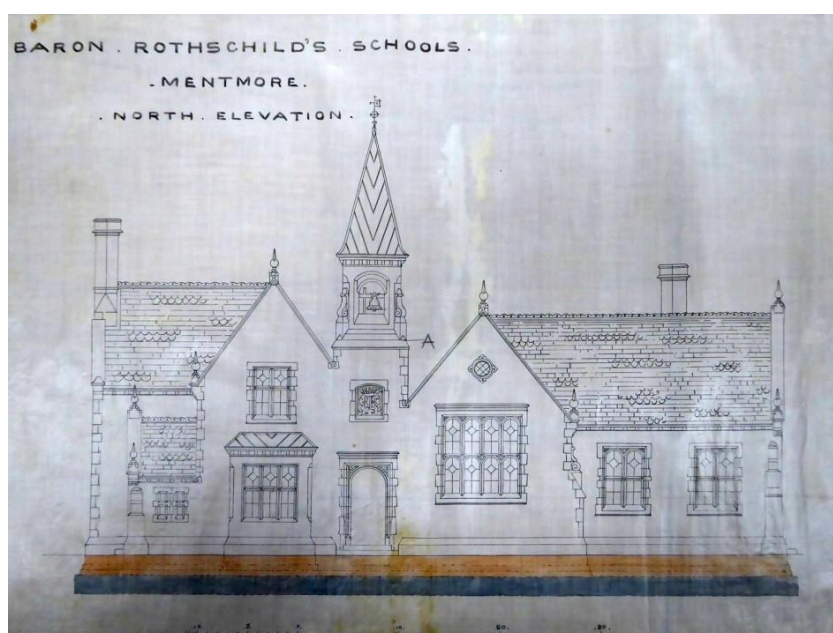
Next door Nos. 10 & 12 are more assertive. The two houses are treated more as a single unit with a single central front gable rather than the pair of large gables fronting Nos. 14 & 16. The window and door surrounds of cream brick contrast strongly with the red brick of the rather crowded facades and are given additional visual weight with their cambered heads (reminiscent of the windows of Dairy Cottage). Like Dairy Cottage the roof is decorated with bands of fish scale tiles in blue clay. Again, a large central chimneystack holds the composition together. Sadly, the central recess presumably intended for a date and inscription is empty.



*Nos. 10 & 12 The Green viewed from north-east*

#### 9.6.9 Village School

Beyond these, terminating the north end of The Green and the village street, is the former village school. Now converted into two houses it was originally intended to be a new building in Tudor style with a schoolmaster's house and a central entrance under a bell cote, most likely designed by Stokes.



*Baron Rothschild's School  
(Centre for Bucks Studies ref D-R0-31)*



In the event the Baptist chapel on the site was pressed into service in 1862 presumably as the schoolroom, the headmaster's house being added probably at the same date on the east side with the playground on the opposite side (First Edition OS surveyed 1879). The school was extended in matching style for the Roseberys with an earl's coronet on Hannah's monogrammed plaque.



*Old School viewed from north-east*



*Old School houses viewed from south-east*



*Extended School House viewed from north-east*

### 9.7 The mansion main gates and Stone Lodge

The village street emerges onto the road from Leyburn and Leighton Buzzard, the road enjoying panoramic views northwards towards Wing and Ascott. Turning back towards The Green, the view is dominated by the main gates to the mansion and its elegant Stone Lodge (both listed Grade II). The gates display the lion crest and motto of the Roseberys.



*Gates and Stone Lodge*

Stone Lodge is more correct and strait-laced than Devey's other lodges for the estate. It has however been designed to have an attractive and picturesque façade to the north, towards the road from Wing as it climbs towards The Green.

### 9.8 Other key buildings

Heading down the hill towards the church and Wing, past the Cottage set back from the road, the Stables collectively command attention with the attractively detailed half-timbered gables and tall chimneys of Stable Cottage. The most prominent buildings are those on the street frontage. The road frontages of The Granary and Church End Cottage make a strong impact on the character of the road at this location, ending with Church Cottage by Devey (listed Grade II) commanding the end of a short straight stretch of the Wing Road. Church Cottage forms an important group with the parish church of St Mary (listed Grade II\*) to the west and the Old Vicarage on the other side of the road.





*Stable Cottage from north-east*



*Church Cottage viewed from north*



*Church of St Mary viewed from south-west*



*Old Vicarage from Church entrance*



*Crafton Lodge*



*Laundry buildings*

Beyond this important group on the approach from Wing is the terrace of laundry buildings (now three houses; all listed Grade II). Possibly the most extravagantly decorated and varied group in the Conservation Area. These houses deserve to be more visible and better enjoyed from the road.

The remaining key building, Devey's Crafton Lodge, is more remote, standing on the far west side of the Conservation Area. It stands on the western edge of the mansion's designed landscape just south of the Crafton Conservation Area (designated 2005). It is another of his picturesque buildings created for the estate. It is even more quirky than his Cheddington Lodge, but has sadly lost its thatched roof which is now clay tiled. Perhaps the most unusual feature is Devey's decision to hide the upper parts of the substantial principal rafters of the gables in the main facades.

## 10 Details and Materials

Each section below indicates what is most significant and characteristic about Mentmore's appearance and the wealth and variety of materials displayed in this small village.

See also Appendix 4: Asset Sheets, for further information on individual buildings.

### 10.1 Village building scale and character

With the exception of the mansion and the village hall, buildings in the Conservation Area are generally of two or 'two-and-a-half storeys' (two storeys plus rooms in the roof). They are of 'additive' form with gable widths generally corresponding to the 20ft commonly appearing in English vernacular architecture, the style often adopted by the Rothschilds in Buckinghamshire for their own buildings, for village housing, and village facilities. This provides a consistent scale for village buildings. The use of orange/red bricks and red clay tiles is associated with Mentmore's most characteristic cottages.

Village buildings generally sit back from the road frontages and face roads. Exceptions can be found in the little quadrangle created by Nos. 13-25 The Green focussed on the charming pump house treated in Old English style as a lych gate; Aspell's 1893 Bothy and Manning's 1880 Laundry Cottages are end-on to roads. Cottages have been formed variously as semi-detached pairs, as single houses or, as in the case of Nos. 21-25 Laundry Cottages and the quadrangle cited above, put together in highly picturesque groupings. Roofs are either hipped or gabled, enlivened by the use of large, tall or decorative chimneys

### 10.2 Walls (brick)

The significance of the use of brickwork in the village lies in its promotion of an Estate style, underpinning the interest of the Rothschilds in improving general housing standards in the villages where they were responsible.

The most characteristic and significant building material for ordinary houses in Mentmore is orange/red brick in Flemish Bond, particularly as it is associated with the cottages erected on behalf of Hannah Rothschild in the late 1870s. This bond is often used beyond Mentmore for more important buildings (alternating headers and stretchers within each course with headers being placed above stretchers in the course below).

In Mentmore this bond is used regardless of the intended status of the building, for grander buildings, cottages, and operational buildings alike. With headers distributed across the façade in regular intervals there is scope for decorative effects: Nos. 9-11 employ the commonly-used contrast between red stretchers and blue headers to great effect (C10) while across the village street Nos 14 and 16 use a more subtle and unusual combination of heather and cream bricks (the latter probably from Fletton, near Bedford). (C9).

There is sometimes nothing hard and fast about the bond chosen for a building; while the front gable of the Non-Conformist chapel is in cream Flettons in Flemish bond, its projecting porch is also of Flettons, but in English Bond (alternating courses wholly of stretchers and headers). The later northern extension to the School is in English Bond. The important thing about these bonds is that they introduce a more pleasant texture to brickwork than the common 'stretcher bond'.

Unfortunately these bonds cannot be easily used for cavity walls (the default construction feature in modern times), because the headers used to run right through a traditional solid 9 inch wall: they conflict with the cavity unless the headers are cut in half before use: this practice is expensive and is usually ruled out for this reason. If a stretcher bond is to be used for new structures in the village it will require a careful choice



of brick and high-quality bricklaying. Opportunities should also be taken to use brickwork to form simple decorative headings for window and door openings. Moulded red bricks have been used for eaves details on Laundry Cottages (C3).

### 10.3 Walls (stone)

Again, excepting the mansion, there is not so much stone in use for residential properties and it is generally used for buildings marking important points in the street scene. It ranges in the village from the smooth ashlar and faultless detailing of Stone Lodge (1879) to the more muscular and rugged effect of Ferrey's 1851 Vicarage in 'coursed rubble' of the local ironstone. Halfway between these textures stands The Stag Inn with 'squared rubble' used in irregular courses. Elsewhere stone is used sparingly for window surrounds and gable parapets, mostly in association with the buildings built using Fletton bricks. Most of the windows round the stable yard have sawn stone lintels.



*The Stag Inn squared rubble wall viewed from north-west*

The three park lodges are built in similar materials in Old English styles, but without strong unity in a single form. The single-storey Cheddington Lodge is in Fletton brick, also with rendered and timber framed walls. Wing (Honeysuckle) Lodge, also single storey, is rendered with timber framing and brick chimneys. Crafton Lodge is built of similar materials, but is of two-storeys, making it the most impressive lodge, although oddly it marks the least significant major park entrance, except if visiting the Crafton stud farm.



*Cheddington Lodge*



*Crafton Lodge*

#### 10.4 Walls (half timbering and gables)

For the cottages in the village without hipped roofs, gables provide another opportunity for decoration. The use of half timbering is a significant and attractive element in the village, examples of the Old English style employed by the Rothschilds widely in the county. The best examples are based on an understanding of the construction techniques of genuine examples. For historical accuracy, scale and bravado, 'The Old Laundry' and 'The Laundry' (the centre and the western of the three houses created out of the Estate Laundry) cannot be bettered. Their large gables are packed with half-timbered incident.

The projecting bay of 'The Old Laundry' imitates close studding with downward braces, while the projecting gable of 'The Laundry' displays a projecting bay window set in half-timbering below decorative tiling in the gable apex with a tiny lean-to roof of plain tiles covering the bay. In these two examples the timbers are set in smooth panels painted white. There are further examples of this in the village notably at the rear of Stable Cottage where two gables are given individual treatment, prominent in views towards the church.



*Stable Cottage north-east gable*



*Stable Cottage north-east gable*

Some other gables have the half-timbering set in uncoloured pebbledash. Nos. 33-35 share a design mimicking a kingpost with diagonal braces, but the plain design chosen for No. 29 sadly has no historic precedent. Pebbledash is also found used in the houses around the former Wing Lodge.



*Nos. 33-35 The Green viewed from north-west*



*No. 29 The Green viewed from north-west*



*No. 27 The Green brick detail on gable.*

Wing Lodge's original charming asymmetrical design was held together by a central gable with decorative half-timber with pebbledash panels. It and the surrounding outbuildings have been hugely extended over the last half century and the general use of half-timbered gables with pebbledash has produced a visual consistency in the vicinity of the former Lodge. The apex of the side gable to Nos. 9 and 11 The Green also has plain pebble dashed panels, matching its large rear gabled extension even though the projecting bays either side of the front door have smooth white rendered panels.

Perhaps the most charming gable in the village is that of No. 27 where a simple arrangement of timbering is set within pebbledash and the line of casements in the gable has been given an attractive apron of herringbone nogging in red brick.



## 10.5 Roofs

As with red brick, plain red clay tiles are the prevalent and significant roofing material in the Conservation Area. The attractive texture created by the adoption of this material is an important feature of the appearance of the village, given the large areas of roof typical of the old English style adopted by the Rothschilds on their estates in the area. Less common are the plain blue clay tiles used at Dairy Cottage and at Nos. 10-12 (on both occasions with bands of shaped decorative blue tiles). A single band of these is used to enliven the large red tiled roof of No. 29. The Old School House as extended had blue slates originally with elaborate crests throughout, now sadly lost except for a few fragments. As with brickwork the use of tiles provides a unified appearance to the estate.

Two of the three park lodges were formerly thatched with particularly ornamental patterns, at the Cheddington and Crafton gateways, while the Wing (Honeysuckle) Lodge was always tiled. Crafton Lodge is now tiled and Cheddington Lodge remains thatched.



*Dairy Cottage blue roof tiles*



*Nos. 10-12 The Green from north-east*



*No. 29 The Green from north-west*



*Old School House from north-east*



## 10.6 Chimneys

Red brick has also been used for chimney stacks (the best examples range from the massive arrays at Nos. 14-16 to the fanciful Tudor stacks displayed by various properties in the Stables. Mass-produced moulded bricks, consistent in size and shape, were ideal for building decorative stacks. The faceted chimney in cream Fletton bricks is perfectly suited to Cheddington Lodge with its cranked ground plan.



*Nos. 14-16 from The Green*



*The Stables from south-west*



*Cheddington Lodge*

## 10.7 Windows

Simple side-hung casement windows are ubiquitous and significant in Mentmore village. Most 'lights' are subdivided into square panes, though the windows of Dairy Cottage, with its 'cottage ornée' style, incorporate lozenges at the centre of each light.

Again, Stone Lodge provides the most sophisticated model, its metal-framed casements displaying stained glass details. Much of the variety to be seen comes from the window surround. The Stone Lodge example uses moulded stone mullions to divide the lights, all framed in a moulded surround.



*Dairy Cottage*



*Stone Lodge*



*The Stag Inn*

The casement windows of 'The Stag Inn' are set in a simple chamfered stone frame. Chamfered brick surrounds are also found at Dairy Cottage and at Nos. 10-12 where heavy cream brick surrounds with quoins make a strong and rather jarring contrast with the red brick used for the majority of this pair of cottages.

The ground floor windows of Church Cottage are set under surprisingly crude brick 'arches' (two straight lines joining above), a motif picked up by the adjacent frontage and by Stable Cottage at the stable yard entrance. Devey in designing Church Cottage has not resisted tucking a tiny dormer casement with its own catslide roof into the re-entrant angle overlooking the churchyard.



*Church Cottage from north*



*Dormer casement in Church Cottage*

#### 10.8. Decorative Details including Plaques and Metalwork

The plaques placed in the cottages erected by Hannah using her own 'H de R' monogram seem to convey a personal interest, in contrast to the more remote style utilised after her marriage, such as the 'HR' monogram under an earl's coronet on the School extension, the Rosebery crest on the gate piers and the baroque style cartouche on the gable of Stone Lodge. They are of considerable interest and form part of a varied group on buildings in other settlements in which she was involved, including Wingrave.



*'HR' Monogram  
(style used post marriage)*



*Rosebery Monogram*



## 10.9 Boundary Treatments

The consistent use of estate metal fencing throughout the village and in the wider road frontages of the former Estate is the most significant item to be recorded here. This elegant, efficient and slim fencing is used as front boundaries of village gardens and is often employed in conjunction with hedging. Where used alone, it virtually vanishes in visual terms, and allows views to flow unhindered, notably on the north side of the Green. Its welcome slenderness means that it can be liable to damage, particularly when lining the main roads and at risk of damage from vehicles. Around the Conservation Area many stretches survive together with simple and ornamental gateways, contributing elements of design distinctiveness, high quality workmanship and unity throughout the estate village.

Where railings have been damaged or have been replaced, given their significance, it will undoubtedly enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area for repairs and replacements to be commissioned.



*Damaged railing on Rosebery Mews frontage to Cheddington Rd*



*Fencing at Rosebery Mews viewed from south-east*

*The Journal of Horticulture and Cottage Gardener* of November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1882 commented of Mentmore:

*'It is impossible to tell where the public highway ends and the private drives to the mansion begin. Strong and neat iron fencing to the extent of nine miles has been firmly fixed by Mr Smith (the competent manager of the roads, woods and gardens) by the sides of public and private roads alike and ornamental planting has been done on an extensive scale.'*

The four main park gateways are dominated by the most important one, the main gateway off The Green, of stone with impressive iron vehicle gates and overthrow, erected in 1879. It is possible that the gates came from Frankfurt Cathedral. The other three, Cheddington, Wing/Honeysuckle and Crafton originally were united with a similar design of timber posts and gates seen in early photographs, but these have gone. The service drive gateway by Laundry Cottages had a similar style, elements of which survive ex situ with a local resident. The Cheddington Drive is now marked by tall panelled, Ashlar piers, one of which retains an ornate stone urn, but the origin of these is unclear.

Red brick walls contribute in localised, but specific ways. The most prominent is the Manor House garden wall, used to enclose the later (and now lost) glasshouse yard, which forms such an important visual element in the entry to the village as a 'pinch point' opposite the Stag. Brick walls feature importantly on three sides of the former kitchen garden, to the north-west, north-east and south-east sides, but a wall never enclosed the fourth, roadside wall to the south-west. Another C19 brick wall fronts the garden of the modern house 'The Orchard' next to the Green.

## 11 Identity Areas

The following sections cover the character areas of the designed landscape as identified and numbered by the Designed Landscape Appraisal vol 2.

The buildings in these identity areas are included in the accompanying Asset Sheets detailing materials, character and significance, see Appendix 4.

### 11.1 Mentmore Park General

Mentmore Park and associated areas enclose the village to the north, west and south. Unlike Waddesdon, for Ferdinand de Rothschild in the late C19, and more in the manner of Stowe, for Earl Temple in the 1760s, the design encompasses the village approach roads. That from Cheddington in the south was transformed by the planting of platoons of mixed deciduous and evergreen species on either side interspersed with *Wellingtonias* until Devey's Cheddington Lodge was reached. Here the southern approach road to the mansion started and the public road then continued north-eastwards towards the village between a double avenue of horse chestnuts. The road from Wing was lined with hedgerow trees up to the crossroads with the Ledburn-Wingrave road where a little 'rond-point' was created with a circle of trees.



*Southern Avenue from Cheddington*





*Wing Road*

The main entrance to the mansion from the village green to the east is guarded by fine gates and the Stone Lodge of 1879 (both listed) from which the main drive curves west to the mansion forecourt.

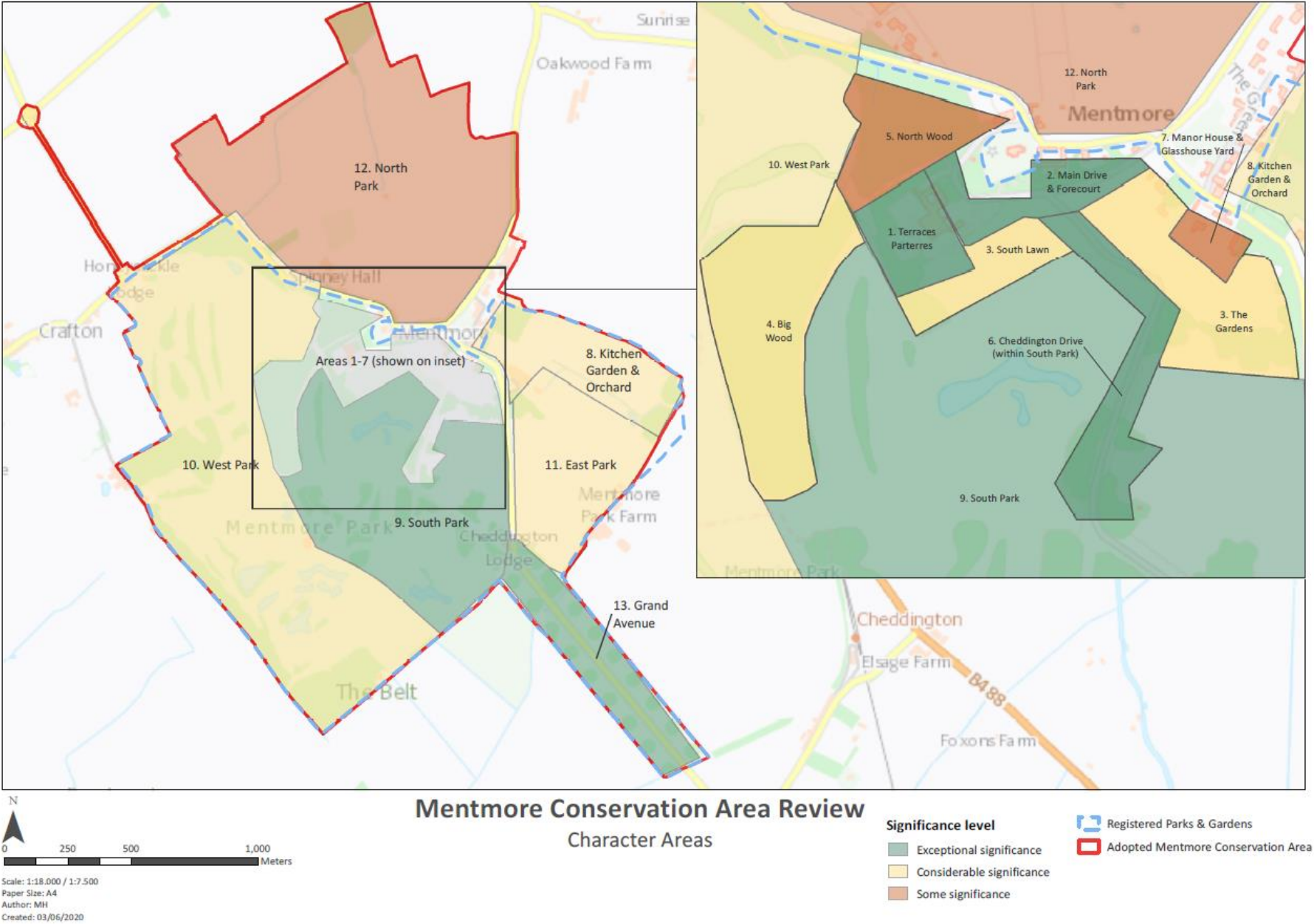


*Main gates and Stone Lodge viewed from south-east*

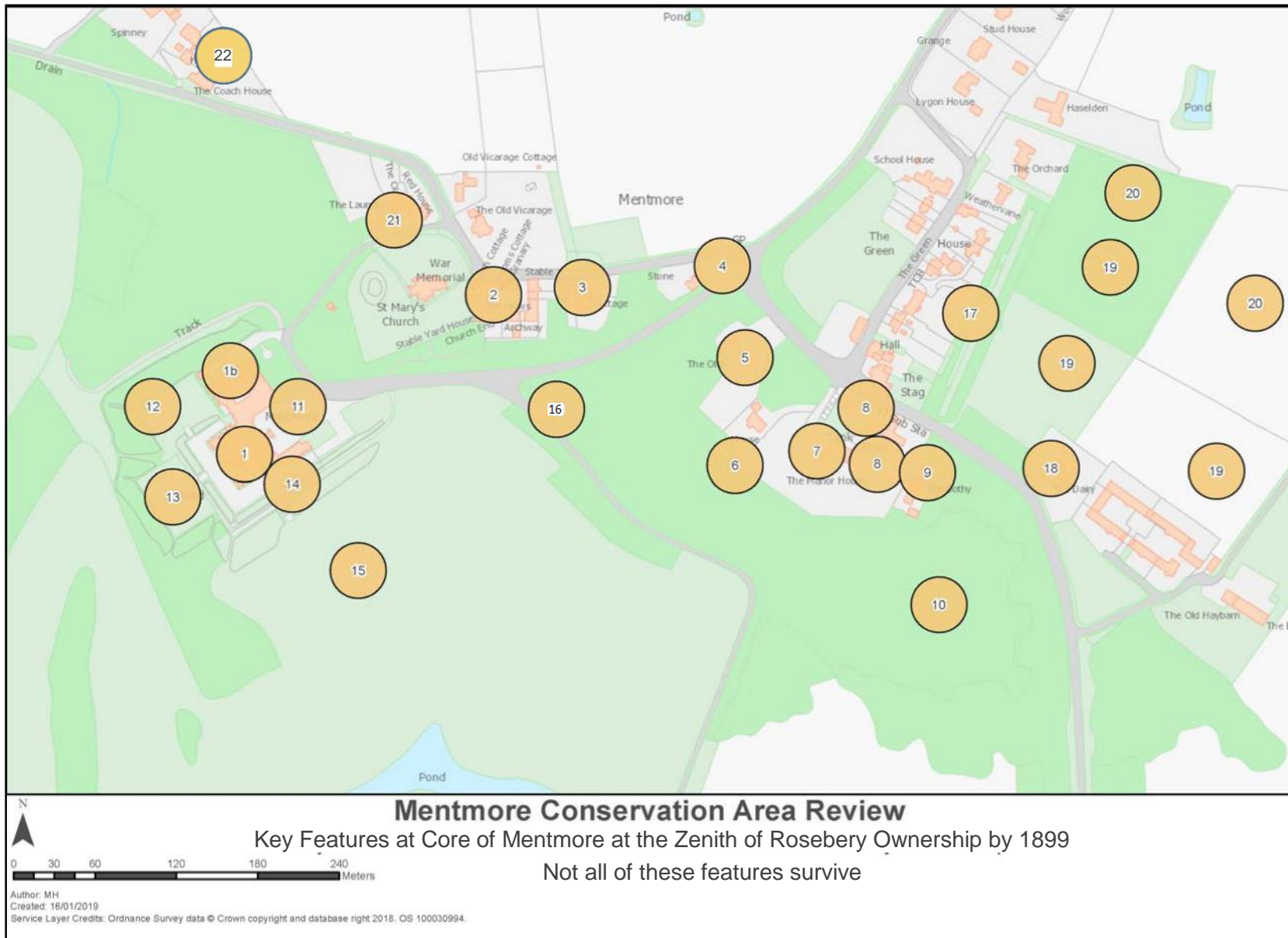
## 11.2 Character Areas

Mentmore contains a number of areas considered to have specific or individual character. This perceived character is generally made up of a combination of elements including the buildings themselves, how they relate to each other, how visible they are and how they sit within the landscape. Thirteen individual areas (also called Identity Areas) have been identified and are shown on the map below.





Designed Landscape Character Areas and Levels of Significance



### Key features

- 1) Mansion (1850s) (1b: service wing)
- 2) Stables, Riding House & Church Cottage (1870s)
- 3) The Cottage (1840s)
- 4) Main gateway to Main Drive, Stone Lodge (both c.1879)
- 5) Aviary Cottage (1840s-1870s) & Aviary (late 1870s)
- 6) Maze (late 1870s)
- 7) Manor House (C18)
- 8) Glasshouse yard (1860s-70s)
- 9) Bothy (1893)
- 10) Arboretum (1860s-70s)
- 11) Forecourt (1850s)
- 12) Italian Garden (1850s)
- 13) Fountain Garden (1850s)
- 14) South Terraces (1889)
- 15) South Lawn (1889)
- 16) King Tom statue (1879)
- 17) Boyd Conservatory on terrace (1880s-92)
- 18) The Dairy (1859)
- 19) Kitchen Garden (1860s-90)
- 20) Orchards (1860s-80s)
- 21) Service gateway, laundry and lodge (1880)
- 22) Gas and electricity works

*Key Features at core of Mentmore at the zenith of Rosebery ownership, by 1899*



### 11.2.1 Character Area 1: Terraces and parterres

This area comprises the mansion and its formal, geometric frame, all established at the same time. The terraces complement the forecourt to the north-east, with terraces around the other three sides of the mansion. To the north-west and south-west, two geometric parterres provided an intensive horticultural display of great extravagance. There was an extensive and high-quality sculpture collection. The parterres were originally enclosed by yew hedges. The layout of the Italian Garden was lost by the late 1920s to a tennis court. The Fountain Garden survives with a simplified layout.

Today the framework of the design survives along with the main paths. The horticultural element has largely gone along with the sculpture collection. The parterres retain their woody surroundings and two sets of ornate C18 metal gateways survive on the terraces although only that below the conservatory is listed. The extensive views survive, damaged in the foreground by the golf course in the park but otherwise intact.

#### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

This is the immediate and formal ornamental frame for the mansion. While it has lost much of its intended floral layout and nearly all of its extensive sculpture collection, it retains its structure and remains critical in the setting of the most important building in the Conservation Area.

### 11.2.2 Character Area 2: Main Drive and Forecourt

This area covers the main approach to the mansion from the village and was completed at the village end only in 1878-9 with the erection of Stone Lodge and gateway. The drive curved between intensively maintained shrubbery on artificial banks screening the mansion and led to a large formal forecourt in front of the mansion's north-east entrance front between the service wing/kitchen court and the mansion's conservatory. The forecourt was ornamented by many high-quality sculptural items including at least four bespoke iron lamp standards. From 1878 it had a view of a life-size statue of the racehorse King Tom (a racehorse famously put to stud after a short racing career curtailed by injury which became a key stallion for Baron Mayer's Mentmore and Craffton studs) at the junction with the drive from the Cheddington Lodge. The statue is now at Dalmeny, the current Earl of Rosebery's house, west of Edinburgh).

#### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

The main drive is the direct link between two key parts of the Conservation Area (the mansion and the Green). The west end enjoys spectacular surprise views of the distant countryside in the approach from the main gate. The entrance structures (listed gates and Stone Lodge) are crucial to the character of the Green as well as the most important entrance to the park. While much of the intended floral character has gone, along with the high-quality sculpture collection, the drive and forecourt retain their form and remain critical in the approach and setting of the most important building in the Conservation Area.

### 11.2.3 Character Area 3 East Pleasure Ground including the Gardens and South Lawn

The more naturalistic layout of this area contrasted with the formality of the above areas. The historic character east of the Cheddington Drive of woody planting and lawns threaded through with paths has largely survived, but features such as the maze and aviary have disappeared and areas have been lost to development associated with The Old Aviary and Maze House. It is divided into three areas:

- 1) The Gardens: West and north-west of the Manor House, here intensively maintained features such as the Aviary and the Subtropical Gardens were set within ornamental shrubberies, trees and lawns. It was largely established by the early 1870s and enlarged by the incorporation of the sites of the former

hunting stables and kennels on the former village green. The Subtropical Garden area survives, but has lost its exotic planted character.

- 2) The Arboretum/Pleasure Ground: a naturalistic lawn area with shrubberies south of the Manor House, with a collection of ornamental trees including many conifers.
- 3) The South Lawn: Immediately below the south terraces of the mansion, this late addition was enclosed by Head Gardener Smith in the early 1880s from the south park. It was planted with specimen trees and clumps. A plateau was established below the south terrace for tennis and croquet. The ornamental horticultural character has largely gone.

#### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

As an important part of the park and of the 'buffer' screen between the mansion and south park, and the village, this area was included in the original Conservation Area designation. It represents the expert C19 use of ornamental planting to supplement the numerous activities and recreation available to the residents and guests of the Mansion. The South Lawn forms a buffer between the terraces and the South Park, now largely occupied by the golf course.

#### 11.2.4 Character Area 4: West Pleasure Ground - Big Wood

Big Wood formed one wing of the 1850/60s pleasure ground concept, as a contrasting pendant to the East Pleasure Ground. It is an ornamental wood originally with a complex network of paths, simplified by 1899 leaving a central main drive linking the mansion with Crafton Drive and thence to Crafton Stud.

Big Wood survives with its original boundaries but has lost some of its ornamental character and areas have been replanted with conifer plantation. The drive has been obscured at its south end by mature Box and other ornamental shrubs, losing the connection with the Crafton Drive.

#### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

This substantial woodland was a significant feature of the mid-C19 layout. It contributes significantly to the pleasure ground design, contrasting with the more open East Pleasure Ground (Area 3), also acting as the sylvan setting of the South and West Parks (Areas 9 & 12) and forming a strong frame directing views from the mansion and terraces over the Vale of Aylesbury to the Chiltern scarp.

#### 11.2.5 Character Area 5: North Wood

A later wood, North Wood was planted in the 1880-90s in an area of original parkland. It formed a continuation of Big Wood wrapping around to the north of the mansion, forming the setting for the late C19 Wing Drive, screening the service wing of the mansion and its drive from the Wing road, and forming a backdrop for the new Laundry and the parish church and churchyard.

Like Big Wood, North Wood survives within its original boundaries. Wing Drive is now grassed over. The watchman's hut is in ruins and the fire engine house in poor repair. A large area within has been felled and grassed, leaving the outer trees as an encircling belt.

#### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

North Wood remains a defining feature of the approach to the village from Wing. It provides much of the setting for several listed and locally significant buildings, particularly screening the mansion from the Wing Road and is the setting for the service drive from Laundry Cottages and the church and churchyard. It has been damaged by the loss of a central group of trees.

### 11.2.6 Character Area 6: Cheddington Drive

This was the most impressive drive to the mansion. Apparently designed by Paxton, it largely followed the line of the former public road from Cheddington. It comprised a dog leg of two straight sections flanked by an elm avenue leading from Cheddington Lodge (c.1870) and its originally timber gateway to the edge of the east pleasure ground before curving around it to join the main drive where King Tom once stood. It comprised the northern park half of the approach from Cheddington Station.

The northern section is lined by a number of commemorative trees planted by notable people including royalty. Views of the mansion are carefully manipulated, initially screened then affording an oblique and startling 'burst' initial view of the south-west façade and conservatory. There are close parallels with Waddesdon Manor, where the approach from the nearest station also started on public roads and then entered the park by means of its longest and most impressive drive, joining up later with the shorter and more direct drive from the village.

The park was planted with large irregular blocks of highly ornamental wooded shrubbery with gaps for key views of the mansion and park. This area survives largely intact. The avenue and some of the trees have gone, and some views are obscured by scrub. The south section of the drive is poorly maintained.

#### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

This is a key part of the original landscape design and remains the most impressive and extensive approach to the mansion. The unusual design, flanked by shrubbery planting and an avenue, is closely associated with Paxton. The Cheddington Lodge, one of three by Devey, is a key element heralding the park entrance, originally with a rustic timber gateway similar to those at other park entrances, but now with tall stone piers.

### 11.2.7 Character Area 7: Former Glasshouse Yard and Manor House

This was used as the working heart of the ornamental and productive country house landscape. It was densely developed incrementally from 1860s -1900 in the old walled garden of the Manor House with glasshouses and service sheds. It was a residential area for the gardeners, dominated by the Manor House standing on the high ground downgraded from the principal residence in the village to the Head Gardener's residence. The former walled garden is enclosed on the north against the road by a high red brick wall. East of the garden wall a large bothy for unmarried gardeners was designed in a smaller enclosure by Aspell in the 1890s. The yard was unusual as it was not contiguous with the kitchen garden beyond the Cheddington road to which it was linked only after it was completed in the 1880s.

The high wall, Manor House and bothy survive, all important elements in the character of the Conservation Area. The bothy has been converted into several residences with individual gardens. The glasshouses and related structures within the garden wall have gone, replaced by residential buildings and associated structures. A new house recently constructed in the east corner opposite the Stag Inn, on the site of the former smithy, alters the dispositions of the south entrance to the village and is prominent in views from the Cheddington road approach to The Green.

#### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

This contributes strongly to the culmination of the southern approach to the village having passed the showcase items of Cheddington Drive, Dairy Cottage and Dairy Farm. The tall brick wall is an important visual feature defining the entrance along with the Stag opposite, also with a brick garden wall. The roofs of glasshouses would have been visible formerly with the Manor House upper levels beyond. The historic character has been altered by a recent house in the south corner.



### 11.2.8 Character Area 8: Kitchen Garden and Orchards

This was the extensive productive horticultural showpiece of the designed landscape, intended to provide an extravagant and tightly-controlled display for the family and visitors. It contrasted with the more enclosed glasshouse yard in size and openness. It developed in phases from c.1860s as it was said that Mayer did not initially want a kitchen garden. The initial south-east section was present by 1879 and was walled only to the north-east and south-east. The formal layout was completed with the north-west sections leading up the slope to Boyd of Paisley's magnificent domed conservatory flanked by lean-to wings stretching over 80m along the great terrace, completed in 1891. This showcase overlooked the kitchen garden and enjoyed an extensive view towards the Chilterns. It formed a landmark from the London – Birmingham Railway. The completed garden was laid out in a grid pattern with two axial pools. Dairy Cottage on the road frontage was built in 1859 to designs by Stokes, above the adjacent Dairy farm (later Home Farm) and formed a key feature in views within the garden and from the conservatory. The orchards extended from the north-east corner of The Green to halfway towards the railway line.

Today the kitchen garden is abandoned and is a grazed paddock within the three brick boundary walls, the fourth having only been closed by a belt of trees and iron fencing. The conservatory on the great terrace has collapsed. Dairy Cottage is occupied, recently upgraded by the Rosebery estate, but unfortunately painted white. Dairy Farm has been converted into eight dwellings as Rosebery Mews. Most of the orchard trees have long gone, the land being arable. The relatively small section closest to the Green was replanted in the mid-1940s as a traditional orchard but has not been managed for some time and is in poor condition. A house, 'The Orchard', has been built at the north-eastern corner of the Green between estate housing and a bungalow ('Haselden House') which was originally also part of the estate. The kitchen garden and the conservatories share their orientation, their elevated terraced platform for the conservatory and their axial plan with circular features, with Paxton's Crystal Palace and the associated Park after it had been erected at Sydenham.

#### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

Intentionally and prominently situated on the slopes that contribute to the character of the village, the former kitchen garden is a key part of the country house estate, even though it was not part of the original concept. It contributed to the activities and pleasures sought by the residents and guests occupying the mansion. Although divorced from the main ornamental landscape visually and by a road, turning its back on the body of the village, it forms a large discrete enclosure that has not been irreversibly developed. The open character and framework remain, it retains its formidable and characterful walls and the great terrace, but the layout is largely gone except for the axial two pools and ash tree. The glasshouse is beyond redemption, but much of its ironwork and the brick walls remain.

### 11.2.9 Character Area 9: South Park

This area forms the most prominent park setting for the mansion, framing views from the two main fronts, forecourt and Main and Cheddington Drives. Enclosed by Big Wood and the trees flanking Cheddington Drive, it contained the most significant park planting. These plantations framed distant view of the Chilterns. The character has been greatly damaged by the introduction of the golf course over nearly all of it west of Cheddington Drive, particularly the provision of a large pond, fairway planting, greens and bunkers, paths and a drive to the club house. The golf course is currently closed and maintained to a minimal standard. The east section is still grazed and retains ridge and furrow.

### Significance and contribution to Area character

Despite the modern damage, this area retains its important function as the most significant parkland element of the wider designed setting of the mansion including in views. It makes a key contribution in the approaches to the mansion from The Green and Cheddington roads, including the Grand Avenue.

#### 11.2.10 Character Area 10 West Park

This represents the wider western parkland setting for the mansion and pleasure ground, containing Crafton Lodge, Wing Lodge and their respective drives. It can be characterised as ornamental agricultural land and was never planted to supplement surviving hedgerow trees, but had a belt thrown round it in phases, most ornamentally along its north boundary. It also formed the wider setting of Big Wood and North Wood. It formed part of the model agricultural regime set up by Mayer Rothschild.

The park survives, but is seriously damaged by the overlay of the golf course, particularly because of the large and prominent clubhouse and the usual golf course features densely distributed and the result of considerable ground remodelling. Wing Drive is grassed although some of the double avenue of horse chestnuts survive, and the site of its designed entrance is obscured in the garden curtilage of Honeysuckle Cottage (the former Wing Lodge as extended), the gateway having gone.

### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

This part of the park forms a large part of the setting of the mansion, is the direct setting for the listed Crafton Lodge, Wing Lodge and the adjacent Crafton Conservation Area (designated September 2005).

#### 11.2.11 Character Area 11: East Park

Like the West Park the East Park was little ornamented with planting. It functioned as the paddock for the adjacent Dairy Farm. The main planting related to its western boundary to Chestnut Avenue north-east of Cheddington Avenue with two irregular plantations at either end to screen views and features. East Park was a key part of the wider designed setting of views south-east from the mansion, and formed an element of the approach to the village from Cheddington. It contained the Estate water works near its south-east boundary.

The area survives largely intact. It is farmed as arable leaving a strip of grass in which the avenue stands. The water works has been converted to residential, and the former chimney lost. The avenue is in decline and some lost specimens have been replanted. The iron estate roadside fencing remains in places, but is in poor condition and supplemented by an historically inappropriate hedge.

### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

The area is important to the character of the approach to the village from Cheddington, to the setting of the Grand Avenue, and in views south-east from the mansion and terraces. It is also part of the immediate setting of the Dairy Farm, the kitchen garden, and former orchards.

#### 11.2.12 Character Area 12: North Park

Like South and West Park, this area can be characterised as ornamented agricultural land with little designed tree planting. A high number of hedgerow trees were retained, mostly elm, now gone. The main function was as the setting of the public roads from Wing and Leighton Buzzard. It features in views from the approach to the village from Leighton Buzzard, and in the panoramic views northward from the Green. It includes the estate gas and electricity works adjacent to the Wing road. It contains a C20 cricket ground and a farmstead nearby.

The area has survived intact, but is managed now largely as arable rather than pasture. Many trees have gone and some of the field boundaries. The gas and electricity works have been converted to residential use.

### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

The area forms the setting for the northern village approaches. Views over it are a fundamental element of the character of the Green.

#### 11.2.13 Character Area 13: Cheddington (Grand) Avenue

The Avenue dominates the showy approach to the mansion from Cheddington Station, framing a view of the tops of the towers. Covering just over 1km (0.6 miles) the public road is flanked by a unique avenue created on an heroic scale to a design by Joseph Paxton, executed by Veitch Nurseries by 1863. The avenue is 190m wide. Each side comprises nine roundels of mixed trees and shrubs alternating with trios of Wellingtonias set in grass. There are views to each side and tantalising glimpses of the upper levels of the mansion. The planting was supplemented in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with an inner roadside avenue of mixed lime and horse chestnut some of which survive.

This important feature survives largely intact and retains much of the essential historic character. The flowering shrubs in the tree roundels have largely gone and some of the trees have died, including a few Wellingtonias. Some of the spaces between the tree planting have become obscured by scrub or poplar trees.

### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

This key element of the landscape design is one of the few features directly attributable to Paxton and is unique in design. It is a remarkable and significant formal element in the setting of the village and the park and makes a major contribution to the public realm.

## 11.3 The Village

The compact built village nucleus, together with the varied buildings arranged in linear fashion, straggling along the Wing and Cheddington roads, with the open space of The Green, are of the utmost significance to this identity area and to the Conservation Area character as the focus of the settlement. As a highly ornamental estate village it complements the design and ornamentation of the surrounding park and agricultural land which comprises the rest of the country house ensemble.

### 11.3.1 The Green

The Green is the nucleus of the village and forms a very public part of the designed landscape of the country house estate, open to all. It appears never to have been totally enclosed by village buildings, perhaps because the road from Leighton Buzzard and Ledburn arrived along the very edge of the precipitous ridge on which the village is located. A sense of enclosure is provided by the magnificent crescent of thirteen lime trees fringing the outer sides of The Green (only those on the north-west edge are shown by 1879 (OS), but none were shown in 1899).

The few houses built actually on The Green are of cottage scale and unusually turn their back on it, preferring to face the village street on its south side. The green, surrounding roads and the front gardens of the houses, combine instead to form an attractive space that flows informally around the buildings in the



village. Neither the trunks of the limes nor the iron park fencing obstruct the fine panoramic views northwards towards Wing and Ascott over the North Park. A group of large, pleasant C20/C21 houses immediately north and north-east of The Green stand in spacious gardens: Happily, those opposite the former School are visually open to the road. Some contain historic and protected trees. However, the modern houses here represent the maximum development that can be accommodated without unacceptable damage to the setting of the Green.

### *Significance and contribution to Area character*

The Rothschild estate buildings in the Vale of Aylesbury are a remarkable architectural and social legacy apparently unparalleled in their unity of style and number in the mid-late C19. It is even more remarkable that the settlements were constructed for a number of estate owners of the same family who chose to express their philanthropy and taste in the same style. Of this outstanding group of estate villages Mentmore is:

- A notable model village, comparable in scale with Halton, with a high proportion of estate buildings in the settlement including public buildings. These survive intact, with later additions that are largely well screened from key vistas.
- One of the best-preserved, least altered Rothschild estate villages, retaining the Picturesque variety of scale, materials and irregular layout established by 1880, with the essential village green setting and contributions by buildings adjacent in the pleasure ground.
- Not the most extensive of Rothschild estate villages. A relatively compact layout (confined to one side of the village green).
- The village/ communal buildings are self-effacing in size, style and visibility, especially the school and village hall.
- The Stag is comparable as a village inn with the Five Arrows at Waddesdon, although it contributes as a major village building and focal feature it is considerably more restrained in architectural style, materials and in size.

#### 11.3.2 The Wider Village & Approach Roads

The Green is approached via three roads, all of which have village buildings alongside them to varying degrees in a form of ribbon development. The main group along the dog-legged Wing road comprises a linear straggle of disparate buildings from various periods leading past the former Wing Lodge, the converted gas and electricity plants, then south-east to the stables and the church, and then east up the hill. Although in varying styles, purposes and scales, together the inner buildings form a harmonious village scene with a high level of ornamentation. They include Manning's 1880 Laundry cluster, the medieval church, Ferrey's 1851 vicarage, the 1870s stables including a characteristic cottage by Devey, and The Cottage, Mayer Rothschild's temporary residence. Little later development has occurred, and only at a small scale, including a recent garage for the Vicarage and a bungalow conversion of former Vicarage outbuildings adjacent to the north, causing little significant damage to the character.

Leading south-east away from the Green down the hill towards Cheddington the few scattered buildings were, until very recently, purely estate structures, including Aspell's Bothy, set back and end-on to the road, but visible high above the approach road, Stokes's Dairy (1859), designed as a key feature at the angle of the road. Immediately below is the Home or Dairy Farm, a mid-C19 model farmstead now converted to residential units. This small group contributes strongly to establish the character of a well-managed country estate, together with the garden wall of The Stag, the garden wall of the Manor House/former glasshouse yard and the remains of iron park fencing. This dispersed group has recently been altered by the construction of a house at the south corner of the former glasshouse yard; because of its greater scale than the building it replaced, it is prominent as seen from the upper levels of the approach road and in front of The Stag at the crest of the hill.

The final outpost of the village is isolated to the north-east on the Leighton Buzzard road. Stud House, the former Manor Farm is set away from the Green with the former Mentmore Stud, now converted to residential units with parking neatly provided under trellis screening.

*Significance and contribution to Area character*

- The variety of buildings arranged in linear fashion, straggling along the Wing and Cheddington roads, herald the more strongly planned open space of the Green, leading up to the plateau and the ornamental and functional focus of the village as well as to the grandest entrance to the park.
- These approaches are of the utmost significance to this identity area and to the Conservation Area character as the focus of the settlement.
- The 1850s vicarage/church group, built by the Diocese, is closely related visually and contrasts stylistically with the more numerous Rothschild village buildings.

## **12 Alterations to the Conservation Area boundary**

The previous Conservation Area boundary was relatively tightly drawn to include the Mansion, the terraces and parterres around it, and the village green, linked by the main drive and its environs, with the area around the church and stables to the north. This followed a relatively arbitrary boundary in relation to the country house ensemble and extent of the estate village character.

Alterations to the Conservation Area boundary have been prompted by advances in scholarship, and greater understanding of Victorian architecture, designed landscapes and social conditions. In addition, the private country estate character of the area has changed with the advent of new houses in the village and residential conversions of redundant estate buildings, the deteriorating condition of the mansion and its designed landscaped setting, the considerable length of time since the original designation, and the brevity of the existing document.

The extended Conservation Area reflects this better understanding of the integral character and development of Mentmore Towers, its designed landscape and estate village as developed during the mid-late nineteenth century.

It now includes (starting from the south) Paxton's Grand Avenue from where it commences immediately north of the former Aylesbury branch railway and thus includes the Cheddington Lodge (listed Grade II). Near the Lodge the boundary turns south westwards and then north westwards to include the whole of the Mansion's inner park as a critical part of its designed setting. Approaching the Crafton Conservation Area (designated on 14 September 2005) the revised boundary takes in Crafton Lodge (also listed Grade II).

It skirts the Crafton Conservation Area which already covers the pastures associated with Crafton Stud, and turns east along the Crafton Road and takes in the road to Wing with its planted clumps outside the former Wing Lodge and its tree avenue and 'rond point' at the Mentmore cross roads.

The Conservation Area includes Wing Lodge as extended and its substantial modern neighbours. Continuing along the northern side of the Wing road, at the sharp corner it turns northwards and follows the line of the edge of the estate as shown on early OS mapping. This line takes the boundary eastward across to the road from Ledburn to include the former Mentmore Stud (now Howell Hill Close) and the modern houses between the Green and Howell Hill Close.

Running down the hill to the brook at its foot the boundary follows the brook until the outer end of the estate's original orchard is reached. The boundary skirts the orchard and follows the parish boundary south westwards (including the house constructed on the site of the Estate's water works but excluding the site of the former Model Farm (now Mentmore Park Farm) and returns to the Grand Avenue.

The following discussion of the Conservation Area additions is split into two sections:

**Section A:** Discussion of areas considered for inclusion.

**Section B:** Summary table setting out the significances of the areas followed by maps of the current and proposed boundaries.

The intention is to create a contiguous and logical boundary in which the planning authority has confidence. Historic significance here relates to the historic environment as eligible for inclusion in a Conservation Area



based on Historic England guidance. Specifically, the level of local and greater significance to the Mentmore Towers country house estate.<sup>5</sup>

## 12.1 Section A: Discussion of areas considered for inclusion.

### 12.1.1 Registered Landscape not in the original Conservation Area

#### *Historic Significance: HIGH*

This forms the majority of the nationally significant Grade II\* Registered mid-late-C19 designed landscape, integral and contiguous with the existing Conservation Area, including the Grade I listed mansion, and connects seamlessly with the part of the designated Conservation Area around the mansion. It has a strong historical connection with the other elements of the Mentmore country house estate which is proposed for inclusion. It includes the listed Cheddington and Crafton Lodges.

#### *Level of survival of historic fabric: MEDIUM/HIGH*

The historic boundaries and much of the historic fabric survive. Planting is degraded: a golf course overlies part of the park, altering the land form, with a modern club house. There is a relatively small and localised amount of development, around Wing Lodge. The kitchen garden is derelict, but the majority of the framework survives so the original plan is recognisable and its significance can be recognised and better protected.

✓ *Included in revised designation*

### 12.1.2 North Avenue

#### *Historic Significance: MEDIUM*

The straight planted public approach to the park entering at the former Wing Lodge, it runs between the Mentmore crossroads, marked at the north end by clumps in the quadrants making a roundel in plan, leading between a lime tree avenue to the south end marked by two further clumps framing Wing Lodge. In place by 1879 and thus part of the overall ornamental concept as a significant public approach to the park (from Aylesbury and Wing), echoing the most significant public approach along the Grand Avenue to the south from London. Avenue trees probably replanted in early C20. It has high visual/design connection with the Registered park.

#### *Level of survival of historic fabric: HIGH*

The fabric survives largely intact. Some avenue trees have gone but roundels survive, and still recognisably a strong designed feature. A group of trees at the south-east corner are protected.

✓ *Included in revised designation*

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<sup>5</sup> An area has to be identified by the local authority as having a definite architectural quality or historic interest to merit designation ([NPPF paragraph 127](#)). Revised edition of HE guidance to be issued.

### 12.1.3 North Park

#### *Historic Significance: HIGH-MEDIUM*

An extensive area of ornamented agricultural land, an integral part of the Estate's mid-late-C19 model agricultural regime and part of the parkland and village presentation. It largely used former hedgerow elms as ornamental planting. The slope up to the village was always important in views on the main approaches and from the nearby Rothschild Ascott House and grounds, much as the East Park forms the frame for views from the south. It is an integral part of the north and west approaches to the village and main park entrance. Its bowl-like curved topography is visually pleasant when seen from the village green and from the west approach with which it enjoys strong visual links providing the foreground for important views back to Wing and Ascott.

The main built features are the Gas and Electricity plants grouped on the west boundary by the Wing road which were part of a group of innovative C19 technological structures provided by the Rothchilds/Roseberys along with the Fire Engine House and former Water Works.

#### *Level of survival of historic fabric: MEDIUM*

This area survives as open agricultural land divided into several fields without later development, (extent shown in grey on early C19/early C20 maps). While the landform and boundaries are unchanged the historic trees (elm) are largely gone. The Gas and Electricity plants have been converted to residential and still form features on the Wing approach.

✓ *Included in the revised designation*

### 12.1.4 Gas and Electricity Plants including Spinney Cottage (the former Gas House) and the Coach House

#### *Historic Significance: MEDIUM*

These buildings represent the innovative technology available to the mid-C19 country house estate. They are detached from the core village buildings, but their prominence in treed enclosures on the approach from the north heralds the particular estate character of the Village, its significance as a model estate community and the integral relationship with Mentmore Towers and its park.

#### *Level of survival of historic fabric: HIGH-MEDIUM*

The gas holder and industrial equipment have gone; the buildings are converted to residential use, but much of the fabric and character survives. The conversion has somewhat altered the appearance of the former gas plant ('The Coach House'), the most prominent, standing on the roadside and an ornamented building, but it is still recognisable as an estate building. The location is adjacent to both the Registered Landscape and North Park.

✓ *Included in the revised designation*

### 12.1.5 Stud House and Howell Hill Close

#### *Historic Significance: HIGH*

These significant and visually prominent early C20 buildings (The former Mentmore Stud and the former groom's house) were slightly detached from the village core by an orchard. They represent, as a public stud, the horse racing interests shared by the creator of the estate and his son-in-law, both hugely

influential and famous in these activities. They represent the redevelopment from c.1914 of the former Manor Farm, the original farm buildings of which had themselves been replaced as a model farm a relatively short time previously.

*Level of survival of historic fabric: HIGH*

No fabric survives from the C19 because the farmhouse and its model farm courtyard were replaced with Stud buildings virtually on the same footprint. The early C20 buildings are of considerable interest in themselves and the residential conversion of the former Stud has retained much of its historic fabric and its character.

✓ *Included in the revised designation*



## 12.2. Section B: Summary of significance and areas considered for inclusion.

Key: Green = merits inclusion      Red = does not merit inclusion

High significance /High survival	High significance /Medium survival	High significance /Low survival
Medium significance /High survival	Medium significance /Medium survival	Medium significance/ Low survival
Low significance /High survival	Low significance / Medium survival	Low significance /Low survival

Ref	Area	Historic Significance	Level of Survival of Historic Fabric	Inclusion
1	Historic England Registered designed landscape 258 ha. not in Conservation Area (c.12 ha. core already included)	<b>High:</b> The majority of the nationally significant designed landscape, integral with area already included. Strong visual connection with rest of country house estate and approaches via Wing and Cheddington.	<b>High-medium:</b> Planting degraded; a golf course overlies part of the park with new club house, localised development, kitchen garden derelict; majority of framework survives	Yes
2	North Avenue, ½ mile long along Wing road, c.3 ha.	<b>Medium:</b> 750m long, flanks part of key northern public route from Aylesbury/Wing terminated by clumps at either ends including Mentmore Crossroads. Echoes south approach along Grand Avenue, but of lesser magnitude of size/ magnificence reflecting hierarchy of a less important approach. One of main external ornamented approaches to a main park entrance, mid-C19. High visual & design connection with park (ref 1 above).	<b>High:</b> Probably replanted in early C20. Some avenue trees have gone (estimate up to 1/3) but otherwise undamaged	Yes
3	North Park (extent shown on C19 OS) NW of village green, c.100 ha.	<b>High-Medium:</b> Extensive ornamented agricultural land, integral part of mid-C19 model agricultural regime; frames village green & two main approaches to park (from Wing & Leighton Buzzard); compliments other park areas, but lower level of ornamental planting as it used existing trees instead. Gas and Electricity plant group important in country house technology; forms ornamented feature in Wing approach. High visual connection with approaches & green.	<b>Medium :</b> Survives as open agricultural land with some hedgerows, estate iron railings on side of Green. Most historic trees (elm), which marked former field boundaries, largely gone. Gas and Electricity plant group remains. Gas holder gone, buildings converted to residential, still important contribution to ensemble, Gas House (now The Coach House) particularly visible on main approach.	Yes

4	Gas/Electricity plants, next to Wing road, part of North Park, adjacent to Area 3 above. 0.5 ha.	<b>Medium:</b> Part of innovative technology of mid-late C19 country house estate. Medium visual connection; localised ornamental feature on one of the main public approaches.	<b>High-Medium:</b> Gas holder gone, buildings converted to residential, still important contribution to ensemble, Gas House particularly visible on main approach. Set in treed enclosures.	Yes
5	Stud House & Howell Hill Close, L Buzzard road, NE of village green 1.3 ha. area	<b>High:</b> Formerly Manor Farm, part of renowned mid-late C19 racehorse breeding operation with Crafton Stud. Prominent in approach from Leighton Buzzard.	<b>High:</b> Farm buildings converted to residential, external character preserved and otherwise largely intact.	Yes
6	Fields behind/ east of Stud House/ Howell Hill Close. 35 ha.	<b>Low:</b> Agricultural land adjacent to former stud but without special features. High visual connection with Manor Farm stud from E & SE including the railway.	<b>High:</b> Little change from C19 layout.	No

## **13 Sensitivity of setting to change and effect on the heritage assets**

The sensitivity or vulnerability of the setting to change and the consequent impacts on Mentmore Towers, park and village is dependent on the nature of the change. A range of potential effects on the setting have been identified:

### **13.1 Through the Planning Process**

The effect of proposals will vary depending on the proximity to the study area and levels of inter-visibility, and the relative height, elevation, scale and external aesthetics (e.g. colour, cladding material). Proposals within view should be scrutinised in detail to ensure that harm of key views is not sustained.

#### **High impact**

Large-scale or visually intrusive developments, such as housing estates, warehousing, tall structures such as wind turbines, and new road or rail schemes

#### **Moderate impact**

Small scale development, such as single house-plots, barns associated with existing farmstead, substantial changes to the appearance or use of a Listed Building. Visually prominent development or changes on the Chiltern scarp; the effect of these will alter depending on the distance from the study area, e.g. Pitstone Hill and Ivinghoe Beacon are the closest and most visually sensitive and therefore small-scale changes may damage views; the scarp at Chequers/Kimble is most distant and only larger scale changes are likely to be visible.

#### **Low impact**

Extensions, small-scale changes to Listed Buildings e.g. sensitively designed extensions and sympathetic small-scale changes to listed buildings.

### **13.2 Via Land Management**

Re-location of the golf course outside the park into the wider agricultural would be less damaging than remaining within the designed landscape, provided that no other significant heritage assets were significantly damaged in the process.

#### **High impact**

Removal of hedgerows, standard or parkland trees, significant changes to land-use, including woodland clearance, or other significant woody planting in key views close to the study area, substantial changes in agricultural practices (e.g. from pasture to indoor poultry-rearing)

#### **Moderate impact**

Changes to agricultural practice, such as from pasture to equine culture, and changes to land-use

#### **Low impact**

Minor changes in agricultural practice or land use.



**13.3. Sensitivity of Mentmore's setting significance to changes to assets**

<b>Asset group</b>	<b>Contribution to significance</b>	<b>Sensitivity to change</b>
Rural topography and landscape, includes medieval and post-medieval landscape features (DMVs, ridge and furrow, farms, fields, lanes, footpaths etc.), locally significant designed landscapes.	Major positive	Vulnerable both to high impact developments and to the incremental effect of numerous moderate to low impact developments in this area also to changes of land management.
Designated heritage assets.	Major positive	Vulnerable both to high impact developments and to the incremental effect of numerous moderate to low impact developments in this area; also to changes of land management.
Former Parkland e.g. Wing Park.	Major positive	Vulnerable both to high impact developments and to the incremental effect of numerous moderate to low impact developments in this area also to changes of land management.
Undesignated surviving archaeological sites.	Moderate-major positive	Vulnerable both to high impact developments and to the incremental effect of numerous moderate to low impact developments in this area also to changes of land management.
Excavated archaeological sites.	Moderate positive	No longer vulnerable.

## 14 Management Plan

There are several key features of Mentmore that are essential elements of its character and which need to be considered in the future management of the Conservation Area.

AVDC has laid out general principles of Conservation Area Management in the following document:

- AVDC Conservation Area Management Plan District Wide Strategy (2009):  
<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/conservation-area-management-plan>
- AVDC Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (2011):  
<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/aylesbury-vale-conservation-spd>

The site-specific points below are to be read in conjunction with these documents and are not intended to be a management plan in themselves:

- Maintain the integrity of the designed landscape and its setting.
- It is also important to maintain the connection between the village, designed landscape and surrounding countryside, gained in part through views.
- Maintain the character and setting of the conservation area, especially through the preservation of the hedges, trees, open spaces, boundary treatments and verges.
- Maintain all heritage assets and encourage the retention and restoration of historic features within the conservation area.
- Where new development is deemed acceptable ensure that its form, layout, massing, materials and design reflect and respect the key characteristics of the built historic environment of the conservation area as identified within this document.
- Maintain the character of the village through the rationalisation of signage, street furniture and overhead wiring. This can be achieved through undertaking a street furniture audit, (refer to the Aylesbury Vale Highway Protocol: <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/highway-protocol>)

*Residents and stakeholders will have an opportunity to propose additional principles as part of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan consultation.*

## 15 Recommendations

As well as further exploration to confirm the date and significance of the archaeological finds made over 150 years ago, further recording will help understand the history and function of the various elements introduced in the designed landscape around the Mansion.

There is archaeological potential represented by the locations of former farmsteads and by lost estate buildings and the former village elements absorbed into the mansion's landscape (see below).

Where appropriate specify orange/red brick and promote English bond or Flemish bond brickwork for repairs in the Conservation Area.

Restore estate metal fencing wherever damaged and replace where lost.

*Residents and stakeholders will have an opportunity to propose additional recommendations as part of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan consultation.*

## 16 Guidance and Useful Information

### 16.1 References

Aylesbury Vale District Council, 'Crafton Conservation Area' (2005).

Dix, B 'Mentmore Towers – Archaeology Report' (2001) (unpublished report in HER).

Girouard M, *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House* Yale (1983)

Ireland, G., *Plutocrats A Rothschild Inheritance* John Murray (2007).

Page, W. (ed.), *Victoria History of the County of Buckinghamshire* vol. 3 (1925), 397-401.

Pevsner N and Williamson E., *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 1994).

Place Services, 'Mentmore Park and Village: Assessment of Setting' (2018) (unpublished report for Aylesbury Vale District Council).

Soughton C, 'George Devey and the Rothschild estate buildings in the Vale of Aylesbury' in *Records of Bucks* vol. 55 (2015), 261-85.

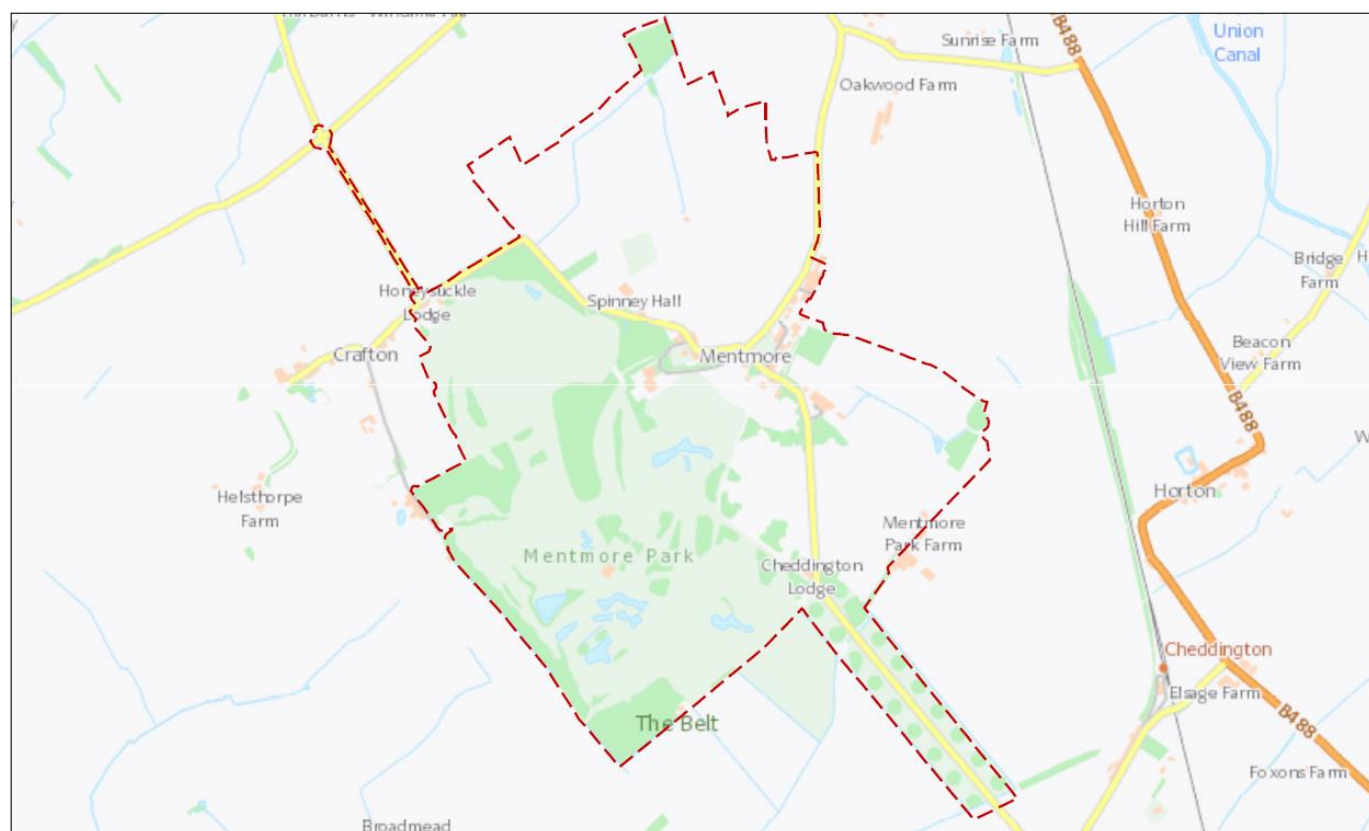
SR Historic Environment Ltd, 'Mentmore Historic Landscape Analysis' (2018) (unpublished report for Aylesbury Vale District Council, includes extensive references list).



## **16.2 Useful Information on AVDC's Website**

- [Aylesbury Vale Conservation Area Supplementary Planning Document](#)
- [Conservation area leaflet](#)
- [Conservation area management plan](#)
- [Converting traditional farm buildings](#)
- [Doors in historic and listed buildings](#)
- [Glossary of terms](#)
- [List of Conservation Areas](#)
- [Map of conservation areas in the district](#)
- [Planning constraints and Planning Policy](#)
- [Satellite dishes](#)
- [Shop front information](#)
- [Thatching](#)
- [Windows in historic and listed buildings](#)
- [Witchert buildings](#)

## 17 APPENDIX 1: Adopted Conservation Area Boundary



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**Mentmore Conservation Area Review**  
Adopted Mentmore Conservation Area Boundary



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*The Adopted Conservation Area*

## **18 APPENDIX 2: Mentmore Building Periods**

The following list attempts to outline the main building chronology. This is problematic in places as the origins of some structures are unclear except for circumstantial evidence.

### *Pre 1840*

- Parish church (medieval, restored 1850s)
- Manor House (C17/C18)
- Manor House garden walls
- Chapel (later incorporated in school)

### *1840s*

#### *For Baron Mayer de Rothschild*

- Hunting stables and kennels (gone)
- Possibly The Cottage (Nos. 2 & 3)
- The Stag (pre-1852)

### *1850s*

#### *For Baron Mayer de Rothschild*

- Mansion (1850s)
- Cottages: The Green numbers 14 & 16, 34
- The Dairy (1859)
- The Gas House (as Gas Works, 1859), (Spinney Cottage and The Coach House)
- Dairy Farm (now Rosebery Mews)
- Model Farm
- Manor Farm (Howell Hill Close)
- Possibly The Cottage (Nos. 2 & 3)
- The Old Aviary as kennelman's cottage
- Church restored (mid-1850s)

#### *For Diocese*

Vicarage rebuilt (1851)

### *1860s*

#### *For Baron Mayer de Rothschild*

- Cheddington Lodge
- Honeysuckle (formerly Wing) Lodge
- Crafton Lodge
- Water Works (?mid-1860s)
- Electricity Works
- School rebuilt incorporating earlier chapel

- Cottages: The Green numbers 10 & 12 (by 1862)

### 1870s

#### *For Baron Mayer de Rothschild*

- Church Cottage
- Stable Yard including Stable Cottage
- Riding House

#### *For Hannah de Rothschild*

- Stone Lodge & Gateway
- School remodelled? With schoolmaster's house?
- Garden walls (present by 1879)
- Houses: The Green Nos. 9 & 11, 13-19, 21-25, 27, 29, 31 & 35
- Well Head

### 1880s-90s

#### *For Hannah de Rothschild and Lord Rosebery*

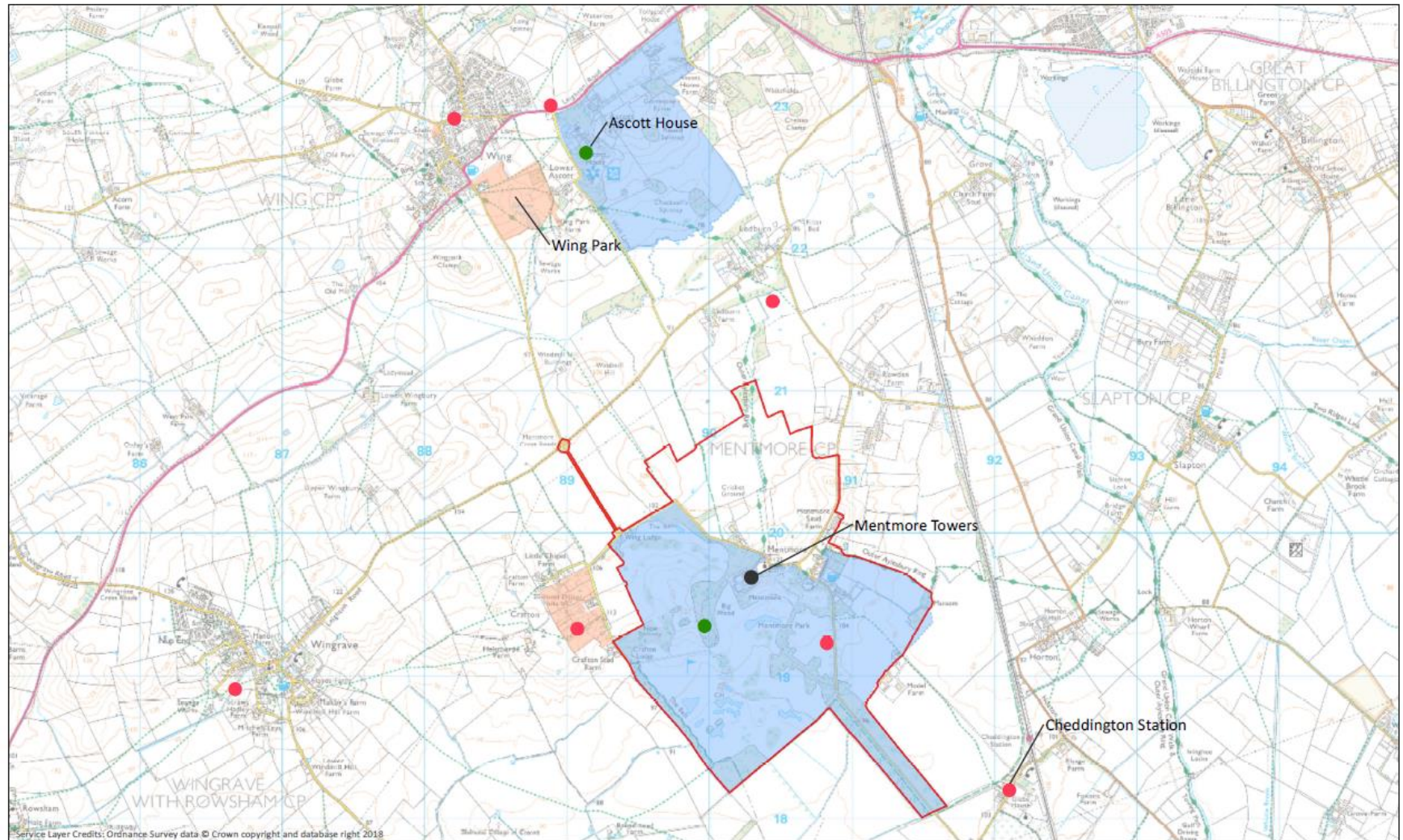
- Laundry and cottages (1880)
- Fire Engine House
- Gardeners' Bothy (1893)
- Conservatory in Walled Garden (1880s-92)
- Village Hall (as 'club house')

#### *Later C20/C21 Buildings*

- Haselden House
- The Orchard
- Lygon House
- The Grange
- Buildings in former glasshouse yard
- Weather Vane Cottage
- Maze House
- Wysteria & Woodlands next to Honeysuckle Lodge
- Golf Club House
- Golf course maintenance yard
- The Bullpen
- Bungalow on former water works site



## 19 APPENDIX 3: Historic Development & Archaeology



Service Layer Credits: Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018

N

0 250 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Meters

Scale: 1:34,000  
Paper size: A4  
Author: MH  
Created: 29/05/2020

### Mentmore Conservation Area Review

Setting of the Study Area  
Including Land Designations

- Adopted Mentmore Conservation Area
- Rothschild House
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Notable estate village or group of Rothschild properties
- Registered Parks and Gardens

*Setting of Mentmore Conservation Area including land designations*

## 19.1 Early Origins

### 19.1.1 Prehistoric

Mentmore lies within a so-called 'coaxial landscape', which was probably laid down in the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age and reinforced in the Roman period. It is characterised by roads and boundaries on a north-west – south-east alignment, perpendicular to the Chilterns ridge, which may represent drove ways originally intended to move people and animals between summer and winter grazing. There are many examples of field boundaries, roads and parish boundaries preserved on this alignment in this area, suggesting that parishes were established in a pre-existing landscape. Although the landscape within Mentmore park has been radically altered, the way the earlier landscape was aligned is still evident in the fields around it.

### 19.1.2 Roman Period

The possible line of a presumed Roman road (a possible forerunner of Watling Street and the line of the Claudian invasion of AD43) from Pitstone Green and Stewkley crosses the park through the mansion, but there is no visible trace of it and the conjectured route remains unproven. Roman finds include metalwork and a coin. Burials have been found with signs of cremation suggesting use as a Roman burying ground found in excavations for building the mansion in the early 1850s.

### 19.1.3 Anglo Saxon

Considerable evidence has been found for Anglo-Saxon occupation in the village and in surrounding settlements. An early Anglo-Saxon cemetery was discovered in the course of the construction of the mansion and in the laying-out of its pleasure garden: ten skeletons were uncovered near the Hunting Kennels (later the site of the Aviary). Associated grave-goods include weapons and an early Anglo-Saxon gilt bronze saucer brooch (probably 6<sup>th</sup> century). Other finds include a bronze Anglo- Saxon clasp. The evidence points towards an Anglo-Saxon cemetery, possibly near a Roman site. In the setting important Anglo-Saxon architecture survives in the polygonal apse and crypt of All Saints Church at Wing, 3.5 km (2 miles) north-north-west. A coin of Offa was found in the village (location unfortunately not recorded).

### 19.1.4 Early Medieval

The owner of the manor of Mentmore before the Norman Conquest was Edith, wife of King Edward the Confessor. In the time of the Domesday Book, Hugh Earl of Chester held the land at 'Mentemore'. It was assessed at 18 hides and was annexed to the Crown in 1265.

The Manor of Mentmore passed through several families including the de Cauntelows who held it in the 13th century, when it was declared to be a member of the manor of Eaton Bray (Bedfordshire: 6.5 km (4m) east). From them it passed to the de la Zouches of Harringworth in 1273.

The broad outline of the modern settlement pattern was in existence by the end of the C11. The pattern of small villages and hamlets had been established in the vicinity, including the hamlet of Crafton 1.5 km (0.9 miles) west, where a Scheduled Monument designation protects the archaeological remains of a deserted medieval village with its open fields and the site of a C17 manor house. Crafton probably originated as a 'daughter' settlement of Wing in late Saxon times with a chapel of ease last documented in 1388.

Mentmore church, dedicated to St Mary, is first recorded when the rectory was donated to St. Bartholomew's Smithfield c.1200. It contains fabric dating from the early 13th century. St Mary's stands at



the west end of the village just below the crest of the prominent ridge on which the village stands. A vicarage was noted nearby in 1234.



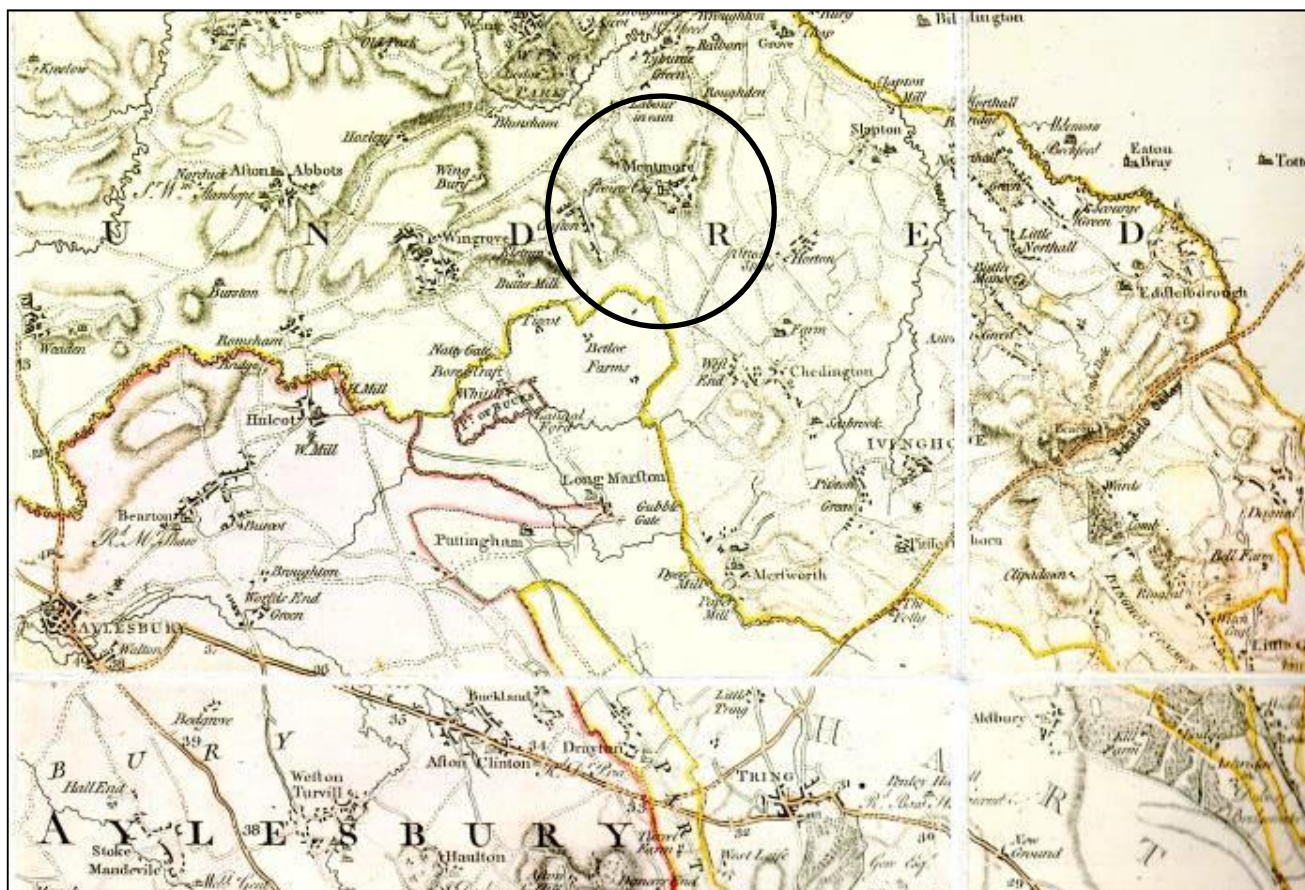
*St Mary's Church viewed from south-west*

Testament to the significance of agriculture in Mentmore's history, ridge-and-furrow survives in many of the fields surrounding the village, except for the areas transformed for aesthetic reasons in the Park to the south-south-west of the mansion where traces of the earlier Berrystead Farm (which may formerly have been a hunting lodge) have been obliterated. This name may indicate a medieval origin of some status, but it may refer to a position below a defendable hill.

A medieval manor house site was perhaps sited where a building platform has been identified near Manor Farm at the north-east end of the village.

### 19.2 Later History, Late Medieval to 1840

William de la Zouche was followed in direct descent by four generations, all bearing the name of William. Sir John de la Zouche was attainted in 1485 after the Battle of Bosworth. In 1490 Henry VII granted the manor of Mentmore to Sir Reynold Bray. The Manor passed through the Brays, the Sandys family, and the Wiggess. In 1688 the manor was conveyed to Thomas Ligoë, a relative of the Wiggess. In 1725 the manor came to John Hamilton, Lord Limerick. Jeffery's County Map of 1768 however records the village in the possession of 'Peairce Esqr'. His plan shows buildings around a central green with the church to the west and a 'big house' to the south between the two roads to Cheddington (3km (1.9m) SSE). A small cluster of buildings south-west of the village represents the lost Berrystead Farm. A group of buildings on the south side of the road leading north-eastwards indicates the earlier buildings of Manor Farm (removed later). In 1780 Lord Limerick's son James (Earl Clanbrassil) sold the lordship to Richard Bond Harcourt (who lived near Windsor). Bryant's County map of 1824 shows The Green lined on the west and south by houses. The population of the village was 279 in the 1801 Census. A non-conformist chapel in the village had been built of white brick in 1840, with Bath stone dressings and with a bell turret on one gable.



*Jefferys Map of Bucks, c.1768 Mentmore village and approximate area of later park ringed*





*Bryant's Map of Bucks, 1825 Mentmore village and approximate area of later park ringed*

### 19.3 The Development of the Country House Estate and the village

#### 19.3.1 Phase 1 1840s-74 Baron Mayer Amschel Rothschild

By the 1840s the parish was in a number of ownerships, with no single major owner, comprising local farmers and absentee landlords for whom the land was a minor part of their holdings, and of little strategic concern to them. From the Harcourt family the manor was purchased about the middle of the 19th century, by Baron Meyer Amschel de Rothschild (1818-1874), who from 1850 initiated and developed the framework of the country estate that survives today, that was developed and completed by his daughter, Hannah, and then with her husband, the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Rosebery from 1874 to the 1920s.

The story is that Mayer's mother, Hannah Barent Cohen, (1783-1850) the wife of Nathan Mayer (1777-1836) - son of Mayer Amschel Rothschild of Frankfurt (1744-1812) and one of the original 'Five Arrows' decided that her sons should get more fresh air and exercise, and in 1836 bought some land in Hastoe (south of Tring). The Rothschild children had already developed a strong liking for horse riding and hunting. In 1835 her husband bought Gunnersbury Park, Ealing, as the family country house, but died shortly after, leaving his wife in residence there. Gunnersbury was too close to London for the country sports that Nathan's sons so loved. Nathan's oldest son, Lionel, (1808-79) acquired a pack of hounds based at Hastoe in 1838. The vendor became his agent and manager for the next three years and helped to recruit new 'hunt servants' and find extra stabling for Lionel and his brothers<sup>6</sup>.

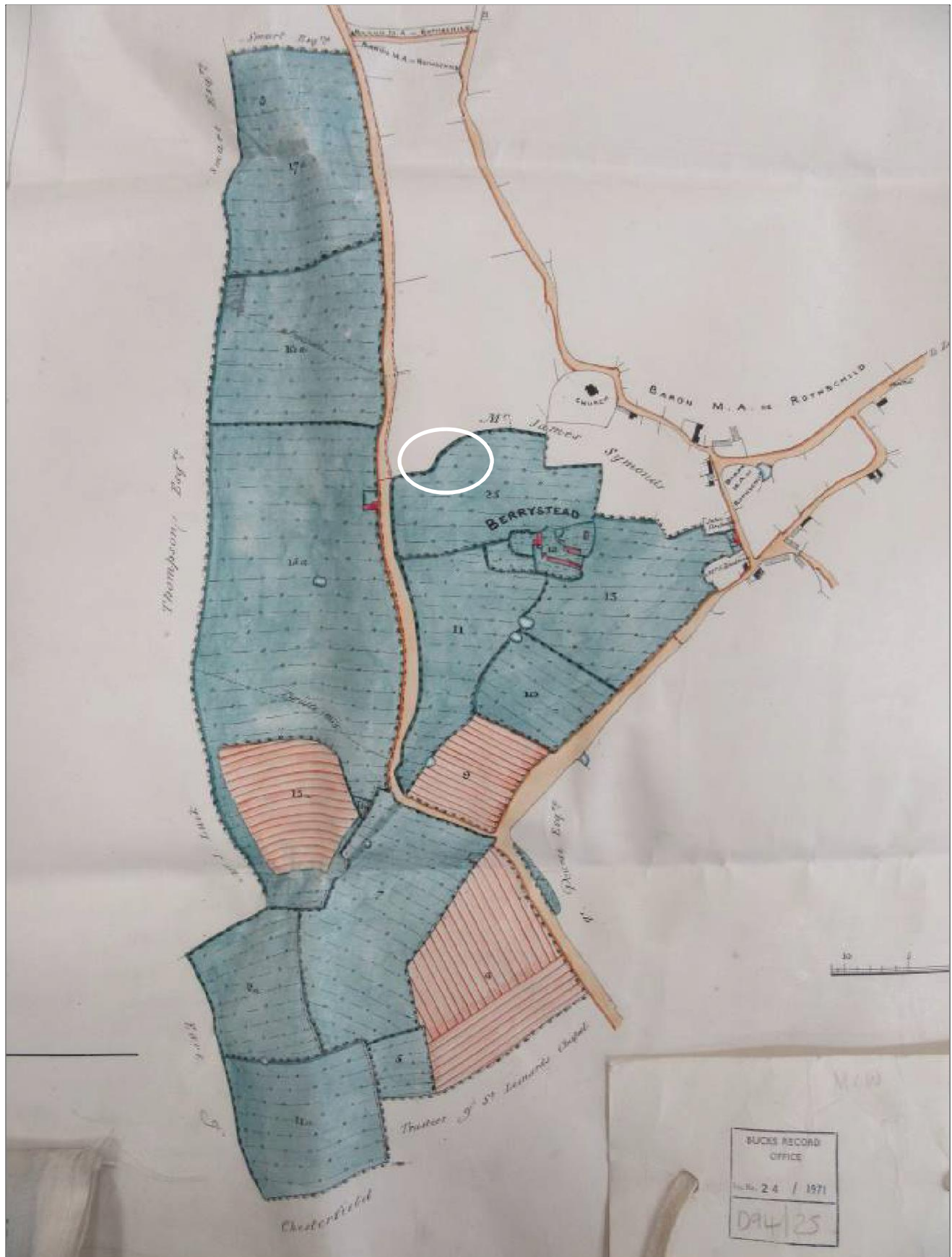
Mayer Amschel, the youngest of her four sons, began the extensive Rothschild colonisation of Buckinghamshire and acquired the title to the manor of Mentmore. Her sons had been advised by their solicitor to locate their acquisitions closely together to concentrate their influence on local matters and this eventually led to the acquisitions that developed into seven country house estates in the Vale of Aylesbury.

Mayer Amschel began by buying land in Ledburn to the north of Mentmore in 1842. The Berrystead estate followed in 1843, bought from local farmer William Warner mainly involving fields south-west of the village, including important parcels of land in the village (this land later provided the site of his new mansion). Substantial hunting stables (three sides round a square courtyard) were erected on the south-west side of The Green in 1843 along with hound kennels nearby. A Stag Inn is first noted in the village by Kelly's directory of 1847, the current building first appearing on the plan to a road order in 1852 that authorised the realignment of public thoroughfares away from the new mansion then being constructed. An earlier road order in 1844 had authorised the realignment of the road to Wing for the same reason. Land was bought from Thomas Buckmaster in 1844 to the south of the village with plots in the village. An important tract of land south of the village was purchased from Theed Pearce (a local landowner) in 1848 also including parcels of land in the village.

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<sup>6</sup> Ireland, G, (2008) 'Plutocrats' pp178-9





*Berrystead Estate 1843, south-west of the church including the site of the later mansion (ringed) and pleasure grounds (Centre for Bucks Studies ref D\_94\_25)*

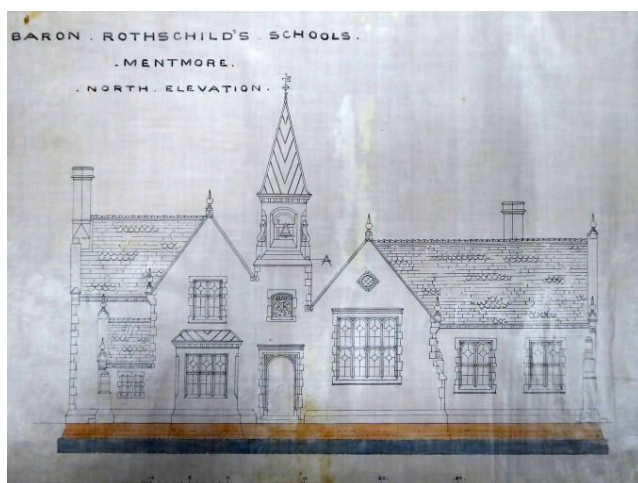
The mansion was built 1850-6 to plans by Sir Joseph Paxton and his son-in-law G H Stokes, the design inspired by Wollaton, Nottingham (1580-8 by Robert Smythson). A road order in 1851 authorised the realignment of the eastern road south to Cheddington in order to convert it into the southern approach to the mansion. This involved the appropriation of Brinage Way, the road west of the church and the former Berrystead Farm, the site of which lay to the south-east of the mansion.

The road on the south-west side of the village green and the properties fronting it were absorbed into the Mansion's pleasure grounds in 1852, being replaced by the current alignment at the same time, thus shortening the village green. Two pairs of cottages were built on former Pearce land in the village c.1855. While the Mansion was under construction The Cottage was built between the church and green as temporary accommodation for Mayer and his new wife Julia Cohen (they married in 1850).



*The Cottage*

The village's Non-Conformist chapel on the north side of The Green was purchased in January 1862. A grand plan for a new school and schoolmaster's house in Gothic style (apparently by Stokes) was drawn up but never proceeded with. Instead the chapel was incorporated into the new school with a schoolmaster's house designed with some reference to the abandoned scheme. St Mary's Church was restored and the chancel rebuilt and extended by Stokes in 1858. A substantial vicarage was built opposite the church by the Diocese, to designs by Benjamin Ferrey in 1851, with an appearance not matching anything in the village, particularly the unique use of local ironstone in small courses.



*New school and masters house plans, north Elevation (Centre for Bucks Studies ref D-RO-31)*



*The Vicarage from Church entrance*



Dairy Cottage was built to designs by Stokes in 1859 (probably at the same time that Dairy Farm was erected nearby) on former Buckminster land. These and the formal layout of the kitchen garden to the east make their first appearance on an Estate map dated 1875, but relate to arrangements considerably earlier.



*Dairy Cottage*

The impressive Grand Avenue with *Wellingtonia* trees and other ornamental trees and shrubs was planted in 1863 by James Veitch probably to plans initiated by Paxton. Substantial payments were made to Veitch and Sons between 1860-75, particularly in 1867 and 1871.

The gas works was constructed north of the Mansion in 1856. Crafton and South (Cheddington) Lodges were built to designs by Devey in 1868. Devey also designed Church Cottage (now at the NW corner of the stables next to the church) and the Riding School (since demolished, to the rear of the stables) in 1869. He also designed Wing Lodge in 1870. Considerable holdings bought from Earl Brownlow of nearby Ashridge in November 1872 extended the Estate southwards beyond the park round the west side of Cheddington. Mayer Amschel died in 1874 leaving his daughter Hannah as a supremely wealthy heiress and the country house estate established to his vision, with scope for insertions by his successors within that framework.

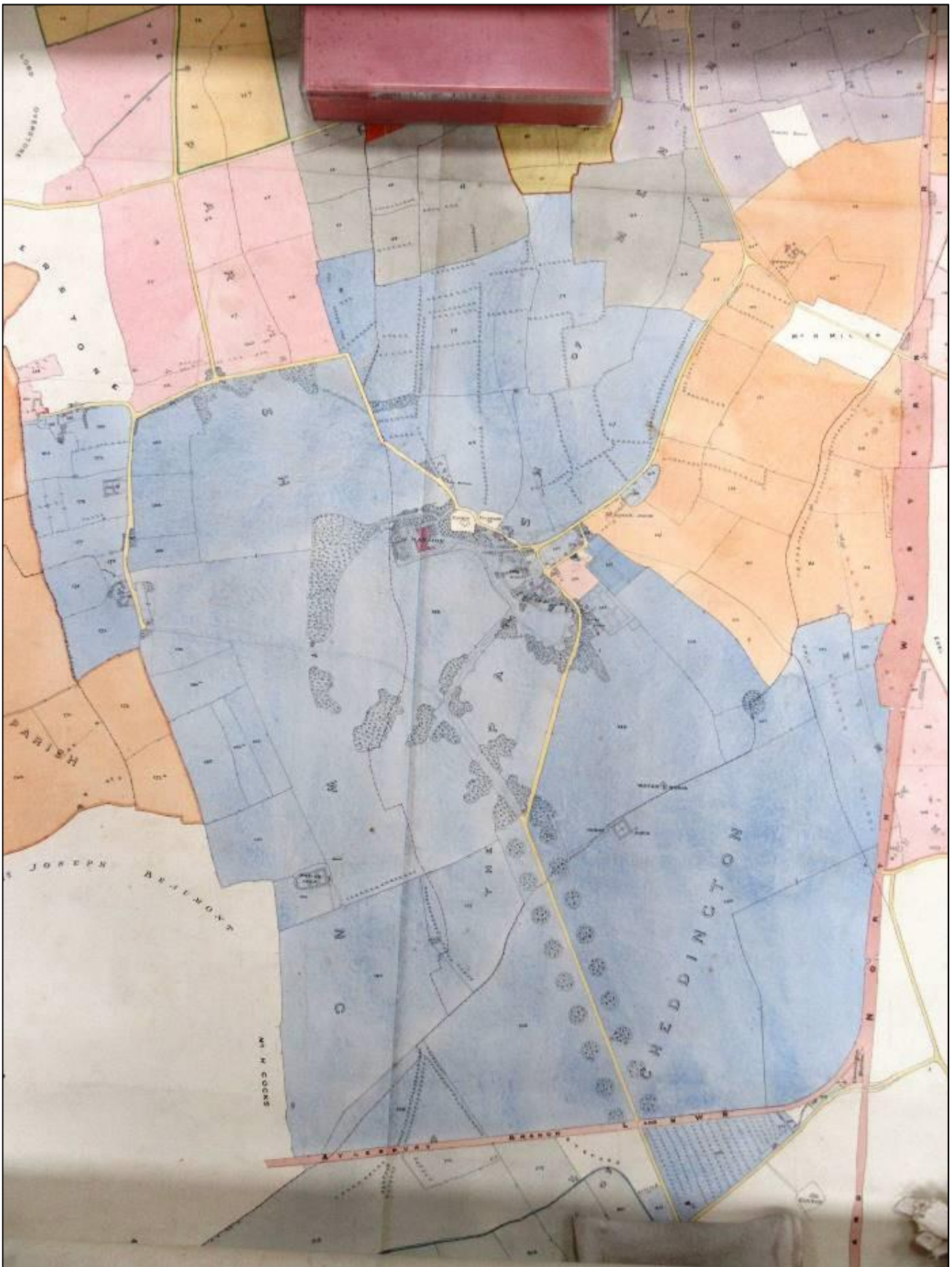


*Church Cottage viewed from north*



*Wing Lodge*

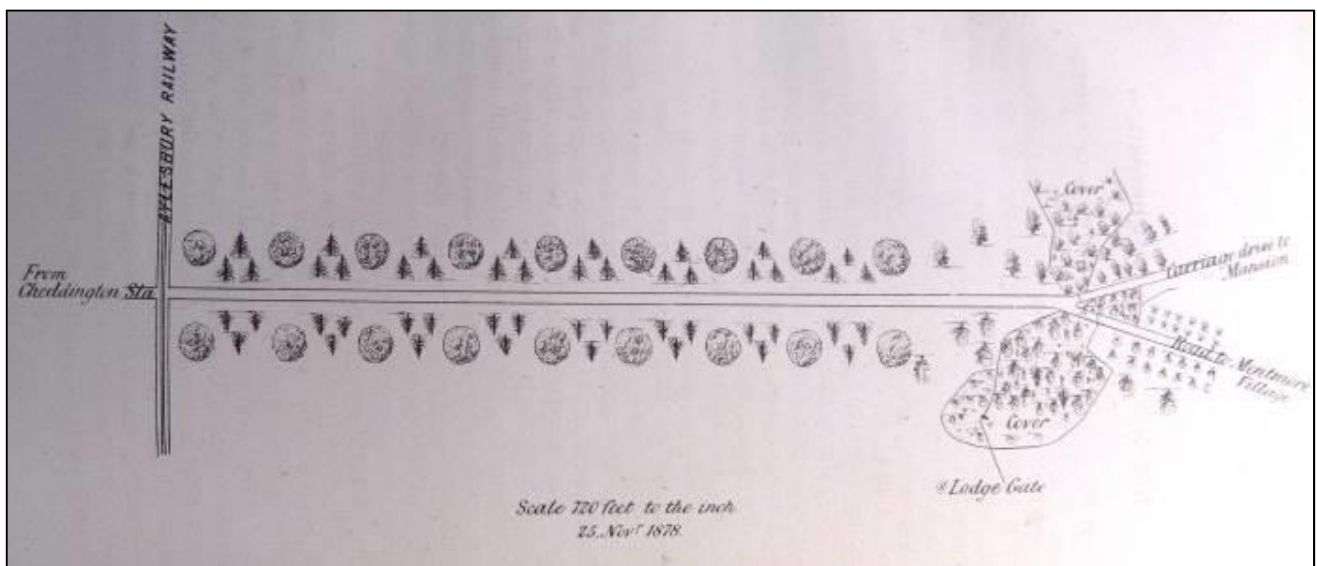




*Mentmore estate map, 1875, showing the newly laid out park and Grand Avenue to the south (Centre for Bucks Studies ref D\_RO\_10\_12)*



Mentmore estate map, 1875, core showing the newly laid out pleasure grounds and village Green before Hannah Rothschild's building campaign (Centre for Bucks Studies ref D\_R0\_10\_12)



The Grand Avenue between Cheddington station and Mentmore Park, laid out in 1863, plan of 1878, published in the Journal of Forestry. The trios of conifers are the newly introduced Wellingtonia. The circles were mixed ornamental trees with ornamental shrubs below

(Journal of Forestry 1878-79)



### 19.3.2 Phase 2 1874-79 Hannah Rothschild

The second phase was conducted by Hannah for a period of five years, 1874-79, after her father's death in 1874. In March 1878, Hannah married Lord Rosebery. She was largely concerned with developing the village of Mentmore as a picturesque estate village in Old English style (drawing on Tudor and Jacobean architectural styles externally) for estate workers, alongside a more ambitious scheme for Wingrave.

The Baron's hunting stables and kennels on the former south side of The Green were demolished and Hannah laid out a pleasure garden in their place, including the aviary. The main entrance was moved east to its present position and an imposing gateway erected. Marked by the Jacobean-style Stone Lodge, it became the most impressive entrance to the park.



*Stone Lodge from north*



*Aviary with Joseph Mercy & family 1904  
(Mentmore Society)*

A number of cottages were erected along the south-east side of The Green in a concerted campaign using a brick vernacular style with some half timbering, the so-called 'Old English' pioneered by Devey in the 1850s. This was taken up and favoured by the Rothschilds in Buckinghamshire for many of their philanthropic projects and which continued to prove popular in later philanthropic model settlement ventures such as Bournville (from 1893) and Port Sunlight (from 1888).



*No. 15 The Green (brick vernacular style with some half timbering)*



*Decorative plaque at 13-15 The Green*

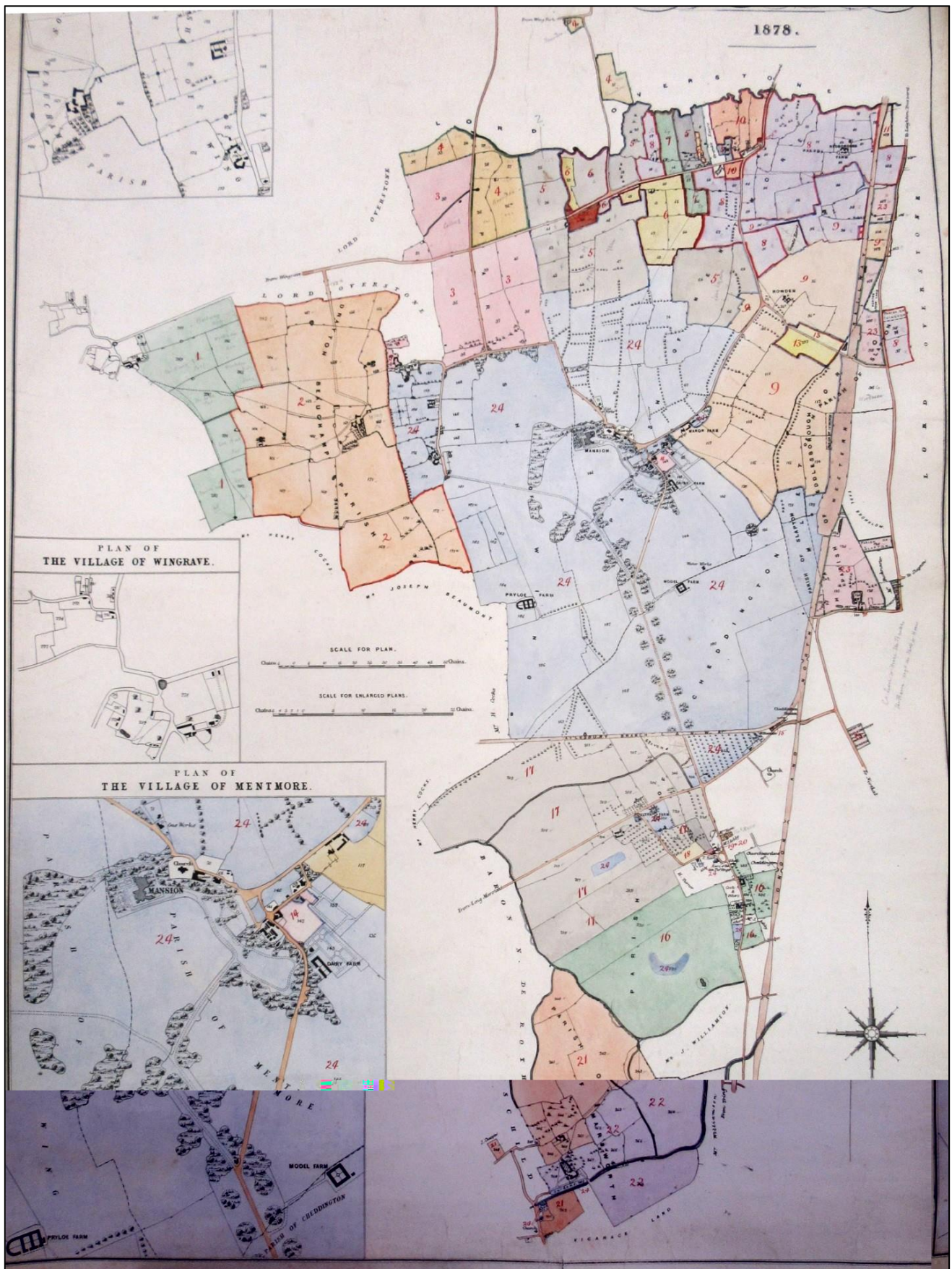
Hannah's Mentmore cottages of the late 1870s generally have decorative plaques with her initials and the date. Devey was consulted on cottage designs and an Italianate rotunda for the garden in 1874. The former Fox Inn was extended and converted into two houses (Nos. 9 & 11). A large residential property on the road frontage almost immediately west of it with outbuildings further to the west, noted on the plan to the 1852 road order, had been replaced by 1879 (OS) by the group including Nos. 13 and 15, and 21-27, erected respectively in 1878 and 1879. No. 25 was a shop.

Their attractive disposition framing a courtyard behind the frontage to The Green suggests that the earlier residence may have been demolished only after the new houses had been built. The picturesque 'lych gate' in front of Nos. 13-19 apparently housing two pumps may be another legacy from this former building, reusing the single pump it may have had to the rear.



*The former Fox Inn, Nos. 9 & 11 The Green*





Mentmore estate map of leases, 1878, showing the newly laid out park and village Green during Hannah Rothschild's building campaign. (Centre for Bucks Studies ref D\_RO\_4\_6)





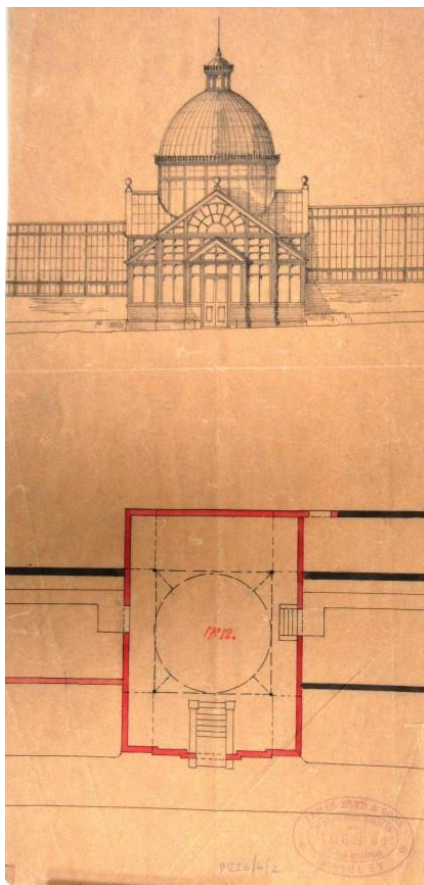
*Mentmore estate map of purchases, 1878, showing the newly laid out park and village Green during Hannah Rothschild's building campaign. (Centre for Bucks Studies ref CBSD\_RO\_4\_6)*

### 19.3.3 Phase 3 1879-1920, Hannah, Countess of Rosebery (d.1890) and the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Rosebery

The third phase, from 1879, led seamlessly on from the second and was not as concerted as the previous two. In this, Hannah and Rosebery erected individual buildings scattered around the estate and made minor adjustments to the grounds of the mansion, masterminded by their long-term Head Gardener, James Smith until his death in 1903.

Mayer's son-in-law, Archibald Primrose, 5th Earl of Rosebery (1847-1929) (Liberal Prime Minister in 1894-5 and first chairman of the London County Council), became lord of the manor on marrying Hannah (1851-1890) in 1878. The road between the Church and the Green was straightened in 1878 giving more space for the current main gateway, so that the drive could be extended east to The Green, and the gateway and lodge be constructed in a more advanced location.

The resulting Stone Lodge is possibly by Devey and dates from 1879 after the gates and drive were set out. Further south-west, No. 29 The Green was newly-built by 1879. Next along, Nos. 33 & 35 made their first appearance by 1898 (OS). In 1891 the linear glass house overlooking the walled garden from the scarp below the village was hugely extended as a conservatory by renowned glasshouse firm Boyd of Paisley, with a dominant central dome as the focus of the formal arrangement of the walled garden which was extended up to it. The dome was visible from the main line railway. Various designs for substantial riding schools were produced, but not carried out.



*Glasshouse dome design 1891 Boyd  
(Centre for Bucks Studies ref D226\_4\_2)*

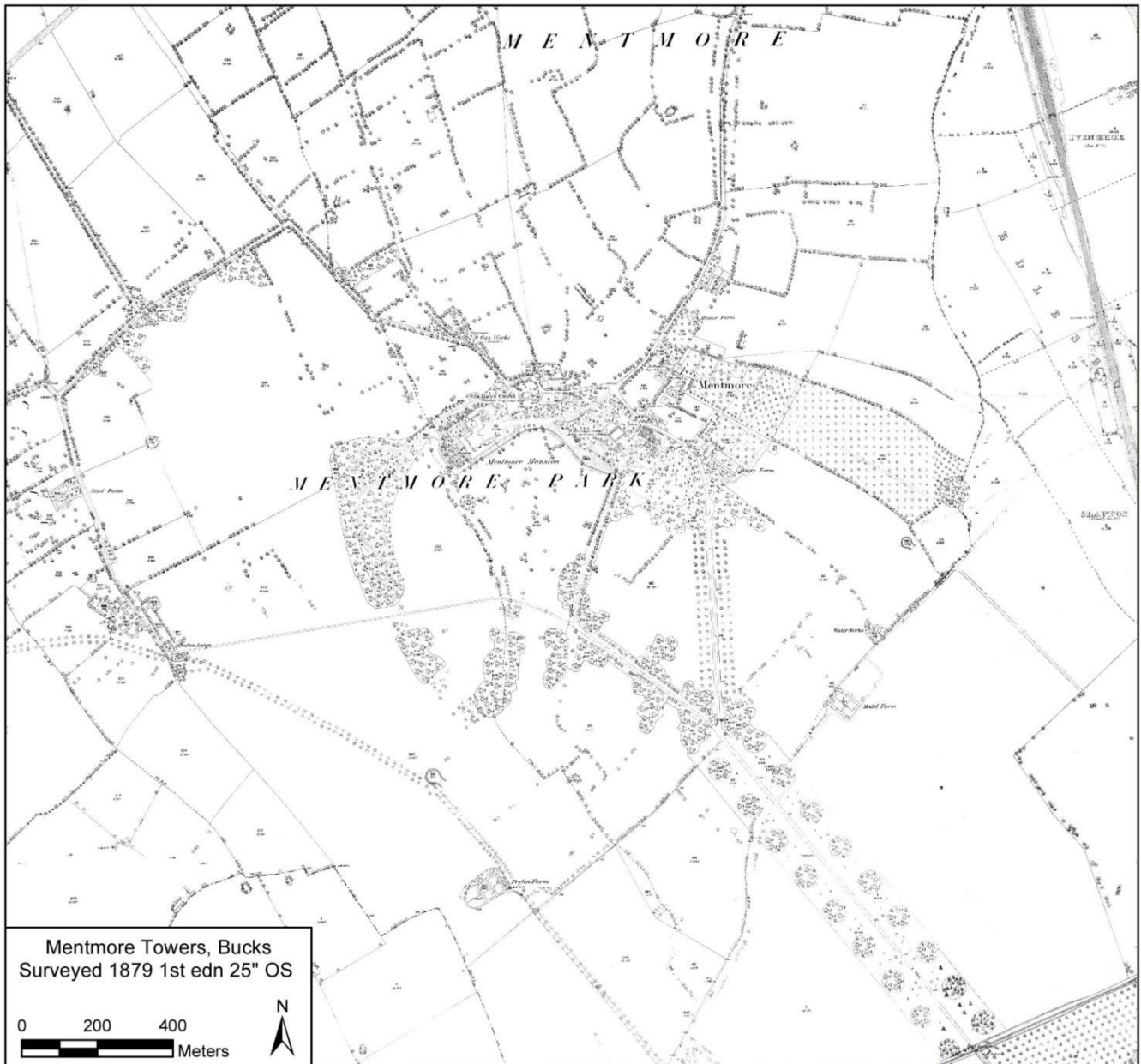


*Greenhouse Dome  
( Janet Day, Mentmore Society)*



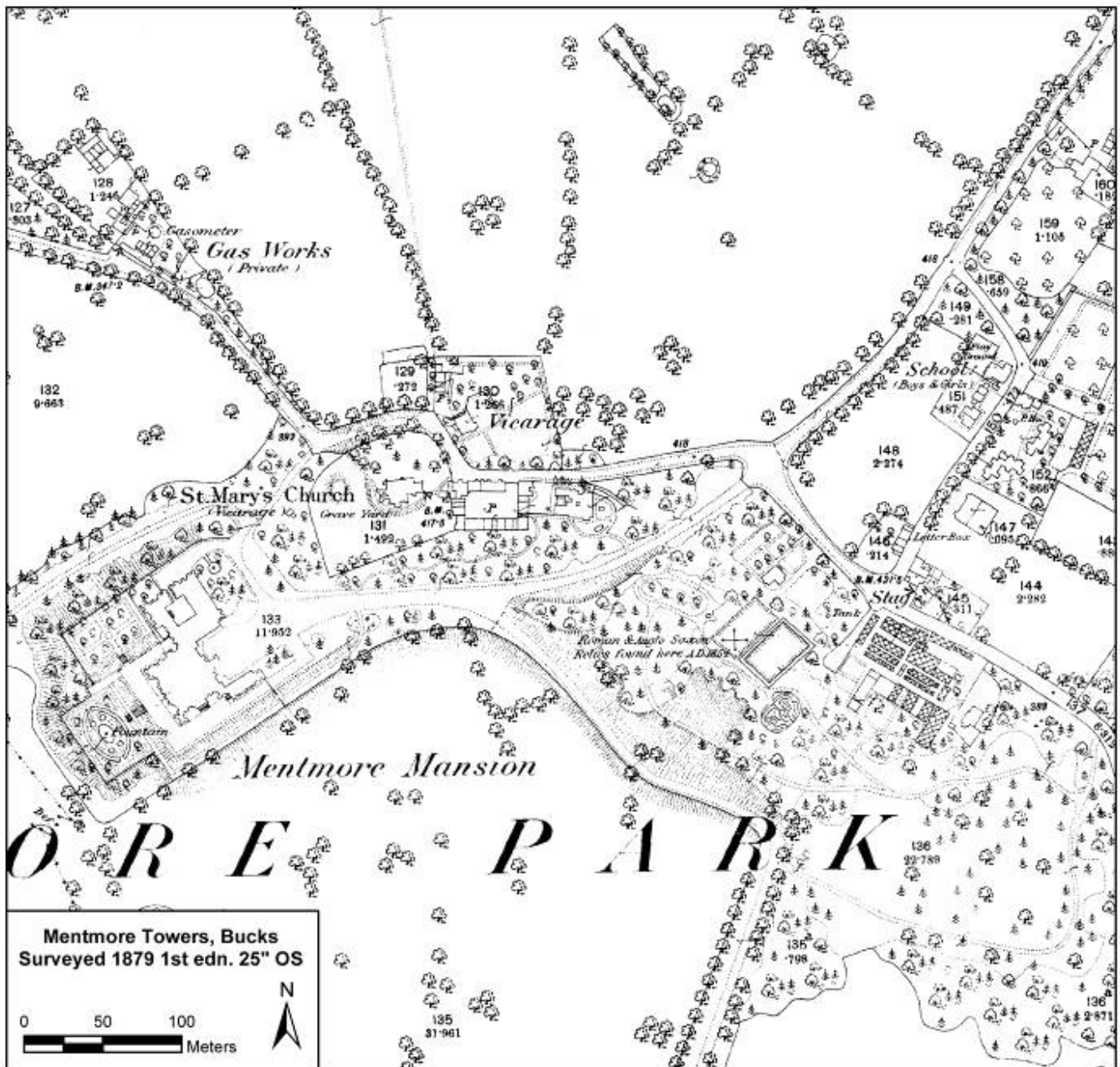
*Nos. 33 & 35 viewed from north-west*



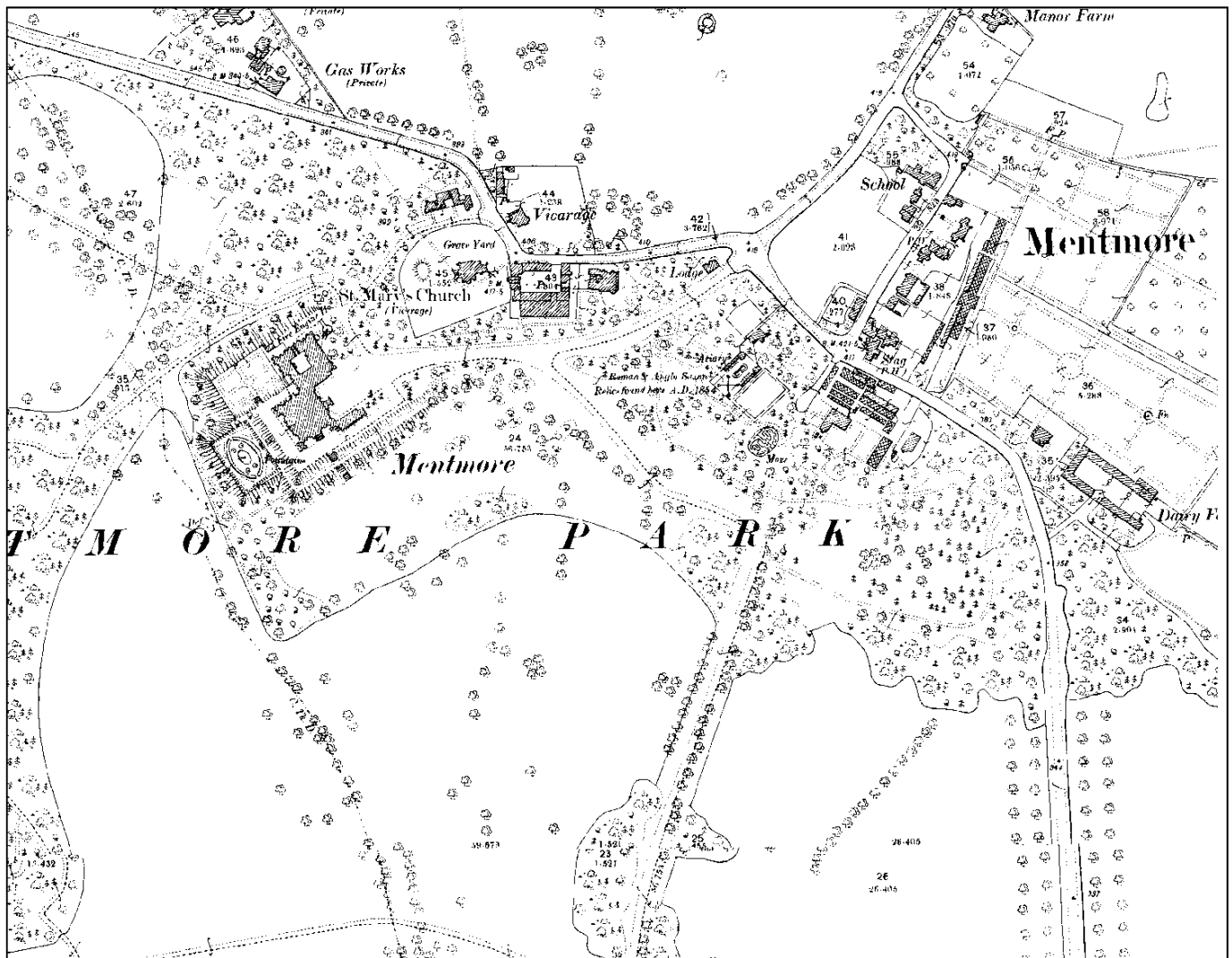


Ordnance Survey, 1879





Ordnance Survey 1878, showing the village just prior the Stone Lodge and gateway were built, and before the road past the church was moved further north.



*Ordnance Survey, 1898, showing the core of the Mentmore after the final major changes: The Stone Lodge and gateway were built, the Wing road moved north of the church, so Laundry Cottages could be built. The kitchen garden was completed with the conservatory. A new aviary had been constructed just west of the Green.*

#### 19.4 Modern developments from the 1920s

Much of the country house estate fabric and layout has survived with little alteration, contributing hugely to Mentmore's interest and importance, although suffering considerable decline in places.

Modern development has had a relatively minimal effect on the historic layout of the village. New housing is mostly discreetly concentrated to the north-east of The Green and includes the conversion of the 'model farm' outbuildings of Dairy Farm and Manor Farm into residences creating Rosebery Mews and Howell Hill Close respectively. The one exception is the recent house in the former glasshouse yard on the site of the old smithy which is more prominent in the important public approach from Cheddington.

More damaging has been the cluster of houses around Wing Lodge (Honeysuckle Cottage) at one of the main entrances to the park, the golf club house and service yard in the west park and the associated golf course layout. Even so the character of the village, mansion and its grounds remain largely intact as a fine mid-late-nineteenth century house estate ensemble.

Considerably damaging and of particular concern to the character and appearance of the village has been the loss of the interest of the Rosebery family and the resulting sale and dismemberment of the Mentmore Estate, leading to the disuse and increasingly derelict state of the ancillary productive areas such as the walled garden, the glasshouses, and the orchard, all culminating in the notorious sale of the house contents in 1977.

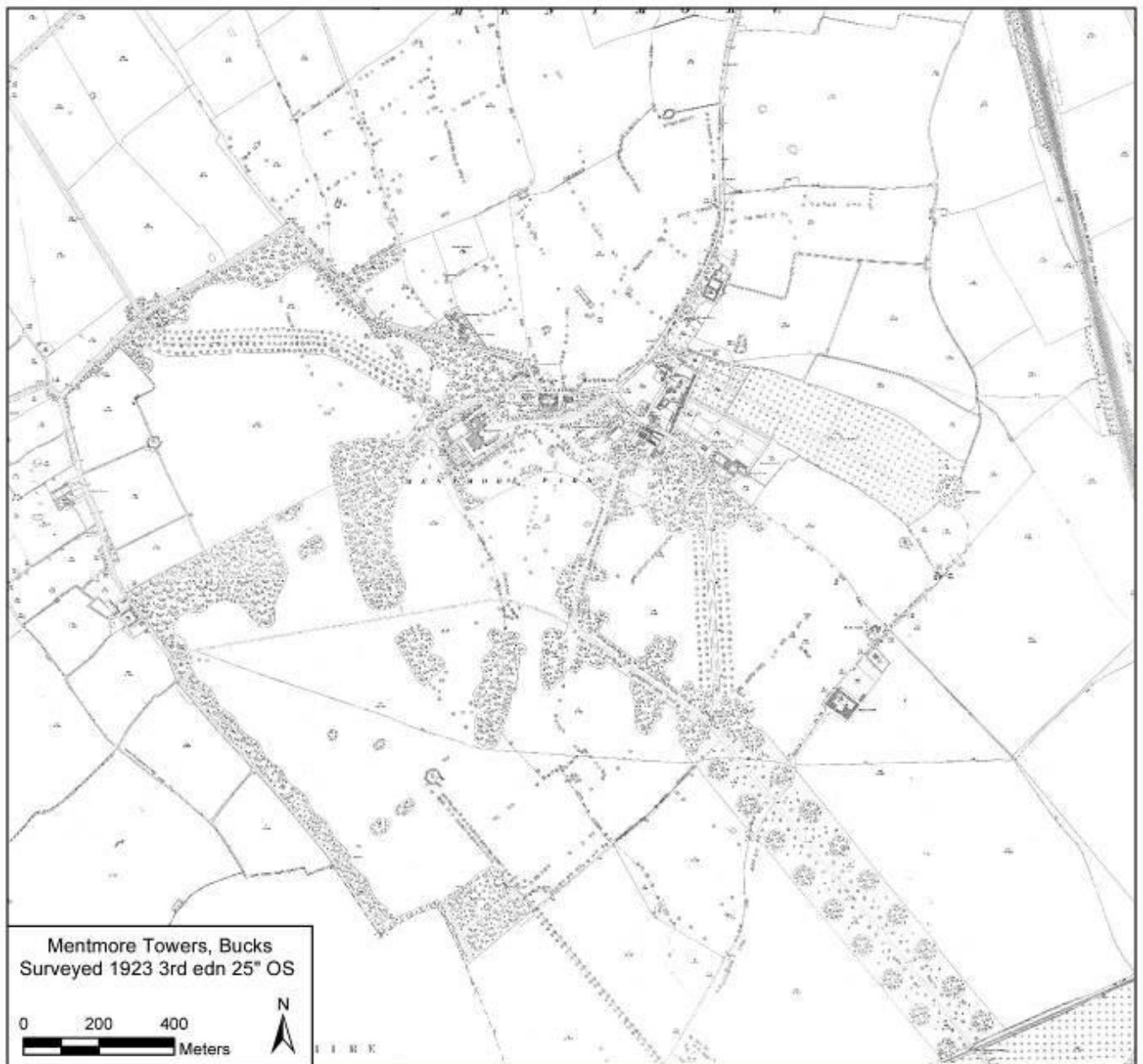
### **19.5 Abandoned schemes**

As plans for the current main entrance became established, in the mid-1870s the hunting stables were demolished along with the riding school at the rear of the replacement stables, of which the skeleton survives. A number of schemes, evident in the records in the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, were commissioned by Rosebery but never carried out.

A grander scheme for the replacement stables was shelved as were two designs for a large free-standing riding school in glass both designed by Messenger and Co of Loughborough. One design was based on the Great Stowe glasshouse at Chatsworth.

A huge orangery and palm house was designed by WP Manning (the architect of The Laundry) in 1891. It combined stone end elevations based on the design of the Mansion with a ridge-and-furrow curved glass roof topped with a circular cupola. It is not known exactly where these designs were intended to be built.





*Ordnance Survey, 1923, showing Mentmore estate at its zenith*

## **20 Appendix 4: Asset Sheets**

The following pages give list descriptions and photographs of the listed buildings in Mentmore Conservation Area together with details of Local Note buildings.

The sheets are presented in the following order

- The Park
- The Green
- Cheddington Road
- Wing Road
- Leighton Buzzard Road
- Listed Building Entries

The Historic England listed building descriptions are given for those structures so designated.

**Note:** Listing information thought to be inaccurate or superseded by recent research is in italics and the replacement information in square brackets. Additional information is given in square brackets at the end of the entry.

## The Park

### Mentmore Towers Grade I



#### Assessment of significance

Formerly a country house, *the British Seat of the World Government of the Age of Enlightenment at the time of last revision of list entry*. [Now in private hands].

Built 1852-4 by Sir Joseph Paxton and G.H. Stokes for Baron Mayer Amschel de Rothschild. Ancaster ashlar, flat lead roofs. In the Jacobethan style, much influenced by Wollaton Hall. Main block of 2 storeys is almost square in plan with projecting 3-storey corner towers and single storey wings flanking entrance courtyard. Right wing masks service court to north. Main block is articulated by entablatures and pairs of lugged pilasters on plinths: ground floor is Doric with triglyph entablature; first floor is Ionic and has plinths with cartouches. Balustraded parapet with stone urns on plinths and, on N.E. side, a central scrolled gable with broken segmental pediment, clock and flanking obelisks.

Towers have Corinthian pilasters on plinths with cartouches, entablatures with carved heads, and scrolled gables with small pediments, central open roundels, heraldic lion finials and corner obelisks. Groups of round stone chimney shafts with panelled capitals and linked cornice heads. Stone mullion windows with double transoms. N.E. front has 5-light windows in outer bays, and slightly projecting centrepiece with 2-light windows flanking 4-light. Towers have 4-light windows or elaborate strapwork cartouches.

Central double panelled doors with large radiating fanlight. Single storey porch has semi-circular arch to each face with carved lion-head keystones, flanking pairs of lugged Doric columns, and triglyph entablature with central Rothschild crest. Flanking wings have rows of 6 arched niches, triglyph entablature and balustraded parapet, and terminate in similar 2-storey towers to front. Remainder is similar, the S.E. front with central heraldic crests and cyphers dated 1851, and keyblock dated AH1878.

Service wing is of 2 storeys and a basement with a single Doric order and similar parapets, and is built around a small court with inner walls of white brick and entrance arch to N.W. Interior: central 2-storey hall is faced with Caen stone and has arcaded first floor gallery with marble balustrade. Glazed ceiling with wooden ribs, plaster coving with moulded strapwork cartouches.

Ground floor of hall has large arched doors with early examples of plate glass, and fireplace, said to have come from Rubens' house in Antwerp, of black and white marble with large projecting entablature hood on scrolled sheep herms. Other ground floor rooms have heavy carved marble fireplaces with large mirrors above, carved skirting boards and door surrounds with panelled doors.

Rooms in S.E. range have plaster ceilings with gilt Rococo decoration, some C18 imported from France. Dining room has very fine C18 boiseries and gilt ceiling from the Hotel de Villars, Paris, with C18 Genoese velvet in some panels and paintings by Van Loo over the mirrors. Small room to right of entrance front also has C18 french panelling with overdoors by Boucher. Stairwell is of Caen stone with Jacobethan plaster ceiling; single lower flight and double upper flights of stairs with marble balustrades.

First floor has suites of bedrooms, also with marble fireplaces, and with bathroom fittings adapted from C18 French commodes. His Lordship's Room has plaster gilt Rococo ceiling. Mentmore is also notable as one of the earliest houses to have a hot water and central heating system. (SAVE Britain's Heritage, Mentmore for the Nation, 1977)

**Significance:** Principal building of a magnificent country house estate and focus of the designed landscape and wider Mentmore estate. One of the finest of Early Victorian houses and an exceptional and extensive example of the Jacobethan Revival at its best, by the most renowned architect of his day. It survives intact except for its contents. Prominent in landscape and from wider Vale of Aylesbury, it enjoys panoramic views of a 10 mile stretch of the north Chiltern scarp.

**Issues:** Building at Risk, unoccupied, fabric deteriorating including water ingress.





**Gates and Railings adjacent to south-east corner of Mentmore Towers  
Grade II**



Assessment of significance

Gates and railings to terrace along S.E. front of house. C18, probably French. Wrought iron. Central double gates, convex in plan, with flanking concave and straight railings, the posts also of wrought iron. Ornamented with scrolls, scrolled foliage and delicate realistic flowers. Curved tops with scrolled crests. Posts are similar, the inner ones topped with vases of flowers, the outer posts topped with asymmetrical scrolls, one carrying a lantern.

Pedestrian garden gates on top terrace. Another similar pair remains on the terrace below this pair, linked by iron posts, with a further pair at the south corner of the terraces by Fountain Garden leading to Big Wood. Photos taken 1997

**Significance:** A group of 3 pairs of fine garden gates, rare in style and date, dividing various parts of the terraces. Rare survival of high quality C19 garden sculpture collection

**Issues:** Condition unclear, apparently deteriorating. Two pairs not Listed.

**Stone Lodge**  
**Grade II**



Assessment of significance

Lodge to Mentmore Towers. Dated 1879 on chimney plaque. Possibly by George Devey. Ashlar, tiled roofs, gables with moulded stone copings and kneelers. Picturesque in an early C17 manner. One storey and attic. Moulded stone mullion windows with leaded lights. Bay to N.E. has shaped gable with stone finial, semi-octagonal bay window with hipped stone roof to right, moulded 4-centred arch with cornice hood to porch at left, and rectangular panel in gable with cypher 'R' in scrolls.

Side to drive is of 3 bays: left bay is smaller and gabled with 3-light window; centre bay is also gabled and has square bay window with 4 lights to front, a single light to right, and a 3-light window to first floor; right bay has 5-light window to porch and 4-lights in wooden dormer window with dentil cornice. Chimney with 2 octagonal shafts to rear.

**Significance:** The largest and most prestigious and last of the four park lodges, forms a group with the adjacent gateway and echoes the style of the earlier Stag Inn. Survives intact.

**Gates, gate piers and railings to east of Stone Lodge**  
**Grade II**



Assessment of significance

Gates, gate piers and railings at main entrance to Mentmore Park. *Circa 1852-4. Probably by G.H. Stokes.* [Stokes attribution unlikely unless erected further west and moved with modifications in 1879 to this position. Gates may have come from Germany. Gate piers with Rosebery crest date to 1879]. Double gates with flanking single gates and railings that curve towards the front, all of cast iron, painted gold and blue, with scroll ornament and frieze of alternate spearhead and flame motifs. Elaborate scrolled crest over central gates. Gate piers and terminal piers are of ashlar with triglyph friezes and moulded cornices. Gate piers also have shell niches, roundels with *Rothschild* [Rosebery] crests, and plinths with raised panels. Outer piers have moulded bases and shafts with vertical and horizontal bands.

**Significance:** The most prestigious of the four major park entrances, and the last, erected with the adjacent Stone Lodge. An impressive gateway heralding the park and mansion, survives largely intact.

**Issues:** Damaged, e.g. ball finial missing, and condition deteriorating, particularly the ironwork.

## Cheddington Lodge Grade II



### Assessment of significance

Lodge to Mentmore Park. *Circa 1870-80* [1868-70], by George Devey. White brick dado, pebble dashed upper walls with half-timbering to gables. Thatched roofs, white brick chimneys with square shafts set diagonally. Y-plan picturesque building of one storey with one bay to each wing. Leaded casements. Central projection is gabled to front with semi-circular bay window of 6 lights. Flanking chimneys with single shafts. Side wings each had porch to front, each porch with 2 bays of timber arches to front and entrance arch in gable end. Left porch leads to door with flanking single lights. Arches of right porch have been infilled, one with paired leaded casement. Side wings have chimneys with paired shafts.

**Significance:** One of Devey's 3 lodges in Old English Style of 1868-70, marks entrance to Cheddington Drive from Grand Avenue, both by Paxton and predating the lodge. Survives intact.

**Issues:** Unoccupied; garden setting vulnerable to damaging alteration.

## Cheddington Gateway Heritage Asset, local note building



### Assessment of significance

Gate piers to Cheddington Lodge, origin unclear, probably early C20, replaced c.1868 timber gateway in similar style to former Crafton, Wing Lodge and Laundry gateways. Tall ashlar piers with stone urn finials, west one lost after 1997. Modern gates.

**Significance:** Marks main south park entrance from Cheddington and the railway station from London, alongside picturesque thatched lodge; one of the most important park gateways.

**Issues:** One pier damaged, lost urn finial; gates replaced; origin of piers unclear, and hence level of significance.



### Crafton Lodge Grade II



#### Assessment of significance

House, formerly lodge to Mentmore Park. *Circa 1870-80* [1870], much restored 1983. By George Devey. Ground floor is of white brick, first floor partly rendered and whitewashed with ornamental half-timbering, upper gables and part of ground floor right bay pebbledashed. Steeply pitched tile roof. White brick chimneys with off-set heads and moulded neckings, one with 2 square shafts set diagonally. Picturesque. 1 ½ storeys, 3 bays to south. Leaded casements. Left bay has first floor jettied on shaped brackets to left and over porch to front. Centre bay has door in left return wall and 2-storey canted projection to front with hipped roof, continuous casements to ground floor, and small single light to first floor. Chimney to right. Right bay is lower and gabled to front with 3-light casement to ground floor. Round oven projection to N.W. corner, C20 single storey range to rear forming L-plan.

Marks entrance to Crafton Drive. Formerly thatched in ornate pattern. Former timber gateway similar to former Wing and Cheddington Lodges lost.

**Significance:** The most impressive of Devey's 3 park lodges in Old English style, perhaps because it stands on the route from the mansion to the Crafton Stud. Survives largely intact except for the change of roof materials to tiles.

**Issues:** Thatch roofing replaced by tiles; adjacent gateway gone; garden setting vulnerable to damaging alteration.

### Wing Lodge Heritage Asset, local note building



#### Assessment of significance

House. c.1868, Devey in Old English style. Former lodge to north avenue approach to the mansion from Wing crossroads to former Wing Drive park entrance. Prominent as it terminates the approach along avenue from Wing to north. Asymmetrical original frontage features a half-timbered gable with panels of plain pebbledash. Outline of original lodge survives to the north but hugely extended to rear with big gables to east frontage using matching materials, rear gable features a large window after Lutyens. Curtilage boundary treatments have overlaid the former estate entrance. Former timber gateway similar to former Crafton and Cheddington Lodges lost. Building surrounded by modern houses in similar style.

**Significance:** One of Devey's group of 3 park lodges in Old English style, marks the approach from Wing and Aylesbury. Survives largely intact but with major extensions.

**Issues:** Greatly altered; gateway lost; no connection to former Wing Drive; no longer has character of entrance lodge; surrounded by modern housing development.

**Fire Engine House**  
**Heritage Asset, Local note building**



Assessment of significance

Fire engine house, north of west corner of mansion service range. Late C19 (post-1879), Fletton brick, flat roof, stone balustrade, single storey, double door vehicle entrance to east elevation.

**Significance:** Service structure for emergency fire-fighting. Unusual survival apparently intact, reflecting one element of the panoply of country house technology at Mentmore.

**Issues:** Disused; poor condition, wall cracked, roof deteriorating, etc. Unclear if interior survives in original form.

**Watchman's hut**  
**Heritage Asset, Local note building**



Assessment of significance

Brick, single storey, utilitarian watchman's hut, west of churchyard, on site of building present by 1879.

**Significance:** Service structure for security of estate. Unusual survival reflecting one element of the panoply of country house structures at Mentmore.

**Issues:** Derelict, deteriorating.

## Cheddington Road



### **The Bothy** **Heritage Asset, Local note building**

#### Assessment of significance

Gardeners' communal accommodation. 1893, Aspell, adjacent to former glasshouse yard west of Cheddington road, end on to road and set back. Long, two-storey, brick, tile hung, flanking projecting central gabled block; similar ornamental Old English style to houses on Green. Converted to residential units. Design drawings CBS D226\_4\_6.

**Significance:** high quality communal accommodation for estate gardeners, a late example but extensive and highly ornamental. Exterior survives intact but interior altered to residential units.

**Issues:** Converted to several residential units, in divided ownership. Historic character as communal residence lost. Individual gardens around building have altered setting. Approach off Cheddington road damaged by recent house built at corner of former glasshouse yard.

### **Walls to Walled Garden, and Pools** **Heritage Asset, Local note structure**



#### Assessment of significance

Walls to north, east and west, surrounding 3 sides of large estate kitchen garden. Surprisingly the short south-west boundary against the road not walled, but bounded by iron railings in front of a belt of trees. In situ to N & E by 1879. Extended around new W sector behind glasshouse c.late 1880s; detached from main pleasure grounds and glasshouse yard by road.

Red brick, c.3m high English bond, level courses despite the varying and considerable slope. Square piers at intervals with stone moulded caps. Single pilaster between piers. Red tile copings where they survive. Two circular pools on main axis, brick with rounded engineering brick coping. Eastern one (present by 1879) retains iron fountain; western one (1879-99) uphill, fountain gone. Possibly fed from well near Dairy.

**Significance:** A typical later C19 construction of an enclosure for the exceptionally high quality former kitchen garden and setting for the former conservatory. Relatively utilitarian style, survives partly intact. Pools typical of features in kitchen gardens of the period.

**Issues:** Considerable survival but two areas of collapse at least on SE wall; extant sections deteriorating parts covered in ivy, other parts with vegetation growing out of coping, etc. Gates gone. Condition of W wall behind ruined conservatory unclear. Pools disused but elements of piping survive.



## Conservatory in Walled Garden Heritage Asset, Local note structure

### Assessment of significance

c.1880s-92 conservatory and show houses, east range built first then west range by Jas. Boyd of Paisley 1891-92; 80m long range, south-east facing, dominated by central dome set on large terrace. Addition to late kitchen garden completion, panoramic views to Chiltern scarp. Visible from mainline railway, probably deliberately sited for this purpose.

**Significance:** Imposing, showy ornamental/ productive glasshouse range, part of kitchen garden and Dairy/Home Farm complex. One of the most extensive glasshouses of the period, but survives in relict form only.

**Issues:** Fabric largely gone and site overgrown. Some ironwork survives, with remains of central pool; brick terrace walls in poor condition. Rear wall survives. Rear sheds etc gone.

## The Dairy/Dairy Cottage Grade II



### Assessment of significance

House, originally house and dairy. Circa 1859. Whitewashed brick, Dark tiled roof with bands of fishscale tiles, bargeboards, brick chimneys. Windows have cast iron glazing bars with diamond motifs, segmental heads and sills with brick dentils. 1 ½ storeys, 3 irregular bays. Left bay is set back and has small single light to ground floor, centre bay is gabled and projecting with 3-light casement to ground floor and 2-light above. Lower window has hipped tiled hood with ornamental wooden fringe on shaped brackets. Right bay has 2-light casement and is surrounded on 3 sides by verandah with lean-to roof on rustic wooden posts, brackets, and similar ornamental wooden fringe. Door to left side in single-storey bay with parapet. Dated contract drawing in County Record Office, ref. no. D/RO/4/27.

By Stokes, east of Cheddington Road, detached from main pleasure grounds and glasshouse yard by road, sited adjacent to the estate dairy farm. Feature in the kitchen garden in cottage orne style, particular features are fishscale tile roof, bargeboards, ornamental chimneys and iron windows, verandah to 3 sides of dairy wing to keep interior cool. Strong visual contribution on public approach to village from Cheddington. Garden much simplified.

**Significance:** Notable ornamental estate dairy, which survives largely intact including interior features; contributes to the productive area as a key feature, and similarly on the main approach to the village from Cheddington.

**Issues:** Setting deteriorated: garden much simplified and no longer productive; kitchen garden adjacent has lost its productive character; hardly visible from the road.

## 1 Rosebery Mews

### Heritage Asset, Local note building

#### Assessment of significance

Originally the farmhouse for the estate Dairy Farm, c.1850s-60s. 2 storey, red brick with blue slate roof. Flemish bond brickwork. Decorative bargeboards to east gable. Gabled central porch with decorative Half-Timbering in gable. Modern extension with conservatory half-octagon end to conservatory. Plain timber casements painted mid-grey with cambered brick heads.

**Significance:** The farmhouse for the estate Dairy Farm, survives intact; forms the focus of the farmstead, part of a group of model farms built by 1879 and possibly as early as the 1850s.

**Issues:** The setting has altered with the change of use of the farm to residential.

## 2-7 Rosebery Mews

### Heritage Asset, Local note building



#### Assessment of significance

Converted to residential use from the estate Dairy Farm. Red brick with blue slate roof. Windows in warm grey/black finish dependent on property. Central projecting porch to 2 and 3 to front access road. Metal ventilators and plain chimneys on ridge. Raised entrance with timber braces with central timber feature on roof. No 4, 5 & 6 have porches to internal court. No. 6 has timber boarded facades to court above brick plinths built around c/1 columns. 7 has wide low gable end to court.

**Significance:** Farmstead buildings reflecting the origin as part of the estate dairy farm, altered with conversion to residential, retains some external characteristics; part of a group of model farms built by 1879 and possibly as early as the 1850s.

**Issues:** The original uses of the buildings are no longer clear and the internal layout has gone. The setting has altered with the change of use of the working farm to residential with domestic gardens and planting.

## 8 Rosebery Mews

### Heritage Asset, Local note building



#### Assessment of significance

Residential conversion of small detached former farm building adjacent Mentmore Estate's Dairy Farm courtyard. Yellow brick gable to South with blue brick surrounds to doors: elsewhere red brick under blue slate roof. Single central stack. Inventive arrangement of long run of casement windows over wall with pilasters to right of front door. Post 1898.

**Significance:** Farmstead building reflecting the origin as part of the estate dairy farm, altered with conversion to residential, retains some external characteristics; part of a group of model farms built by 1879 and possibly as early as the 1850s.

**Issues:** The original uses of the buildings are no longer clear. The setting has altered with the change of use of the working farm to residential with domestic gardens and planting.

**Water Works (site of)  
Heritage Asset, Local note building**

Assessment of significance

Former site of waterworks, built 1850s, pumped the water supply for the village and mansion at SE boundary of East Park near Model Farm. Included prominent ornamental chimney. Innovative approach to country estate technology. Replaced by a cluster of modern buildings. Some of trees surrounding the former structure may survive. Contemporary with pumped water supply from nearby Ashridge for Little Gaddesden, Herts.

**Significance:** Site of an early pumped estate water supply; progressive approach to country estate technology. One element of the panoply of country house technology at Mentmore.

**Issues:** The buildings have gone, replaced by a modern house and associated structures. Level of survival of original fabric unclear.



## Mentmore Green

### Former school (south-east portion) Heritage Asset, Local note building



#### Assessment of significance

Former village school converted to residential use. 1862 incorporating earlier chapel (1840s); white brick with stone dressings and parapet verges. Remainder schoolmaster's house, post-1879 (see below). Front porch to chapel with diagonal buttresses. Tudor style arch to front door. Rooms to either side under lean-to roofs. Slate roof. Extended to SE for school house in white gault brick. Casement windows with small square panes under simple segmental heads. Former chapel bell probably housed in bellcote above buttress in centre of rear main gable.

**Significance:** Part of one of the communal village buildings, with a philanthropic origin; an educational building which has an ornamental role in this part of the estate village, survives largely intact.

**Issues:** Stone parapets may have been removed on reroofing (new brick to verges). The front setting is divided by a hedge so that the building is not seen as a whole with the extension.

### Former School (north-west portion) Heritage Asset, Local note building



#### Assessment of significance

Former school extension, converted to residential use. Post 1879. White brick in English Bond. HR monogram (undated) under Earl's coronet (i.e. Rosebery). Windows on main N gable stacked under segmental head with red bricks as 'keystone' Stone parapets survive on gables. To rear: windows in square stone surrounds with central mullion.

**Significance:** Part of one of the communal village buildings, with a philanthropic origin; an educational building which has an ornamental role in this part of the estate village, survives largely intact.

**Issues:** The front setting is divided by a hedge so that the buildings are not seen as a whole.

**10 & 12 The Green**  
**Heritage Asset, Local note building**



Assessment of significance

Pair of semi-detached cottages, pre-1862. Red brick with white gault brick dressings and quoins. Blue tile gabled main roof with decorative banding and substantial central chimney. Hipped side projections. Windows with heavy white brick chamfered surrounds with segmental heads. Hipped central flush gable. Empty space for plaque in centre of first floor frontage. Timber porches with arched detail in front of side extensions Hipped porch roof with decorative banding. Eaves courses of diagonal yellow brick.

To rear; two gables at first floor, modern ground floor extensions in red brick.

Retains C19 iron gate and fencing within hedge.

**Significance:** An early element of the mid-late C19 estate village, survives intact; part of an early group in various styles with Nos. 12, 14 & 34.

**Issues:** Gate and fencing vulnerable to loss and damage.

**14 & 16 The Green**  
**Heritage Asset, Local note building**



Assessment of significance

Pair of semi-detached cottages, possibly by Stokes c.1859. Pre-1862. Two big gables. 2-storey gabled side projections, not containing main doors. Small ground floor side projections under lean-to in re-entrants. Blue slate roof with substantial central brick chimney. Flemish garden bond in pink brick with cream headers. Windows with stone surrounds and mullions. Brick dentil eaves. To rear: two gables with distinctive cream render at 1F.

Similar style to the Old Aviary, but less ornamentation. Retains C19 iron gate and fencing within hedge.

**Significance:** One of the earliest elements of the mid-late C19 estate village, survives intact; part of an early group in various styles with Nos. 10 & 12, & 34.

**Issues:** Gate and fencing vulnerable to loss and damage.

### 34 The Green Heritage Asset, Local note building



#### Assessment of significance

House formerly three cottages (1879 OS). Red brick Flemish bond under blue slate gabled roof with wide covered eaves. End stacks and 1 mid stack. Prominent straight joint to W of entrance. Small paned casement windows with segmental heads for ground floor windows. Bricked-up entrances to west of straight joint. Modern timber porch with brick side plinths. Large first floor side extension to east and awkward extension to west linking to garage with pyramid roof. All extensions in red brick with blue slate roofs and matching windows. Retains C19 iron gate and fencing within hedge.

**Significance:** One of the elements of the mid-late C19 estate village, survives intact; part of an early group in various styles with Nos. 10 & 12, 14 & 16.

**Issues:** Gate and fencing vulnerable to loss and damage.

### 9 & 11 The Green Grade II

#### Assessment of significance

2 cottages. Late C18-early C19, altered and dated H de R 1876 on terracotta plaque on left chimney. Red and vitreous chequer brick, moulded brick eaves, old tile roof, moulded bargeboards, flanking brick chimneys with 'V' pilasters and off-set heads. 2 storeys and attic, 2 bays. Double fronted. Each bay has 2-storey gabled bay window, half-timbered with pebbledash infill to front, tile-hanging and herringbone brick infill to sides, and upper floors jettied on moulded brackets.

Barred wooden casements with thick glazing bars. Small 2-light casement to first floor centre. Lean-to roof between bay windows at first floor level over half-glazed door with similar glazing bars. Similar door in architrave frame with tiled lean-to hood to left gable. Attic casements in gables. Rear has gabled projection in style matching that of front bays, but with canted oriel window on coved base to first floor. Improved by Hannah de Rothschild as part of a picturesque group of estate cottages.

**Significance:** One of the elements of the mid-late C19 estate village, survives intact; part of the most extensive group, late 1870s in Old English style, probably by Aspell, in good imitation of Devey, all in various forms, none repeated.





### 13-19 The Green Grade II



#### Assessment of significance

4 cottages. Dated H de R 1877 on central terracotta plaque. Red brick with dentil eaves, old tile roofs. Symmetrical brick chimneys with rectangular stacks grooved to resemble groups of square shafts with off-set heads. 1½ storeys, 6 symmetrical bays. Bays 2 and 5 project and are gabled to front with 3-light barred wooden casements in segmental heads. Centre bays have similar casements, 2-light to ground floor, 3-light in gabled semi-dormers. Doors in angles with projecting bays have hipped porches with turned wooden balusters and trellis work, and small single lights above. Outer bays are lower and set back: left bay has lean-to projection to front with C20 door in verandah with matching balusters; right bay has small arrow slit window and hipped porch with 2 bays of balusters. Picturesque estate housing provided by Hannah de Rothschild. Included for group value.

**Significance:** One of the elements of the mid-late C19 estate village, survives intact; part of the most extensive group, late 1870s in Old English style, probably by Aspell, in good imitation of Devey, all in various forms, none repeated.

### 21-25 The Green Grade II



#### Assessment of significance

3 houses, one formerly a shop. Dated H de R 1878 on plaque. Red brick, tiled roofs, brick chimneys. Irregular L-plan ranges with picturesque vernacular details. 2 storeys. N. range of 4 bays, that to left projecting. Bays 1 and 3 are gabled and have 2-storey canted bay windows, half-timbered and pebble dashed with moulded bargeboards and ball finials. Barred wooden casements with thick glazing bars. Board door to left of second bay has hipped porch with corner baluster. Right bay has door in L-plan porch with turned balusters and gabled projection to right. W. range is of 5 bays, irregularly gabled with similar casements. Centre bay has single storey projection with low wooden balustrade parapet. Estate housing provided by Hannah de Rothschild, designed to form picturesque group with Nos. 9 and 11 (qv) and 13 - 19 (odd) (qv).

Retains C19 iron gate and fencing within hedge.

**Significance:** One of the elements of the mid-late C19 estate village, survives intact; part of the most extensive group, late 1870s in Old English style, probably by Aspell, in good imitation of Devey, all in various forms, none repeated.

**Issues:** Gate and fencing vulnerable to loss and damage.

**27 The Green**

**Originally listed with 21-25, but removed from list, apparently after house renumbering**



Assessment of significance

Linked to No. 25 The Green and originally listed as part of the listed picturesque terrace Nos 21-25, turning back to face The Green. Red brick, small casement windows. Large gables to road frontage and to rear. Red tile roof. Hipped porch with balusters. End gable has long casement window set in decorative timber framing with pebbledash panels and apron of square panels in herringbone red brick. Retains C19 iron gate and fencing within hedge.

**Issues:** Gate and fencing vulnerable to loss and damage.

**29 The Green**

**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Large house. c1879. Red Brick, red tile roof with three courses of shaped blue tiles. Relatively plain symmetrical façade with large flanking gables, half-timbered and pebble dashed. Central porch with hipped roof. Smaller gables over first floor windows in central block flanked by big gables (minimal projection) with 2 storey splayed window bays under hipped red tile roofs. Must have been built for a significant resident. Relatively plain chimneys above gables. Retains C19 iron gate and fencing within hedge.

**Significance:** One of the elements of the mid-late C19 estate village, survives intact; part of the most extensive group, late 1870s in Old English style, probably by Aspell, in good imitation of Devey, all in various forms, none repeated.

**Issues:** Gate and fencing vulnerable to loss and damage.

**31 & 35 The Green**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Pair of semi-detached houses. Red brick and red tile. Symmetrical façade. Like small version of No. 29. Narrow recessed centre has porches under lean-to roof: above, small windows tucked under eaves. Gables project further than 29 and have 1F splay bay windows under hipped red tile roofs. Decorative H-T with pebbledash panels in gable. Main Hipped roof continues above gable roofs with larger chimneys than No. 29.

No. 33 has original side extension with hipped roof, decorative Half timbering with pebbledash panels at first floor over brick ground floor. 35 has a modern lean-to brick side extension. Garage to west with half-timbering in gable to match.

Retains C19 iron gate and fencing within hedge.

**Significance:** One of the elements of the mid-late C19 estate village, survives intact; part of the most extensive group, late 1870s in Old English style, probably by Aspell, in good imitation of Devey, all in various forms, none repeated.

**Issues:** Gate and fencing vulnerable to loss and damage.

**Village Hall**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Village hall. Single storey. Post 1879. Designed as a 'club house' on behalf of Lord Rosebery. Very modest compared to other Buckinghamshire village halls provided by the Rothschilds. Pebbledashed. Red tile roof. Two gables to village street with stone copings and wide sash windows. Flat roofed side extensions to north: that nearer road lower. Porch and lobby: incorporating original porch. With pebbledash. Extension to rear in red brick stretcher bond with soldier bricks over window and door openings. Donated to the village by Rosebery family on sale of Estate in 1977.

**Significance:** One of the communal estate village buildings, with a philanthropic origin, survives intact; a public building which, although in a pivotal position, has a minor ornamental role in the village.



**The Stag Inn**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Public House. Pre 1852. Coursed squared limestone rubble with limestone dressings. Tudor style. Red tile roof. Small-pane windows with mullions inset in square-topped frames with chamfered reveals. Prominent projecting 3 Storey gable to centre of main façade, with (possibly later lean-to porch to side with four-centred arch with shield above. GF window to side has square drip over. Window above in tall dormer with vertical slit over Stone copings to gables. Blank gable to side with plain stone chimney with rebuilt upper section. Original chimney may survive at N end but in yellow brick.

Modern flat-roofed restaurant in buff header bond brick to rear with side entrance. Wall to Cheddington Rd of red brick with red engineering brick coping topped by brown stained post and rail fence round extension: wall steps down with slope. Rear large central 3 storey gable as above. Stands in a prominent position at S corner of the Green. Its substantial garden wall to Cheddington Road is a significant element in the approach to the village from the south, paired with the garden wall opposite of the former glasshouse yard.

**Significance:** The most imposing and significant of the C19 communal estate village buildings; a public building in a pivotal position, has a major ornamental role in the village, survives intact. Contributes, together with the garden and roadside wall and wall of the former glasshouse yard opposite, to the sense of arrival at the green from Cheddington.

**Issues:** The frontage is damaged by the tarmac car park. Setting damaged by recent building in former glasshouse yard.

**Manor House**  
**Grade II\***



Assessment of significance

[Former Manor] House. Mid C18. Red and vitreous brick with red brick quoins and window surrounds. Moulded plinth, eaves - line band course, parapet with tile coping. Old tile roof, slightly Mansard, with triangular stone-coped gables and flanking brick chimneys. 2 storeys and attic, 5 bays. 3-pane sash windows with thick glazing bars, architrave frames, moulded sills and gauged brick heads. Ground floor sashes have been renewed. Attic has hipped dormers with paired leaded casements. Central 8-panelled door with rectangular fanlight, in wooden doorcase with panelled frieze, flat wooden hood on shaped brackets, and panelled Doric pilasters. Single storey C19-C20 brick extension to left with hipped slate roof. Lower wing at right- angles to rear is probably older but has been altered and extended. Good interior with C18 panelling in main ground and first floor rooms. Lower rooms have C19 marble fireplaces, upper rooms have original wooden fireplaces and C19 grates. Upper left room has 2 closets with doors and fanlights. Central hall contains C18 staircase with turned balusters and carved tread ends. Attic stair also has turned balusters and panelled cupboards and bulkhead.

[A substantial building set back from the south corner of the Green, the north gable plays an important role in views south along the village street. It became the Head Gardener's house in the mid-C19 with the adjacent walled garden used as the glasshouse yard.]

**Significance:** The earliest, and the most imposing and significant of village buildings on the green, survives intact; although set back, the upper levels have a major ornamental role in the village scene particularly in views south along the village street. Contributes, together with the roadside wall of the former glasshouse yard, and The Stag and its garden and roadside wall opposite, to the sense of arrival at the green from Cheddington.

**Issues:** Partly obscured in the Cheddington road approach by recent development in the former glasshouse yard

**The Old Aviary**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Cottage, probably originated as kennelman's house adjacent to site of former stag hounds kennels (1840s/50s) next to site of former aviary (late 1870s), when it became accommodation for aviary keeper. Decorative Flemish bond red brickwork under slate roof. Gables with ornamental finials at apex. Square bay to E with stone dressings prominent from Green. Other windows square headed with stone dressings. Outbuilding to north in timber boarding and projecting central gable all painted sage green: hipped tile roof. Modern knot garden on road frontage. With substantial and attractive outbuilding forms important part of frontage on W side of the Green. Similar style to Nos. 14 & 16 The Green but more ornamentation.

**Significance:** Early Rothschild estate worker's cottage forming part of the village scene on the south side of the green, survives intact. Notable for its association with the lost Kennels and hunting stables and its later use for the aviary keeper.

**Issues:** Possibly not as visible as was intended, and potential for completely being obscured by garden planting.

**Wing Road**

**1 The Cottage**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

House. 2 storey 3 gables to frontage with largest in centre with progressive slight projections. Cream painted pebble dashed walls, unusual for Mentmore. Blue slate roof. Plain bargeboards. Victorian style sash windows painted black. May originate as service wing for The Cottage, the house (Nos. 2 and 3) used by Mayer and his wife while the mansion was under construction.

**Significance:** Later addition to early Rothschild estate building, survives intact.



**2 The Cottage**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Set back from frontage of No.1, but more sophisticated. 1840s? 3 bigger gables receding in centre with plain bargeboards with substantial overhang. Blue slate roof. Small paned sash windows. Cantled ground floor window bays to larger gables with hipped roofs. Forms with No. 3, The Cottage, the house used by Mayer and his wife while the mansion was under construction.

**Significance:** Early Rothschild estate building; part of the earliest residence of Mayer and his wife while the mansion was built, with No. 2, survives intact.

### 3 The Cottage

Heritage Asset, local note building



#### Assessment of significance

Attached to east of No. 2. Shares materials with No. 2 and hipped roof of porches. Symmetrical composition of east elevation with No. 2. Forms with No. 2, The Cottage, the house used by Mayer and his wife while the mansion was under construction.

**Significance:** Early Rothschild estate building; part of the earliest residence of Mayer and his wife while the mansion was built, with No. 2, survives intact.

### Stable Cottage

Heritage Asset, local note building



#### Assessment of significance

House as accommodation for stable staff, part of the domestic stable block serving the mansion. Possibly by Devey, 1870s. Marks east side of entrance to the Mews. Red brick (Flemish bond) under red tile roof. Straight joint to The Mews to the S. Small paned windows under crude arched brick heads (see Church Cottage below) half-timbering panels in big gable to court with plain rendered panels. Big chimneys. Lean-to roof over door. At rear, two boldly projecting blank gables with decorative half-timbering with plain plaster, both prominent in views towards church. Gable nearest road has tall double Tudor-style diagonal chimneys. Not shown along with east range of stables on estate mapping 1875-8, but appears on OS by 1879. Key element of domestic stable yard for large country house with riding house reflecting particular equine interest of successive C19 owners.

**Significance:** Mid-period Rothschild estate building in characteristic Old English style, part of one of the main estate buildings serving the mansion, survives intact. Key element of domestic stable yard for large country house with riding house reflecting particular equine interest of successive C19 owners. Important contribution to public approach to the village.

**Church Cottage  
Grade II**



Assessment of significance

Small house. Circa 1870-80. Probably by George Devey. Brick ground floor, first floor roughcast and jettied on moulded wooden bressumer. Tiled roof, brick chimney to left with 'V' pilasters and off-set head, moulded bargeboards. 1 ½ storeys, 2 bays. Barred 4-light wooden casements with moulded mullions, 2 to ground floor, one to first floor left. Central board door with painted cast iron boot-scraper to right. Ground floor openings have shallow triangular relieving arches. Right side also has jettied gable.

[Occupies NW corner of stable yard, overlooks the Wing Road to the north and forms feature in approach from Wing; feature in views from the churchyard, church path and porch and churchyard, along with Stable Yard House]

**Significance:** Mid-period Rothschild estate building in characteristic Old English style, part of one of the main estate buildings serving the mansion, survives intact. Key element of domestic stable yard for large country house. Important contribution to public approach to the village.

**The Mews  
Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Part of the domestic stable block serving the mansion. East range converted to residential use. 1 ½ storeys. English bond red brickwork with garage doors prominent in façade to court. Semicircular brick head to porch with stone impostes and keystone. Small paned casement windows with stone lintels. One small dormer in roof, with rooflights to either side. Some evidence of alterations in brickwork round garage doors. . Not shown along with Stable Cottage on estate mapping 1875-8.

**Significance:** Mid-period Rothschild estate building in characteristic Old English style, part of one of the main estate buildings serving the mansion, converted to domestic use, interiors altered. Part of domestic stable yard for large country house with riding house reflecting particular equine interest of successive C19 owners.



**Archway Lodge, Church End Stables**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**

Assessment of significance

Part of the domestic stable block serving the mansion. South range converted to residential use. 1 ½ storeys. As above (the Mews) but without garage doors. No rooflights in blue tile roofs but with larger dormers than The Mews. Remains of riding house, red brick walls, roofless, adjacent to rear as garden area.

**Significance:** Mid-period Rothschild estate building in characteristic Old English style, part of one of the main estate buildings serving the mansion. Converted to domestic use, interiors altered. Part of domestic stable yard for large country house reflecting particular equine interest of successive C19 owners.

**Stable Yard House**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Part of the domestic stable block serving the mansion. West range converted to residential use. 2 storeys. Symmetrical composition to court: Red Brick. Red tile roof with big central brick gable; smaller brick gables in roof to either side. Door in corner under lean-to roof, semi-circular brick head to porch with stone impost and keystone. Rear to churchyard asymmetrical. Red brick with few windows but with big chimney to gable to left with 2 diagonal stacks. Survives largely intact.

**Significance:** Mid-period Rothschild estate building in characteristic Old English style, part of one of the main estate buildings serving the mansion. Key element of domestic stable yard for large country house with riding house reflecting particular equine interest of successive C19 owners. Important contribution the character of the churchyard and of the setting of the church to the west.

**Grooms Cottage, The Granary**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Part of the domestic stable block serving the mansion. North range converted to residential use. As Archway and Church End Stables, but with garage doors prominent and with small dormers (like The Mews).

**Significance:** Mid-period Rothschild estate building in characteristic Old English style, part of one of the main estate buildings serving the mansion. Part of domestic stable yard for large country house with riding house reflecting particular equine interest of successive C19 owners. Converted to domestic use, interiors altered. With the adjacent Church Cottage, they form an important element in the approach to the village from Wing.

**Church of St Mary**  
**Grade II\***



Assessment of significance

Parish church. Some early C13 details, aisles rebuilt C14 and C15, late C15 W. tower, nave arcades and clerestory, chancel rebuilt and remainder very much restored 1858 by G.H. Stokes. C19 S. porch and N. vestry. Dressed limestone, tiled roofs to chancel and porch, lead roofs to remainder. W. tower of 2 stages has plinth, battlemented parapet, diagonal buttresses and square stair tower to S.E. Bell-chamber has 2-light traceried openings. 3-light cusped window over nave and aisles. 3-bay clerestory has 3-light cusped windows with 4-centred heads. Aisles have 2-light traceried windows, the S. aisle irregular with 3-light E. window and one window to S. with flat head and X tracery.

S. door in moulded 2-centred arch. Chancel has one bay of lancets, additional 2-light traceried window to S., and 3-light traceried E. window. Vestry to north. Interior: Tower has double hollow chamfered arch on attached shafts, with moulded caps. Nave arcades of 3 bays have moulded arches on quatrefoil piers with shafts in angles, battlemented capitals and bases made out of C13 stiff-leaf capitals. C19 roof retaining C15-C16 carved figures of angels, restored. Chancel arch rebuilt C19 with double-chamfered arch on semi-octagonal piers and with small carved stone angel stops.

Fittings: round medieval font; fragments of C15 glass in window in N. aisle; C17 altar table with turned balusters and fluted frieze in N. aisle; glass in E. window 1890 by Kempe; other fittings C19. Monuments: W. wall of N. aisle has small brass to John Theede 1641; marble wall tablet above to Thomas Theed 1702 with carved draperies, winged cherub heads and coat of arms.

[Prominent in approach to Green along Wing Road, but screened from grounds of Mentmore Towers by shrubbery and trees to west and south. Churchyard contains monuments to two important late C19/early C20 Head Gardeners, Smith and McGregor.]

**Significance:** Remnant of the medieval village. Notable medieval architecture, remodelled in mid-C19, survives intact with churchyard. The Christian heart of the village. The most imposing building in the village after the mansion, important in an elevated position in the approach along Wing road; screened from the mansion and grounds.

**The Old Vicarage**  
**Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

Former vicarage. Benjamin Ferrey, 1851 for Diocese. Asymmetrical composition. Tall 3 storeys, coursed brown ironstone rubble with ashlar stone dressings and quoins. Blue slate roof. Parapet gables with finials. Casement windows with mullions within chamfered stone surrounds under brownstone relieving arches. Central projecting porch with stone four-centred arch with carved heads at ends of dripstone.

Prominent in approach to Green along Wing Road opposite church and churchyard. Modern garage adjacent in similar style/materials.

**Significance:** Typical imposing mid-C19 vicarage, survives intact. Flanks the village approach from Wing along with the church.



## 1 Red House, 2 The Old Laundry and 3 The Laundry Grade II



### Assessment of significance

Three houses, formerly lodge, laundry and accommodation for laundry-maids at Mentmore Towers. *Circa 1870-80, possibly by George Devey. [1880 by W.P. Manning]* Red brick with moulded plinth and moulded dentil cornice. Upper floors of block to left are rendered with ornamental half-timbering, tile-hanging and bargeboards to gables.

Tiled roofs, brick chimneys, those to lodge with moulded brick entablature tops. An irregular picturesque ensemble with residential block to left forming one side of central yard with L-plan laundry, and lodge projecting to right. 1½ storeys. Irregular wooden casements with thick glazing bars.

Lodge has pedimented gable to south with 3-light casement to first floor and semi-octagonal window with ogee lead roof below. Porch set back to right has hipped roof on turned wooden balusters. Central gabled bay of right side has stone plaque with Rothschild cyphers.

Laundry has half-hipped roofs, hipped dormers with louvred vents and segmental relieving arches over windows. Lean-to with C20 door and casement in front of far wing. Block to left has 2 gables, the left with jettied first floor, upper oriel window on coved base, and canted bay window to ground floor. Right gable has lower 6-light window, 5-light window above and double louvre to attic. Single storey bay to far left has 5-sided bay window to left corner with hipped roof continued to right on turned wooden balusters to form verandah sheltering half-glazed door.

[Ornamental range of laundry & cottages on land incorporated into pleasure ground only when former public road moved north, next to line of road re-used for service drive. Strong visual contribution to service drive entrance, ornamental incident on Wing road. Former timber gateway marking entrance to service drive, similar to former Wing, Crafton and Cheddington Lodges, lost.]

**Significance:** Late and notable example of estate laundry complex, in mid-phase of Mentmore estate buildings, also marks the service drive entrance to the mansion and forms a feature on the Wing approach to the village. Survives largely intact but laundry converted to residential.

**Issues:** -

## The Coach House Heritage Asset, local note building



### Assessment of significance

Former gas works building for estate converted to residential use. Stokes, 1859. Single storey to road frontage. Red brick English bond with blue slate roof. Half-timbering to side gable. Simple chimney stack to right. Modern bay windows inserted with fake leaded lights. Central entrance under half-timbered gable with decorative terracotta cresting. Rear sections taller with decorative terracotta cresting. Gas holder ('gasometer') was to rear.

A strong visual contribution on the public approach to village from Wing/Aylesbury. Innovative approach to country house technology.

**Significance:** Remaining portion of an early example of country house technology, part of the innovative panoply developed at Mentmore. Contributes to the scene in the approach from Wing to the village. Survives partly intact, gas holder gone, buildings converted to residential.

**Issues:** The industrial character of the structures and setting has been lost with conversion to residential use. The ornamental features are liable to be screened from the road by garden planting.

**The Gas House now Spinney Cottage  
Heritage Asset, local note building**



Assessment of significance

House for former gas works, Stokes 1859: red brick and blue slate with tall fairly plain chimneys and pitched roof porch. Small pane casements. Set back behind The Coach House but main elevation visible from the Wing road.

**Significance:** Residence for manager of an early example of country house technology, part of the innovative panoply developed at Mentmore. Contributes to the scene in the approach from Wing to the village. Survives intact.

**Issues:** The industrial character of the adjacent structures and setting has been lost with conversion to residential use. The ornamental features are partly screened from the road by garden planting, fencing and gate.

## Leighton Buzzard Road

### The Stud House Heritage Asset, local note building



#### Assessment of significance

House built c1914 as a groom's house virtually on the footprint of the farmhouse for the former Manor Farm. Bland front brick elevation with 'M-plan' gabled form. Gabled side extension with triple garage. Estate railings on road frontage with relatively ornate iron gate on decorative cast iron gate piers accessing a short brick-paved path.

**Significance:** Groom's house for Mentmore Stud established on site of Manor Farm, survives intact with later additions.

**Issues:** The railings are vulnerable to deterioration, damage and removal.

### Howell Hill Close Heritage Asset, local note building



#### Assessment of significance

Former Mentmore Stud built c.1914 -1920 on site of quadrangular model farm replacing Manor Farm buildings evident by 1879 (OS). Symmetrical double courtyard layout in commanding position with extensive views to SE. Original entrances in centres of longer east and west sides. Now converted into residences. Elevations of plain pebbledash: openings with segmental heads in heavy quoined red brick surrounds. Roofs of red clay Roman tiles. Landscaped surroundings with open and covered car parking, circulation areas laid with herringbone pavers.

**Significance:** Substantial former stud buildings erected by the Estate, altered with conversion to residential.

**Issues:** The former use of the buildings is no longer clear. The immediate setting has altered with the change of use to residential.