Improved aesthetic management (16.4.20, 48) could in parallel encourage biodiversity. Similarly, instigating a ‘meadow’ management regime in parts of the Castle Yard (16.4.9) could also add to its biodiversity value. Some specialist wall plants, such as the fern Wall-rue, were said in 1999 to add to the nature conservation interest of the site, but seem largely to have succumbed to weedkiller in the supposed interests of architectural conservation.

15.4.15 Extensive, rather than intensive, evidence of the use by bats for roosting of both the roofed buildings and part of the Terrace Range was recorded in 2007 (PCSR 2007, 18). Pipistrelle, Daubenton’s and Brown Long-eared bats were recorded in 1999 (ibid, 16).

15.4.16 Overall, the site is not designated for its nature conservation; its ecological significance seems moderate but capable of improvement through management.

Instrumental

15.4.17 The heritage values of Bolsover give it the potential to generate instrumental value; indeed, doing so is one of the main objectives of English Heritage management of the site. It provides learning opportunities both informal and related to educational curricula, and encourages tourism and through it the local economy.

15.5 Summary statement of significance of Bolsover

15.5.1 Bolsover Castle is of highly exceptional significance (A*) primarily for its 17th century ensemble, as a document, as illustrative of the architecture and wider culture of the period, particularly the art of manège, and for its association with William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle, who, inheriting the Little Castle from his father, was responsible for creating the ensemble that in substance survives today. All the 17th century fabric contributes to one or more of these aspects of the highly exceptional significance of the place. Views of and from the castle illustrate aspects of and so contribute to this exceptional significance.

15.5.2 The underlying archaeological remains of the castle which shaped the 17th century ensemble themselves form part of an entity itself of exceptional significance (A), including the twelfth century planned settlement of Bolsover, of unusual scale and form for a defended ‘new town’ of the period, and the settlement which preceded it on the site of the castle. The plan form of town and castle remains clearly illustrated on the ground and its evidential potential is great, if not consistent across the whole area. Particularly beyond the Castle area and the defensive lines of the town, and to some extent in the Castle Yard, the significance of buried deposits in particular areas can only be assessed through field evaluation.

15.5.3 The Castle illustrates changing attitudes towards the remains of the past, in its construction, and in its treatment from the 18th century as a potent (if largely redundant) symbol of aristocratic lineage and values. This, however, is now essentially an intangible, intellectual component of its significance, the physical traces of 18th and 19th century accretions having largely been removed; the

69 Quoted from Wildlife Statement, D Wells, January 1999; no more recent survey is known.
ruination of the Terrace Range is its remaining principal expression. What remains is perhaps of moderate (C) significance.

15.5.4 While of some little illustrative value, post-1945 interventions are aesthetically mostly neutral, although some, particularly in the western end of the Riding House Range, are intrusive and also obscure rather than reveal or reinforce evidence of the historic form of the exceptionally significant fabric. The Visitor centre has the potential to contribute to future assessments of significance.
16 ISSUES AND POLICIES

16.1 Introduction: General management

Context: Public ownership and presentation

16.1.1 Bolsover Castle was effectively a bequest to the nation from the 6th Duke of Portland. But its parlous condition, the great cost of its repair, and the lack of an obvious use, in effect meant that, by accepting the bequest, the state became owner of last resort, of a site that was and is of highly exceptional archaeological, architectural and historical significance. Since the beginning of the 20th century, many such sites, self-evidently of national importance, had come into state care, usually in guardianship, in very similar circumstances – their preservation was beyond the resources of private owners, or what could reasonably be expected from them. The ‘heroic phase’ of repair at Bolsover took 50 years, 1945-95, and very substantial public expenditure.

16.1.2 With fundamental repair and consolidation essentially complete, it has been possible to turn attention and investment towards enhancing visitors’ enjoyment and appreciation of Bolsover. The development project of 1998-2001 marked a turning point, symbolised by the new visitor centre replacing the works compound as the dominant feature of the castle yard. While maintenance will always be needed – the Little Castle roof was re-leded in 2010-11 – the emphasis in the future is likely to be on enhancing – widening and deepening – the visitor experience. That supposition is, of course, based on an underlying assumption, namely that government, through English Heritage, continues to maintain a national collection of properties in care that includes Bolsover. Drastic cuts in English Heritage funding from 2011-12 cannot but affect perceptions of what the future may hold.

16.1.3 Nonetheless, for the purposes of this conservation plan, the ongoing rôle of Bolsover is seen to be primarily as a public monument, a combination of the didactic, the entertaining and the recreational, based upon its exceptional significance to England’s heritage. Visitor expectations, in terms of facilities and interpretation, have steadily risen over the past couple of decades. Presentation and use of Bolsover Castle will need to develop to retain its share of visitors and the income they generate. While engaging more people with historic places is in itself a worthy cultural objective, limiting the net revenue costs of managing the site, and preferably generating a surplus, is vital to sustaining and widening access. Events – weddings, receptions, functions – make a significant contribution to this, and bring people who would not otherwise think of visiting a castle.

16.1.4 Events, as well as rising visitor expectations, the pressure to develop new reasons for people to visit, can nonetheless be in conflict with the responsibility placed on English Heritage to sustain the heritage values of the place for present and future generations, to conserve it. They can indeed be in conflict with exploiting the core values of the place, a conflict which emerges at Bolsover in the presentation of the Riding House. This section of the plan is primarily about exploring ways of reconciling these potentially conflicting
objectives, as they impact on the fabric, the uses, and ultimately the ambiance of Bolsover Castle.

*Relations with adjoining owners*

16.1.5 The Castle and most of the steep slopes surrounding it on three sides are owned by government and managed by English Heritage (Fig 1). The site’s heritage and amenity values are nonetheless vulnerable to changes beyond those boundaries. Mostly, the latter are defined by roads, footpaths or public open space (to the west), but three private ownerships penetrate into what would otherwise be a large oval landholding. Two represent 19th century incursions into the outer court, St Mary’s, now a private house, and the former school, now the Adult Education Centre. Another, the seemingly post-war pair of houses now 60-62 Station Road, on the north-east side, but incorporating earlier buildings, occupies a site cut into the foot of the slope. Nurturing good relations with these neighbours is mutually beneficial.

16.1.6 The Castle is also part of the historic and modern town of Bolsover, which declined with the coal mining industry in the 1980s. The town centre within the medieval defences probably contains fewer buildings today than it did in the 17th century. It is not an archetypal ‘historic town at the castle gate’, but preserves its medieval structure and has potential to be a great deal more attractive and active than it currently is. It is designated as a conservation area, and its management through the planning system is primarily the responsibility of Bolsover District Council. Their remit extends to protecting all significant views of and from the Castle from harmful development. These issues are addressed in Section 16.5 below.

*Policy 01:* English Heritage will seek to work with Bolsover District Council in developing strategies for the improvement and enhancement of the town centre insofar as they affect the setting of the castle and its relationship with the town.

*Policy 02:* English Heritage will work with Bolsover District Council, and Chesterfield Council and North East Derbyshire Council as necessary, in developing a strategy for the protection of all significant views of and from the castle within its topographical setting.

*The adoption and use of the conservation plan*

16.1.7 The purpose of this Conservation Plan is to inform and guide the long-term future management of the Castle in the context of public ownership and use. Any future management decisions should be informed by the assessment of significance and the policies set out in the plan. In order to achieve this, it is important that the plan is adopted not only by English Heritage, but also the other key stakeholder, Bolsover District Council (and Derbyshire County Council, if possible), and distributed to, and used by, all those involved in managing the site in its local context. It is essential that the plan is a living document, which is updated and amended as new information comes to light. The fact that it is written some 12 years after the first (draft) conservation plan for the site was produced (Worsley, 1999a, b) emphasises the need for a formal adoption process.
Policy 03: The conservation policies recommended in this Conservation Plan will be endorsed by English Heritage as a guide to the future management of Bolsover Castle; and Bolsover Council will be encouraged to adopt the plan as supplementary planning guidance (SPG).

Policy 04: The assessments of significance set out in this Conservation Plan will be used to inform decisions about the future management of the site.

Policy 05: The Conservation Plan will be reviewed within five years of its adoption. Further reviews should take place in the same five yearly cycle as the quinquennial fabric surveys.

Policy 06: Responsibility for updating the Conservation Plan will rest with a designated post within English Heritage.

16.1.8 The Conservation Plan is intended to be a high level document setting out the long term strategy for the Castle. In order to deliver strategic change, an implementation plan will be necessary. A management plan is also required, to ensure that the significance of the Castle is sustained on an ongoing basis.

Policy 07: English Heritage will develop and adopt a Management Plan for the site based on the Conservation Plan.

16.2 The statutory and policy frameworks affecting the site and its setting

National planning policy and guidance for the historic environment

16.2.1 In addition to establishing control over works to listed buildings themselves, Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that “In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

16.2.2 National planning policy, for plan- and decision-making affecting designated heritage assets and their settings (as well as undesignated heritage assets) is set out in the National Planning Policy Planning Framework (NPPF), published in March 2012. The Government’s over-arching aim, as set out in the NPPF, is that there should be "a presumption in favour of sustainable development" (para. 14). One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is environmental and this includes “protecting and enhancing ... the built and historic environment” (para 7).

16.2.3 Included in the NPPF’s core planning principles is the statement that planning should “conserve heritage assets” in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of

NPPF Annex 2: Glossary defines a heritage asset as: “A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions’ because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”
life of this and future generations" (para. 17). In order to achieve this, their 'significance', or heritage interest, must be understood at the outset. This clearly requires expert assessment of significance, proportionate to the interest of the asset and the intervention proposed, which, for Bolsover Castle, this conservation plan seeks to assist.

16.2.4 Section 12 of the NPPF, *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, adopts a "significance-based" approach, and its policies relate to all “heritage assets”, elements of the historic environment defined as having “a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions”. ‘Significance’ is defined as ‘The value of the heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.’

Heritage assets include, but are not limited to, formally designated assets, such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas and registered parks and gardens. Bolsover Castle is, to varying extents, covered by all these designations.

16.2.5 Section 12 of the NPPF advises local planning authorities that “The level of detail [required in describing the significance of a heritage asset affected by development] should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance” (para 128). The NPPF also states that "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional" (para 132).

16.2.6 The importance of the contribution made to their significance by the settings of designated heritage assets and the impact of development on the setting of all heritage assets is recognised at para. 128 of the NPPF. It defines setting (at p56) as “The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.”

16.2.7 English Heritage has produced guidance specifically relating to setting, *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (October 2011). The aim of the guidance is to ensure that judgments made about the contribution of setting to the significance of heritage assets and about the implications of change are as objective and

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71 NPPF Annex 2: Glossary
consistent as possible, reducing conflict and delay in decision making. The
guidance provides the basis for English Heritage advice on the setting of
historic places and is offered to assist others involved with managing change
that may affect the setting of historic places. English Heritage has also
produced Seeing the History in the View (May 2011), which provides a method
for understanding and assessing heritage significance within views. The
methodology can be applied to any view that is significant in terms of its
heritage values.

Local planning policy on the historic environment
16.2.8 The Bolsover District Local Plan (2000) still guides current planning policy for
the district\(^2\): its policies are largely saved (none of the 27 policies deleted by
the Secretary of State in September 2007 was relevant to Bolsover Castle or
its setting). Saved policies relating to the historic environment are set out in
Chapter 8 of the Plan, Conservation of the Historic and Built Environment (see
Appendix 2). The Local Plan is supported by four Supplementary Planning
Guidance documents, only one of which, New Bolsover Model Village Planning
Guidelines, has any relevance to Bolsover Castle and its setting.

16.2.9 As part of the emerging Local Development Framework, Bolsover District
Council has adopted the Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document,
which provides further detail on the saved policies in the local plan. Of
relevance to this plan are policies in Chapter 8, CON 1 – 5 and CON 7-14,
which are set out in Appendix 2.

16.2.10 The Council’s Core Strategy document is now reaching Publication version,
following consultation on the Revised Preferred Options stage during early
2010. It is expected to be published early in 2013 (the programme was
delayed pending publication of the NPPF) and then subject to further public
consultation. Submission to the Secretary of State should follow in the Spring
and adoption towards the end of 2013. The draft Core Strategy contains a
spatial portrait of Bolsover District, which identifies (in paragraph 2.20) that
‘the district has a rich environmental and cultural heritage.’ Bolsover Castle is
identified, with Hardwick Hall and Barlborough Hall, as one of the district’s
three significant scheduled monuments. Para L, ‘To protect and enhance the
District’s historic and natural heritage’ (p23), states ‘...Particular attention must
be given to safeguarding, enhancing and, where necessary,  regenerating the
District’s distinctive built environment, including the wider setting associated with
the District’s outstanding heritage assets’ [emphasis added].

16.2.11 Chapter 10 deals with the District’s four towns. With regard to Bolsover, it
recognises that ‘The 17th century Bolsover Castle dominates the western
approach to the town and is a major visitor attraction of regional importance.’
The long-standing planning consent for the storage of hazardous substances
on the former Coalite site (situated immediately to the north-west of the
castle and overlooked by it) is noted as a severe constraint on development in
this area, particularly residential development (although this is understood

\(^2\) The East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) is due to be formally revoked by the Secretary of State subject to
completion of a sustainability assessment.
now to have expired - see 16.6). The issue of susceptibility to landslip immediately to the west of the limestone ridge running north-south through the town is discussed later insofar as it affects the castle and its setting (16.7).

16.2.12 Policy CS 22 of the draft Core Strategy sets out the main strategic principles for the future planning and development of Bolsover during the plan period. These include;

- That the town centre of Bolsover be enhanced and expanded to cope with the anticipated needs of the town’s future population;
- That the wider setting of Bolsover Castle be protected and enhanced; and
- That encouragement be given to tourist-related development in the town and to any initiatives to enhance the town’s tourist potential.

16.2.13 The Council has also produced a character appraisal of the Bolsover Conservation Area, whose content is addressed below (16.5).

**Statutory control of works to the Castle**

16.2.14 In addition to planning control, the Castle is subject to two specific ‘heritage consent’ regimes, both of which are modified because of the site’s ownership by government and management by English Heritage. The Little Castle is subject to listed building control, while the remainder of the site is subject to scheduled monument control, which over-rides the listing of the standing structures.

16.2.15 Normally, scheduled monument consent (SMC) is required from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport before any works are carried out which would have the effect of demolishing, destroying, damaging, removing, repairing, altering, adding to, flooding or covering up any part of the monument. The scope of the control is both more extensive and more detailed than that applied to listed buildings, and consent can be granted only for detailed proposals. Since SMC applications are normally determined by the Secretary of State, advised by English Heritage, a modified, non-statutory form of the process is applied to monuments in the care of English Heritage. Application documentation is prepared in the normal way, a pre-application discussion held with the English Heritage adviser responsible for considering such applications in the area and the application submitted for clearance by the adviser. In the event that the adviser is not content with the proposals, further discussions are likely, aimed at amending the proposals to an acceptable level.

16.2.16 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the primary legislation providing for the protection of historic buildings. Listed consent is required for any works that would affect the character of a listed building as one of special architectural or historic interest. Applications by English Heritage must be made to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, via the local planning authority, Bolsover District Council, which is responsible for advertising the application. Consultation with the Council’s conservation officer at an early stage is therefore advisable.
16.2.17 The Council has a statutory duty to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Bolsover Conservation Area. Thus a prime material consideration in any planning application submitted for the Castle would be its effect on the character of the surrounding area as well as on the character of the Castle itself. Conservation area consent is also required for the demolition of all but minor structures on the site, including modern structures specifically excluded from the scheduling of the monument. The conservation area is key to the management of the castle in its local setting, and is addressed in that context below (16.5).

16.2.18 The scheduled and listed status of the Castle does not supersede the need to apply for planning permission. Where works constituting development are proposed, planning permission must be sought in parallel with scheduled monument clearance, or listed building consent, as appropriate. Its inclusion on the non-statutory register of parks and gardens does not bring any additional controls, but is a material consideration in planning decisions, and a moral responsibility on English Heritage.

Policy 08: Scheduled monument clearance will be obtained before any works, not covered by general class consent, are undertaken within the scheduled area of the Castle.

Policy 09: Listed building consent will be obtained for any works affecting the character of the Little Castle.

Policy 10: Planning permission will be sought where works constituting development are proposed.

The extent of designation

16.2.19 The evidential potential of the outer bailey defences, the deposits sealed beneath the bank, and archaeological remains within the outer court, even where no stratified deposits survive, was demonstrated through the excavations undertaken in connection with the Visitor Centre in 1999 (Sheppard 2003). The boundaries of the scheduled monument (Fig 1) are not rational in that they exclude key parts of the outer bailey area, namely:

- The visible defences of the outer bailey on the north side and the south-east end of the bank flanking the west drive, both in the ownership of English Heritage (Fig 78, A, B);
- Part of the southern corner of the outer bailey, formerly leased to the school but now reintegrated into the outer bailey (C);
- The soil beneath the former school and St Mary’s, which overlie part of the bailey defences (E).

73 The Penfold Review of non-planning consents (July 2010), currently the subject of public consultation, has recommended that the need to seek separate conservation area consent (CAC) should be replaced by a requirement to seek planning permission for demolition in a conservation area,
16.2.20 The scheduled area also includes a curious triangle of land to the north of the castle (F), whose archaeological significance is not clear either on the ground or in the schedule entry. The latter (dated 1992) also refers to Bolsover as ‘an important and well-documented example of a motte and bailey castle which developed into as tower keep castle’, when the evidence (3.4
above) indicates an earthwork castle whose inner ward developed into a polygonal shell keep, like Nottingham or Clisson (Loire-Atlantique).

**Policy 11:** The extent of the scheduled area will be rationalised to include the full extent of the outer bailey of the castle, and thus encompass the whole of the medieval castle and post-medieval country house site. The inclusion of the area to the north-west will be reviewed, and the schedule entry updated to reflect the current state of knowledge.

16.2.21 The boundaries of the registered park and garden again exclude small areas on the south-eastern frontage of the site, which are part of the setting of the post-civil war country house (Fig 78, B), and the whole area of the outer bailey south-east of the bowling green (D). The latter is explicable as being covered by temporary classrooms at the time of designation, but has since been restored after their removal. The register entry (dated 1999) broadly reflects the current state of knowledge.

**Policy 12:** The extent of the registered landscape will be rationalised to include the now-restored area of the outer bailey of the castle, and the small areas on its south-eastern frontage adjacent to the entrances.

### 16.3 Towards an overall strategy for conservation and presentation of the site

#### Conservation principles

16.3.1 English Heritage’s *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment* (English Heritage, 2008) aimed to ‘set out a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of the historic environment’. It was intended to help English Heritage “ensure consistency of approach in carrying out [its] role as the Government’s statutory advisor on the historic environment in England’. ‘The *Policies and Guidance* will specifically guide our staff in applying the Principles….in managing the historic sites in our care’ (para 20).

16.3.2 *Conservation Principles* sets out an intellectual framework for making decisions about change to significant places, from the repair and maintenance of historic buildings to restoration and adaptation. The process involves a step-by-step approach enabling users to arrive at logical, defensible responses to complex issues. It combines the definition of six core principles with more detailed policies and guidance on their application when making decisions about changes to the historic environment. Under Principle 4, conservation is defined as ‘the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.’ National planning policy, also applicable to the specific heritage protection regimes (listed building and scheduled monument consents) now takes a similar ‘significance-based approach’ (16.2 above), but in its definition of conservation accepts (as does English Heritage for its own sites) the possibility that significance can be enhanced.

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74 ‘The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance’ (NPPF, Appendix 2: Glossary)
16.3.3 The final section of the document sets out practical policies and guidance for evaluating and advising on proposals involving heritage places, ranging from routine management, maintenance, renewal and repair, to changes intended to increase knowledge, restoration, new works, and enabling development. The overarching message of *Conservation Principles* is that ‘balanced and justifiable decisions about change in the historic environment depend upon understanding who values a place and why they do so, leading to a clear statement of its significance and, with it, the ability to understand the impact of the proposed change on that significance’ (Conclusion, para. 161).

16.3.4 These policies and guidance, particularly in relation to restoration, are taken here as the basis for reviewing the conservation decisions of the past, as well as strategies for the future. It will helpful to refer, in reading the following section, to this specific guidance on restoration:

Restoration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

a. the heritage values of the elements that would be restored decisively outweigh the values of those that would be lost;
b. the work proposed is justified by compelling evidence of the evolution of the place, and is executed in accordance with that evidence;
c. the form in which the place currently exists is not the result of an historically-significant event;
d. the work proposed respects previous forms of the place;
e. the maintenance implications of the proposed restoration are considered to be sustainable.

16.3.5 The most problematic of these criteria can be the desirability of respecting previous forms of a place. As the text explains (para 136): ‘The more radical the restoration, the more likely it is to introduce an element of incongruity. The reversal of relatively minor, but harmful changes, to restore a place to a form in which it recently existed as a complete entity, is unlikely to contradict this criterion. By contrast, the restoration of isolated parts of a place to an earlier form, except as legible elements of an otherwise new design, would produce an apparently historic entity that had never previously existed, which would lack integrity.’ Some degree of incongruity is inevitable in restoration, even when (as at Bolsover) the primary aim is didactic, for beyond the controllable confines of the building or site, one is in an ever-changing present.

**Cumulative strategy to date**

16.3.6 The stabilisation and repair of Bolsover Castle proceeded for half a century along the established lines of the Ministry of Works and its successors, usually summarised (not always accurately) as ‘preserve as found’. Patrick Faulkner was the key personality for the earlier part of the period, and in the absence of available documentation, it is likely that his was the guiding mind that adapted the concept to the particular (and for the Ministry, somewhat unusual) situation of Bolsover. It was a monument in care whose standing structure, and importance, were post-medieval, and with two of its three major buildings more or less roofed.

16.3.7 The previous conservation philosophy as it can be discerned in retrospect, by
its outcomes, had one over-riding and entirely uncontroversial objective: to retain and stabilise all fabric which was, or appeared to be, of 17th century date, while being conscious of the underlying medieval archaeology. From the beginning, however, and following normal Ancient Monuments practice, later additions tended to be removed, particularly when they were seen as visually intrusive or demeaning (eg the pig sty in the Riding House range). At some point, damaged elements began to be replaced and later interventions reversed, not primarily because it was structurally or functionally necessary to do so, but because it was thought that to do so would (as we might now express it) reveal, reinforce or recover significance. The reversal of changes to the Little Castle perceived as being made in the 19th century use of it as a vicarage are perhaps the most obvious example.

16.3.8 Sometimes, as with the c1976 stripping of some of the Little Castle panelling, a great deal of harm was caused by acting on assumption, rather than compelling multi-disciplinary research. Later restoration, during the development project in 1998-2001 which followed completion of major structural work on the site, learnt from the mistakes of 25 years earlier. The project extended to research-based authentic redecoration of parts of the Little Castle, and restoration of the Venus Fountain and of the Fountain Garden. This intensified the established approach of privileging the highly exceptional values of the 17th century phases over the much more modest significance of later ones. Restoration of the external envelope of the Riding House Range, but not its interior, followed the same approach.

The state of conservation of the principal elements of the site

16.3.9 This plan next looks in more detail at the main elements of the site, considering what restoration has been done (and cannot be undone), and the date at which they are (intentionally or not) now presented. It also looks at the potential within each element to consolidate that restoration to minimise incongruity, and the potential to restore to a yet earlier period, again within each element. This is done purely in terms of the available or recoverable ‘compelling evidence’ on which to do so without material speculation, in terms of English Heritage’s stated policy (16.3.4); not the desirability of doing so, which is a different question.

16.3.10 The domestication of the Little Castle in the 19th century (but, following Worsley, perhaps beginning in the 18th century) has been largely reversed. The south porch, new internal doors and so forth have gone, and only a few incidental features remain, essentially through oversight, disproportionate expense, or failure of nerve (all the stone fireplaces were originally painted, but English Heritage decided not to repaint where they had been stripped, for example, in the lobby to the Pillar Parlour, C3). The most long-lived of the Victorian alterations were actually the paths and hedges of the Fountain Garden, removed c2001. The remaining traces are too slight to be other than minor visual and functional anomalies. The comparatively superficial nature of these changes, with their limited significance, would justify the same conclusion today, in accordance with the English Heritage Conservation Principles. Indeed, to respect the previous form of the place, the final remnants should be removed, as well as expedient repair decisions amended (see 16.4.27).
16.3.11 What would remain, however, is the house essentially as it was left after the repairs of 1751, rather than as William Cavendish left it. The Dowager Lady Oxford replaced the roof structure and, with it, removed the detailed evidence of the second floor friezes, cornices and ceilings, now all plain. Worsley argues an 18th century, probably Oxford, date for the Gothick windows of the Pillar Parlour (C2), and indeed questions whether some of the ‘19th century’ links between rooms were actually 18th century, too (although neither was part of the documented 1751 work). There is, however, good illustrative evidence that the Gothick windows were, in fact, installed by the Grays: a 19th century pencil drawing apparently exists, showing the windows with mullions and shutters still intact. More detailed research is needed, but, while restoring some individual rooms, or floors, to their pre-1751 form is possible in terms of there being comprehensive evidence available to do so (indeed, many rooms do not appear to have physically changed, other than by ageing, between the 1630s and 1751), the restoration of the whole interior to its 1630s or 1670s appearance is not possible on current evidence without some speculation. This is a current issue, given emerging ideas for refurnishing the house: at what scale should incongruity determine the decision?

16.3.12 The Riding House Range has, in terms of its exterior, been restored to its form generally as it appeared in the years around 1700, and remained until 1751, primarily by the decision to retain the windows inserted into the south front of the stable on its conversion to apartments. Internally, traces of post-1700 activity have also been thoroughly removed (including their archaeological deposits), and the whole range roofed, but save for the Riding House itself (which nonetheless lacks its original ceiling), little significance has been revealed by doing so. The rooms to the east of the Riding House, including the viewing gallery, are largely bare, stripped of 19th and 20th century domestic accretions, while to the west is a larger shell, like a cut-away model, with elements of both its stable and apartment phases. Beyond, the envelope is restored, but the structure and interior are mostly modern and utilitarian.

16.3.13Externally, as with the Little Castle generally, a few anomalies remain, like the very late rough blocking of the doorway on the south side, and the un-restored windows at its extreme west, now fronting a service space. Again, like the Little Castle, it would be reasonable to address these final elements. Internally, there is little consistency. The Riding House and spaces to the east are more or less in the form which they took probably until 1751, save probably for the ceiling/ floor over the Riding House, and the ceilings of the upper floor rooms R20-21. The west range is an unresolved space, the Riding House opening into fragments of the stable/ apartments, an entirely modern creation, a roofed ruin. The evidence exists to restore it to pre-1751 (which is not to say that it should be), which would not entail removing anything of more than minor significance. But to return it to its c1670 form, removing the fireplaces and the windows in the south wall, would harm elements of exceptional significance (and create an incongruity with the end of the Terrace Range), although it would result in a stable next to the Riding House. On

75 Although we have not traced it.
grounds of significance, therefore, for the interior as well as the exterior, 1700 – 1750 is the earliest period to which restoration might be capable of being justified, and even that would involve some assumptions about joinery details.

16.3.14 The approach to the roofless terrace range has been closer to standard ancient monuments practice for the consolidation of ruins, in that there appears to have been little or no conscious selection of surviving elements for preservation or removal. Debris has been cleared to historic floor level, existing masonry has been consolidated, but missing elements (e.g., the tops of some gables on the east front) have generally not been restored. The exception has been missing mullions and transoms from the windows, where, justifiably, an eye has been had to architectural as well as structural integrity. In a sense, the terrace elevation has been conserved to resemble an architectural drawing. Internally, the evidence for its more utilitarian life through the first half of the 18th century remains, although not as the result of a conscious decision. Save for a few missing elements at high level, the Terrace Range now looks much as it did by the 1770s, although rather more tidy. Externally, at least, it could be restored to its appearance through the first half of the 18th century, after the conversion of the great gallery, since the shell is virtually complete and the forms of windows, roofs and floors clear from the surviving evidence. Internally, too, knowledge is sufficient to put back the bones of the degraded former apartment, and repair the other spaces. But there is far too little evidence of the decoration of the Great Apartment to go back further, and its conversion (along with the associated changes to the Riding House Range) is in any case part of the exceptional significance of the place.

16.3.15 In the landscape, the approach to restoration has been bolder than for most of the buildings, with the terrace wall and its crenellations completely restored, along with the missing half of the south-west gateway to the Terrace. The restoration of the Fountain and Fountain Garden has been achieved, and the complete reinstatement of the balustrade to its wall walk accepted, but not as yet funded. The Castle Yard has been cleared of modern clutter, and provided with a contemporary visitor centre. Again, the trend has been restoration towards the appearance of the place somewhere in the 18th century, with the visitor centre as an intervention clearly long separated in time and concept from any of the conserved phases. The Great Court still retains its Ministry of Works lawns, rather than being metalled, while the steep slopes of the castle spur are little managed; but both are areas where a return to pre-19th century management is both possible and desirable.

The desirability of a consistent overall strategy

16.3.16 Drawing these elemental analyses back together at the level of the site as a whole, and disregarding the intentionally modern visitor centre, a reasonable conclusion is that incremental restoration is tending to slip into incongruity, in the sense that different elements (including interiors and exteriors of the same structure) are being restored to, and presented at, different stages in their evolution. This is hardly surprising, since there is little to suggest that the ultimate objective of incremental restoration projects has been overtly considered. The result is that the site is presented as a series of museum tableaux or experiences, rather than reflecting its coherence through its
appearance at a particular point in past time. Its character has tended to become fragmented by pragmatic, isolated or opportunistic decisions.

16.3.17 This fragmentation creates problems of comprehension, but, even more importantly, it engenders the character of a museum or public park rather than an atmospheric historic place (total immersion in a different ambiance). Compared to this, philosophical and policy concerns about incongruity are much less important, but a greater awareness of the issue is necessary to mitigate the basic problem. On the other hand, a degree of pragmatism is practically necessary; investment will continue to be incremental, is less easily come by than ever before, and will need to be focused on improving visitor experience, numbers and site income generally. Congruity is a desirable objective, but can be addressed at different levels, notably the site landscape and building exteriors as the first tier, and the interiors of individual buildings as a second tier.

16.3.18 Applying the English Heritage restoration policy, the last historically-significant phase in the development of the site can reasonably be said to be the dismantling of the state apartment and the changes to stabling, arguably of the 1680s, but certainly before 1717. It remained in that form essentially until the middle of the century. Repair work of c1751 survives in part (Little Castle roof), and the c1770s abandonment of the Terrace Range is evident, along with the wall around the Castle Yard, but neither of these reflects historically-significant events in the evolution of Bolsover. Building work after 1751 was mostly ad hoc adaptation of decaying buildings in the Riding House Range and domestication of the Little Castle, and very little of it now survives.

16.3.19 The present state of the site can be rationalised as a tendency to restore elements to their appearance at some point between about 1750 and 1780, but not the same point. That might be seen to be splitting hairs, but for one problem: there is no recognisable or usable stable to support the Riding House or make the point that horses were central to the character and purpose of Bolsover down to the early 19th century. The 1770s stables as an ad hoc conversion within the block(s) adjacent to the Riding House have gone (the last ephemeral traces, including doors in the south wall, removed c2000), while the stable they superseded in the gallery is a roofless shell with no mention of its ultimate role.

16.3.20 The earliest period to which the site as a whole could be comprehensively restored in the long term without speculation is effectively during the works of 1751. The Little Castle is almost at that point externally. In the long term the Terrace Range could be roofed, with its latest, utilitarian interior uses, rooms largely stripped, but, fundamentally, with a stable. At that date, the Riding House Range could still, just, have its windows unblocked, riding house usable, and apartments in the original stable. The Fountain Garden fits (with the remainder of the wall walk balustrade completed), as does the Castle Yard, save for the probably 1770s wall rather than 1750s paling; the Great Court would need to be substantially metalled; the Conduit House could be restored. It would be the logical conclusion of the selective unpicking and restoration undertaken to date, in which most interventions of 1751 and later have
already been removed.

16.3.21 The principal arguments against this are in relation to roofing the Terrace Range. There would be some loss of evidential value in re-glazing the windows, but much of the stone framework is already renewed, and surviving parts are amongst the very elements that are decaying most quickly. Remnants of interior finishes, chimney pieces, etc would be permanently protected. The cost of replacing floors and roofs and re-glazing would be significant, but the compartmentation of the building means that this could be undertaken in phases over time (as it was probably unroofed). Interpretation of the interior would be a challenge, but probably no more so than now; the kitchens (unlike the Little Castle) have working flues and some could be practically used on a demonstration basis (cf Hampton Court).

16.3.22 All of this suggests that the short- to medium-term strategy for the conservation and restoration of the site as a whole should be to consolidate the trend towards a landscape composed of elements presented as they were in the third quarter of the 18th century, although not necessarily co-existing, as explained above. In the medium- to long-term, this could be refined (with the probable exception of the drystone walling in the outer court) towards a date notionally during the works of 1751, which would accommodate a functional Riding House (windows unblocked), the repaired Little Castle, and a roofed Terrace Range. This would be the ultimate resolution of ad hoc restoration, to bring the buildings and site to their state at a specific point in time, the latest when all the 17th century buildings functioned, but already bore the marks of time. It would also provide a clear starting point for site interpretation.

16.3.23 This approach does not preclude modification of this strategy within the Little Castle and Riding House range, given their particular histories of ‘restoration’, and potential and practical needs. To answer the question put at 16.3.11 above, for these reasons congruity will need to be addressed at the level of these buildings or even spaces within these buildings.

16.3.24 The long-term may seem so distant as to hardly warrant a policy being set at this stage to address it. But, in the way of things, once the Fountain Garden walk has its balustrades refixed and is open, and the path leads to a blocked door into a complete shell, the question of what next will inevitably arise.

Policy 13: Future interventions in the site as a whole (spaces, building exteriors and the Terrace Range) should be consistent with and contribute towards a long term goal of restoring its character and appearance to that of c1751 (which largely reflected that achieved at the end of the 17th century with all ranges roofed and glazed), other than providing a 21st century point of entry, the visitor centre.

Presentation: The visitor experience

16.3.25 Spending time on site provides an opportunity to observe visitors as well as buildings. Our entirely unscientific observations in July 2011 are that users of the audio tour were a minority. The Little Castle is the focus of the visit, but visitors tend to respond to the basement and second floor with a quick and cursory look, evidently disappointed by empty, partly dismantled rooms (and
perhaps reflecting the brevity of their treatment in the current guidebook). The basement video presentation only works with the audio guide; it seemed little used. Few linger in the Fountain Garden. People linger mostly on the Terrace, enjoying the view, and overheard conversations suggested many were from the surrounding area, bringing friends. Relatively few venture into the basement of the terrace range. Perhaps those who do are more engaged as well as adventurous, for it was only here that people asked ‘the man with the clipboard’ to interpret their surroundings, the former kitchen offices. Very few seemed to find their way to the Riding House gallery. A wedding reception or function means that the Riding House is closed for at least a day in preparation, as well as the whole site closing early for the event (although we understand that weddings and other functions in the Riding House are to be reduced in number and/or phased out in favour of more public events). The space west of the Riding House is a good place to shelter from the rain, and hopefully explore the leaning experiences on offer.

16.3.26A wholly unscientific conclusion is that most visitors are drawn to the visually attractive and curious elements of the site; views of and from it, the outside of the Little Castle, its principal interiors, and views from the Terrace. In that, they are appreciating the fruits of Charles and William Cavendish’s labours. Engagement, in other words, for most visitors is at a very superficial level, despite the audio guide, the guidebook, and some discreet labels. The challenge is to make it otherwise, to bring to life the buildings, their uses, and the characters that made them.

16.3.27The relationship between the castle and the historic town of Bolsover, especially during the medieval period and the 17th century, is currently under-exploited and few explanatory links are made between them. How this might be addressed, and the relationship strengthened/developed and enhanced for visitors, is considered below, in 16.5. An obvious issue, which should be discussed with Bolsover District Council, is the absence of a specific tourism strategy for Bolsover.

Accessibility

16.3.28English Heritage is a service provider for the purposes of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. This requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments to their buildings and sites to make them accessible to people with disabilities (including physical, mental, hearing and visual impairment). The most recent access audit was undertaken in May 2006 (JGP 2006), and identified a large number of specific issues to which responses need to be developed, particularly through this conservation plan. Decisions as to what is ‘reasonable’ can properly take into account whether the benefits of physical alterations to improve access would be outweighed by the damage that would be caused to the significance of the site.

16.3.29English Heritage’s Disability Access Policy states that: the organisation will
- Explore all methods of providing and improving access to its properties for people with limited mobility while respecting the historic integrity and

76 Not always correct: The Hall is presented as the Dining Room, and the Dining Room as an ‘Entrance Hall’
quality of those buildings and sites

- Where physical access remains difficult or impossible, English Heritage will introduce other forms of interpretation
- Other interpretive resources will also be used to meet the needs of visitors with cognitive and sensory impairment;
- Ensure that all new services are designed to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities
- Ensure wherever possible that existing services and resources are upgraded to the same standard as part of routine works
- Provide training for staff
- Make reasonable and appropriate adjustment for employees.

16.3.30 Horizontal access around the site is generally good, although dependent upon regular maintenance of bound gravel and other wearing surfaces. The fundamental physical access problems are vertical, within the roofed buildings and down to the lower level of the Terrace Range. The 1999 draft plan recognised the problem, and suggested that future developments should ‘not install major new exhibitions in the upstairs area which are not fully accessible’. A ‘virtual tour’ using video as an alternative to physical access provides visitors unable to explore the Little Castle directly, and is available in the former (original) stable.

16.3.31 The planning of the Little Castle, coupled with the exceptional significance of its architecture and decoration, means that there is no opportunity to install a lift either inside or outside. The destruction of fabric and character that it would involve is unthinkable. Yet the Little Castle is, for most visitors, the high point of their experience, with much potential, through dressing the rooms, to enhance that experience and the appeal of the site as a whole. To forego this potential is unrealistic; the ‘virtual tour’ provides a reasonable alternative and, as technology develops, the experience of user-led ‘virtual exploration’ should improve.

16.3.32 Lesser interventions that would marginally improve accessibility are also mostly problematic. Removing elements (eg original thresholds) is irreversible and would not be a ‘reasonable change’ to an historic building of such sensitivity. Adding elements (handrails and tonal contrast to steps on the stair, and increased (necessarily artificial) lighting) would cause a lower level of physical damage, being partly reversible, but would fundamentally change the character of the interior. In the particular circumstances of the Little Castle, the effect on the way the place is experienced would be disproportionately harmful. But opportunities to improve accessibility which are compatible with sustaining or enhancing the significance of the building should certainly be taken, for example, covering more of the lime ash floors with rush matting would achieve a much greater tonal contrast between walls and floors.

16.3.33 The eastern section of the Riding House Range presents a similar, but arguably less acute, problem, but, given the historic nature of the viewing gallery, widening access to it is highly desirable. A lift would change the character as well as the fabric of the building to a very considerable, indeed
 unacceptable, extent. But given that the treads and risers of the stair are largely renewed, a greater but not strident contrast could be achieved, for example, by inlays in the tread edges using wood of contrasting colour.

16.3.34 The basement of the Terrace Range has limited accessibility by virtue of the stair which provides access, and the loose gravel used as the ground surface. This gravel has no historical authenticity: the surface was once paved and bound gravel (or ultimately paving) would be much more appropriate. Similarly, the handrails of the stair are modern and could be improved, while the stair has modern treads and is sited in a much more robust context than that in the Little Castle. Were the Terrace Range ever to be roofed, lift access within modern structure would be easily and appropriately achieved.

Policy 14: Reasonable measures will be taken to improve access to parts of the site currently accessible only to the able-bodied, with the most obvious potential being physical access to the basement of the Terrace Range. The significance and sensitivity of the Little Castle and the eastern block of the Riding House Range rule out such drastic intervention. Opportunities will be sought to improve intellectual and virtual access to such areas.

16.4 Applying the strategy across the site

The Visitor Centre

![The visitor centre from the entrance side, March 2011](image)

16.4.1 The visitor centre stands well in its setting behind the Castle Yard rampart, hidden from outside and seen nestled into the landscape from the inside. A traditional iron estate fence and gate effectively deflects visitors to pass through the centre, and its setting remains generally uncluttered. The exception is a ‘transport buggy’, to move equipment and materials around the
site, currently parked under a tarpaulin to the east. It is understood that this will be removed or relocated shortly. The public areas of the interior provide a panoramic view of the Riding House Range. The building can be considered a successful intervention, providing good amenities for visitors; retail and catering perform well. At the time of writing, English Heritage was planning the installation of a children’s play area, which is now seen as an essential element of the visitor ‘offer,’ on the north-east side of the visitor centre. Whilst a play area here would not be visible from outside the site, it would be very conspicuous in views out from the Riding House Range and entrance to the inner court, so its siting and design will need very careful consideration. Archaeological deposits can be protected by slightly raising the ground level.

The Castle Yard
16.4.2 The castle grounds were let as pasture before the Cavendish ownership (4.2.2) and, from the time that the Riding House Range was built, it served primarily as pasture for horses. In the 1770s, it was divided into two paddocks, and cutting for hay is recorded. In the early 20th century, it began to look more like a public park, with a bowling green, tennis courts, and Elm Avenue; later, it succumbed to utilitarian use, by the Ministry of Works and the school. Tremendous strides have been made in the last decade in ridding this area of clutter and restoring it as a green space with a simple metalled drive. This fits with the overall ‘1751’ conservation strategy, but a few issues remain.

16.4.3 St Mary’s House and the former school are ‘heritage assets’ in their own right (respectively listed grade II and unlisted, but making a positive contribution to the conservation area), with historic links to the Castle’s owners since the mid 18th century, and to the wider development of the community of Bolsover. There is a presumption in favour of their conservation and, fortunately, both are now in good condition and appropriate use (although the further education centre in the former school may be vulnerable to the frequent reorganisation that now characterises public services). The former school was considered as an alternative location for the visitor centre, but the timing of the relocation of the school eventually ruled it out. In the long-term, however, bringing the building (in the ownership of Derbyshire County Council) under integrated management with the Castle would be desirable. The intrusion of its rear boundary, and the car park it encloses, could then minimised, and the remaining modern and rather detrimental additions to the building removed. Its curtilage could also provide, in the long term, a less conspicuous, indeed entirely suitable, location for a play area now deemed an essential adjunct to a site open to the public.

Policy 15: In the long term English Heritage will seek to bring the former school into integrated management with Bolsover Castle

16.4.4 The greatest visual intrusion is the bowling green in its current form (Fig 80). It sits awkwardly across the front of the Riding House Range and the end of the Terrace Range. Its adjuncts – the wooden pavilion, store hut, compost heap and hard and soft landscaping of its cut into the slope on the west – are all suburban and out of place. When the whole area was filled with huts, the store and pavilion huts were hardly noticed; now they are the ‘last huts standing’ -
both prominently sited on top of the bank, on the skyline. The pitch itself appears to be in poor condition. The problems also go beyond the visual. The disruption of the landform has isolated the stable entry into the former gallery (Fig 81), and created a surcharge on the retaining wall to the south drive, as well as necessitating a wire fence to protect the drop, while the public are discouraged by ‘private’ notices from approaching the west end of the range.

16.4.5 Adding to the visual intrusion is a former sandpit associated with the school (1982 survey), now with some reeds and wetland plants growing in it from its subsequent use as an educational ‘pond’, surrounded by a fence and padlocked gate, immediately south-west of the bowling green enclosure. It is not used by the college and is of no ecological interest, so should be filled in when the opportunity arises and the landform restored. Similarly the fence within the west wall of the outer court that has been set out to meet it compounds the intrusion. Between fence and wall, beyond the hedge, the area is generating a ‘wild’ margin that will soon become overgrown.

![Fig 80 The bowling green dug into the landform](image)

16.4.6 There is nothing inherently alien in having a bowling green in the outer court. The square enclosure within the Castle Yard pasture on Senior’s 1637 plan (Fig 10) may well have been one, sited in an obviously suitable area of level ground. Many great houses of the 17th century had one, and they are also commonly associated with former urban castle sites during the same period.\(^77\) They were, however, generally areas of grass that were naturally flat and particularly well tended, without the accoutrements of the modern pitch, and integrated into their historic landscape settings rather than involving major earthworks (here, presumably, to provide a grandstand for spectators).

\(^{77}\) Including Colchester (Essex) and Guildford (Surrey)
16.4.7 The long-term conservation goal should be to try to move the bowling green and its associated clutter and reinstate the landform. This would inevitably be a sensitive local community issue and need handling with due consideration. While the agreement is determinable at 3 months notice, it will be best not to precipitate change but wait until an opportune moment in the life cycle of the club prompts change. In the meantime, better maintenance of the landscaping, removal of the open compost heap and improvement of the huts would provide some visual improvement. In the longer term, a closely mown green in front of the Riding School could be part of the management of the Castle Yard, not perhaps up to modern match play standards, but a wonderful opportunity for visitors to play bowls as in the 17th or 18th century (as one can play 19th century-style croquet at Chastleton).

Policy 16A: The former school sandpit on the west side of the Castle Yard, its fencing, and the boundary fencing set out to meet it will be removed as soon as funds permit and the landform restored.

Policy 16B: Opportunities will be explored for relocating the present bowling green and associated clutter and reinstating the landform when circumstances permit. Consideration will be given, in the longer term, to providing a green to historic standards (a closely mown, level rectangle of grass) in front of the Riding School.

16.4.8 The exedra housing a bench on the south side of the bowling green, however, includes some spoilia, mostly from Gray’s porch added to the south side of the
Little Castle (Fig 71). Of particular interest is a carved head quite possibly of 17th century date which seems once to have formed the keystone of the arch over the porch entrance. Other material seems to be derived from the parapet of the Terrace Range.

Policy 17: The spoilia used in the bowling green exedra will be identified, its significance determined and steps taken to safeguard what is of ‘considerable significance’ whether in situ or otherwise.

16.4.9 Apart from a putative historic ‘bowling green’, it would desirable if the greensward of the outer court had more of the character of a meadow and less of a public park. Since historically it was grazed or cut for hay, the management regime should try to reflect this by allowing some areas to grow higher, encouraging biodiversity in line with more modern approaches to the management of such spaces. Permanent marquee anchor points (used at least once a year for jousting events (see below) but no longer for commercial events by Bolsover Council), and use of picnic tables in the area north of the Visitor Centre suggest that this area needs to be kept reasonably close mown.

16.4.10 This would fit also with the use of the outer court for staging income-generating events such as jousting, or tilting, ‘tournaments’. These are understood to be increasingly popular. Since William Cavendish ‘...was certainly a tilter’ (Girouard 1993, 232), it would be very appropriate if such events could be updated to the 17th century, to reflect the real history of the castle (although authenticity would have to stop short of holding the tilting in the Great Court, where in reality it is likely to have taken place, but where there is insufficient space for both horsemen and a large number of spectators).

Policy 18: Consideration will be given to developing the management regime of the Castle Yard grassland the better to suggest its historic meadow character, provide an appropriate setting for staging historic recreations and encourage biodiversity.

16.4.11 The development project introduced hedges within the walls including ‘old’
roses; the reason for doing so is now unclear. These are not strictly in conformity with its 17th and 18th century character, but do no harm, particularly if allowed to develop into shrubby plants that naturally establish around field edges if not grazed, rather than gardened into anything more formal. They provide a useful screen along the essentially 19th century boundary of St Mary’s House (now supplemented by a trellis screen outside the EH wall) and the school, but the 2007 Condition Survey questioned the desirability of the hedge, and its associated maintenance costs.

The Great Court

16.4.12 The 19th century landscaping has been removed, save for a single Copper Beech and some areas of lawn (Fig 83). Since 1982, the Ministry of Works approach of paths between gates and doors, and perimeter flower beds, has been further simplified by removing the flower beds and expanding the gravel metalled area, particularly in front of the Riding House Range.

Fig 83  The Great Court from the roof of the Little Castle. The view to the church spire is hidden by trees

16.4.13 Historically, this area is known to have been largely metalled, and amongst other things to have been used as an exercise yard for horses. In line with the overall strategy for the conservation of the site, it would be desirable to take the cumulative trend of restoration so far to its logical conclusion, and metal the whole. This would, of course, need to be subject to further detailed archaeological research to ascertain type, extents and so forth; some areas may well have had pitched stone or other materials, especially on the desire lines, which would add interest and authenticity to the result. From a recorded late 19th century ground level rise of at least 0.4m at the Valve Room door (13.1.10), and former stair access to the middle level of the cistern house here, it is evident that something interesting, and different from extensive metalling, was happening in the north-east corner.

16.4.14 There is no reason to disturb the Beech tree (the last survivor of the Victorian garden created by the Grays), so long as it lives and remains healthy;
as a single, mature tree, it is unlikely ever to be out of place here. It should not be fenced for protection, but its condition checked regularly by an arboriculturalist. It would be desirable, however, for the Beech not to be replaced when eventually it reaches the end of its natural life, in order for the Great Court to be returned to its original appearance. Expectation of loss of the Beech could be ‘managed’ through provision of information explaining the long-term objective of returning the Great Court to an essentially ‘hard’ space, without trees. The work involved in doing so could be tackled incrementally, beginning with the southern half, if the whole would be too much of a change, or too great an expense, in a single operation (it is understood that funds are unlikely to be available in the foreseeable future).

16.4.15 Most importantly, a return to an authentic material or materials would emphasise the difference between this space – the working heart of the site – and the outer court ‘meadow’ and Fountain Garden grass plats. In the era before mechanical mowing, the latter were a luxury rather than a commonplace. In a very real sense, the expansive lawns in the Great Court detract from the impact and special quality of the Fountain Garden.

16.4.16 A management issue that needs to be addressed is that of casual parking in the Great Court. Vehicles are not allowed on site during opening hours (except for those associated with works projects, for which temporary special provision is required) and that needs to be made explicit to all building and grounds maintenance contractors, services engineers, caterers, etc, who tend to park casually in the Great Court.

Policy 19: As a medium to long term objective, the floorscape of the Great Court will be restored to a harder metalled/gravelled finish, following archaeological investigation of its historic form and detail. The existing Copper Beech will not be replaced when it reaches the end of its natural life.

Policy 20: The ‘no parking on site during opening hours’ policy will be made explicit and monitored.

The eastern slopes

16.4.17 The argument for the eastern slopes outside the Inner Court and Fountain Garden walls being a wilderness garden, linked to an orchard to the north, has been set out above (10.2.18). In recent years, this area (Fig 84) has been disturbed by the installation of ground anchors and made difficult of access by the walling off of all entrances to it from the castle. In 1967, a small toilet block was built into it, entered from the Castle Yard, and this has been retained for occasional use in connection with events. It is understood to be essentially surplus to requirements, since major events require portable toilets to be imported in any case. The building is lightly constructed of shiplap boarding on a timber frame, under a felted roof, so, within the foreseeable future, the question will arise of whether to spend a substantial sum on it, or remove it. Since its use appears insufficient to justify its ongoing maintenance, the aspiration should be to remove the structure when it reaches the point at which significant expenditure is required to keep it usable. This would enable the adjacent historic gate in the eastern wall to be re-opened, and the stepped
ramp and path beyond made usable again, as and when funds permit. The gateway not only provided access to the eastern slope, but was the start/end of a circular walk around the whole promontory (Fig 86).

16.4.18 Outside the effective walled boundary of the castle, the steep slopes show signs of quite intensive informal recreational use, from dog walking (despite the often perilous paths) and mountain biking to (judging by the unpicked litter) informal barbecues, drinking, and ‘hanging out’ – but with no obvious vandalism. Tree cover is becoming tall and dense, with much of it self-seeded sycamores, some unfortunately well-established in the base of the Castle Yard wall.

16.4.19 Historically, the boundary of this land was altered by the cutting through of Station Road itself, just on the north-east side of the Hockley stream (Appendix 4, 1,1.4-5). The building below the castle, now 60-62 Station Road, modernised, but seemingly of 18th century origin on map evidence, stands on a platform cut into the cliff, and the combination of terracing the back of the cut and the use of no 60 as a builder’s yard brings intrusion and clutter close to the castle walls.
16.4.20 It is clear, and entirely understandable, that there has been no active
management of this area by English Heritage for a long time. Controlling
unofficial activity here will only be possible if it becomes integrated into the
‘curated’ parts of the site. It has come to be seen as effectively outside the
castle, but the historic connections are obvious and, despite neglect, it offers
future potential for management, restoration and access. The first step should
be to try better to understand the surviving landscape, archaeologically and
ecologically. Lidar offers the best chance of seeing its physical form, followed
by selective excavation to understand and restore historic levels adjacent to
the castle walls. A tree management strategy could follow, including planting
and management to control views where modern intrusions need screening,
preferably in co-operation with the adjoining owners of no 60, who lease part
of the English Heritage site as an addition to their garden. The 2007 Asset
Management Plan recommended coppicing the trees on a 5 year rotational
cycle, to maintain the flanks as scrub, but, in the light of the significance of
these areas, that seems rather too coarse an approach.

16.4.21 Reinstating a gate in the Castle Yard wall would provide access (and could
be made no easier to climb than the wall: not difficult!). Access could begin with
the viewing platform, which needs a balustrade, and a gate in place of the
blocking. There may be fragments of the historic balustrade to be found; if not,
a plain contemporary one would suffice. Officially sanctioned access to the
external area may be a longer term goal, needing investment in hard landscape
features and a view to safety; it could, in any event, not reasonably be made
DDA accessible. The circular walks around the Castle mount that began or
ended here are addressed at 16.4.48 et seq. Managing the tree cover in this
area is also vital to exploiting views of the castle from Town End, the Cundy
House and along Hill Top (qv).

Policy 21: Archaeological and ecological research will be undertaken on the eastern
slopes, the putative site of the wilderness garden, to inform a landscape restoration
strategy and management programme, with the objective of recovering its historic
character.

Policy 22: Once an appropriate landscaping scheme is in place, the viewing platform off
the Great Court will be repaired and made accessible.

Policy 23: The existing, modern public toilets will be removed as they reach the end of
their design life, the Castle Yard wall reinstated and the former access gateway through
it reinstated as such.

Policy 24: In the long term, public access to this area will be considered, via historic
connections from the Castle itself, with former paths reinstated and resurfaced, and
appropriate low light fittings installed.

The cistern house
16.4.22 This is currently displayed in more or less its late 19th century form, its
interest and significance to be ascertained only from the diagram on the wall;
the view down whets, but does not satisfy, the appetite. There is no reason
why the overall conservation objective of returning the site to c1751 should
not be applied here so far as the evidence goes, which would involve
reinstating its floors and roof in their proper positions, along with exposing
and repairing the external stair wrapping round the building, the south door,
windows and plain plasterwork to the garden room, and eventually, down to
the gateway through the Great Court wall. The benefits of recovering the
garden room are obviously linked to the restoration of the eastern slopes
(above), over which it gave views. By contrast, what would be lost, the
gimcrack 19th century arrangements, are of moderate significance at best, the
structure a modern renewal; the pump would be retained as an artefact. This
strategy could be undertaken incrementally, beginning with the roof as part of
the completion of the Fountain Garden wall walk (Policy 26). Experimenting
with ‘17th century’ ways of lifting water could engage visitors over time.

Policy 25: As a long term, incremental strategy, the historic roof, floors, access to and
windows of the cistern house will be restored to their pre-19th century form, the roof
forming an integral part of the incomplete wall walk restoration.

The Fountain Garden and high walk

16.4.23 The major project purged the Fountain Garden of its Victorian landscaping,
reinstating the simple 17th century scheme, which presumably persisted into
the following century, as well as the fountain itself. This is now maturing, and
presents no major conservation or presentational issues. Unfortunately,
evertheless, funding was not available to complete the balustrade around the wall
walk, and thus to open it to the public, although the paving of the walk and cill
of the balustrade were completed. This is an obvious next step in restoration
and presentation, and needs to include the restoration of the roof of the
cistern house as part of the walk. On the north-east, the foreground views
would be of the eastern slopes, historically the wilderness garden, emphasising
the need to bring them into historically appropriate management.

16.4.24 The balustrade as (partly) restored is too low in the ‘vents’ to meet current
building regulations, like the restored balustrade to the terrace. It does not feel
unsafe, however, and is more substantial than that at other points on this and
many other sites. The decision was taken in 2000 that this historically-accurate
balustrade is adequate in the context of a site where generally visitors are
informed about the risks of historic sites. There has been no change in
circumstances that warrants reconsideration.

Policy 26: The balustrade to the high walk will be completed in accordance with the
approved scheme when funds allow, and the walk opened to the public. This will necessitate
management of the trees on the eastern slopes if views to the north-east, including to the
Cundy House, are to be revealed.

16.4.25 Against the east wall of the Little Castle there is a pile of debris (Fig 85)
which appears to have been there for some time, associated with the exposed
vault crown of a cistern in need of maintenance and a secure but sensitive
cover to its entrance, rather than the extant broken stone.
Policy 27: Building clutter will be removed from the Fountain Garden, the top of the exposed vault repaired and made safe, and the garden kept clear of clutter in the future.

The Garden Rooms

16.4.26 The Fountain Garden should be a restful place, in which to linger in the soothing influence of the sound of the fountain. South-west-facing seats in the walls should encourage visitors to loiter, to enjoy the place as a garden, but few seem to do so. A way perhaps needs to be found to say ‘you may sit here’ – but not with a notice. While the Fountain Garden has been recovered, the south-east garden rooms are forbidding, taking one back into the world of a derelict monument, with all the character of coal cellars. The most interesting and high status, the western rooms, are closed off, apparently because of the potential nuisance of pigeons taking up residence. Water ingress from above has been reduced by the repaving of the walk, but appears to continue at a low level, to the detriment of the internal stonework, including the fine rib vault. These rooms are virtually complete (save for the former entrance passage on the west side, which could remain as a store), and could be repaired and authentically redecorated (mostly plain limewash?) without speculation and at modest cost. If sense of how they were likely to have been furnished (presumably not permanently) can be discerned, the visitor experience could be enhanced still further by providing entirely usable reproductions.

Policy 28: The western garden rooms will repaired and made accessible, the gates if necessary being adapted, backed with mesh and made self-closing, to deter pigeons.

Policy 29: All the garden rooms will be repaired and restored to the same authentic standard as the wall walk and Fountain Garden, and consideration given to bringing them to life with seasonal, usable, reproduction furnishings.
The Little Castle

16.4.27 The core significance of the Little Castle lies in its 17th century phases, as it does for the site as a whole, but it is a building whose exquisite interiors survive in many cases more or less complete, although unfurnished. The interior finishes are a mixture of original plain surfaces (basement, stairs), highly wrought interiors with paintwork authentically restored (ground and most of the first floor), and slightly less highly wrought interiors in their original aged finishes, but with friezes and cornices replaced in plain work in 1751 (second floor) and substantial areas of missing panelling.

16.4.28 Working within the overall conservation strategy proposed for the site, of harmonising its restoration to its appearance in the middle of the 18th century, there are further minor steps in the restoration of the Little Castle that are uncontroversial and should be implemented as opportunities present themselves. In the post-war restorations, the 19th century sashes inserted in the French door openings to both balconies were replaced with windows above apron walls, and several opening casements (indicated by surviving pintles), particularly on the second floor, replaced by plain leaded glazing: this has resulted in inadequate ventilation in hot weather. Reinstating French doors is the most important and urgent priority, to make sense of the most significant interiors and the external balconies; the present situation is open to ridicule. The other particularly unfortunate modern change has been the occasional substitution of concrete screeds for lime ash floors; authentic reinstatement should be considered in the event of extensive disturbance being necessary for services or other purposes.

Policy 30: French doors will be reinstated in the first floor balcony openings of the Little Castle as a priority, and opening casements fitted where originally present as circumstances permit, sufficient to enable adequate ventilation of the building.

16.4.29 Although most of the intrusive 19th century changes to the Little Castle have been reversed, a few remain, which, for consistency, should be picked up in any future presentation scheme. They include the removal of blocks of masonry obscuring two of the cupola lights, if structural considerations permit (13.1.4), and the covering or filling of the open well dug in front of the north end of the west elevation, in the forecourt (which also introduces dampness into the basement).

Policy 31: The reversal of the few remaining intrusive 19th century changes to the Little Castle will be undertaken as opportunities arise during the course of future works.

16.4.30 These minor matters apart, the plan of the Little Castle remains as it was completed in the 1620s. The most problematic issues concern the conservation and presentation of the historic interiors. Interventions in the internal decorations of the Little Castle reflect changes in the understanding of, and approach to, ‘restoring’ historic interiors over half a century. Without them, had most of the historic paintwork survived to be carefully conserved and presented, 1751 would a good terminal date for reversing ad hoc interventions, for at that point the earlier appearance of the second floor was changed, particularly through the loss of the ceilings, some of it probably
beyond certain recovery. The 17th century house would have appeared universally ‘old’, like the surviving interiors at Chastleton (though few there are really wholly 17th century). Lady Oxford could have invited visitors to take tea amongst the furniture so thoughtfully recorded in the bills.

16.4.31 What exists now, as each generation of conservators has found fault with the approach of their predecessors, is a mixture of aged original finishes, cleaned and conserved original finishes, and ‘historic’ finishes reproduced at different times with varying degrees of accuracy. On one level they provide an illustrated history of changing attitudes to conservation and presentation, and the 1970s/80s scheme in the Ante Room (C1) might be explained as such rather than redecorated ‘authentically’. Nonetheless, the ‘restored’ rooms demonstrate how interesting and striking early 17th century taste actually was. Only in one room, the Pillar Parlour (C2), are these reinstated schemes actually misleading in terms of the 17th into mid 18th century appearance of a room. Sashes with internal ‘gothick’ glazed screens take the place of the two mullion and transom windows in the north-west wall, their cills cut down to near the floor; all probably of c1835. Aesthetically the result seen from the inside is generally perceived as successful, although it is in no sense ‘authentic’ in combination with restored 17th century decoration and the reversal of the other 19th century change to the room, the cutting of a door to the Ante-Room. Externally, the large sashes near the ground give the building something of the appearance of Pugin’s ‘Modern Castellated Mansion’ (1841, 68), but a very strong nerve would be needed to restore the original form of these windows (which is entirely clear from their surviving elements) given that they do not obviously jar in the manner of interventions noted under Policy 30.

16.4.32 Overall, the present appearance is inconsistent, even confusing, not least for lack of an engaging explanation. Yet the Little Castle somehow retains a special ambiance that derives from the character and intimate quality of its rooms, and much of their decoration, both original and reproduced. Options for the future direction or application of policy are limited. The new work replaces that mistakenly stripped in the more distant past, so there can be no return to the status quo ante (and, in any event, the redecoration serves a valuable didactic purpose). To over-paint all the remaining original work, even if this could be achieved with an interleaving layer making it fully reversible, would be to rob the interior of its remaining authentic historic character. Conservation may improve the legibility of some of this surviving work.

16.4.33 The refurnishing of the house, essentially with modern reproduction items, is now proposed, as one of English Heritage’s top ten priorities. This could bring these interiors ‘to life’ and make the most of this key asset in terms of attracting visitors, for whom empty rooms seem insufficient to fire the imagination. The potential to explore the appearance in use of an effectively complete (if miniature) set of high status interiors of the 1620s-30s is also an extraordinary opportunity for experimental archaeology (like the V & A work on Ham in the past). It could have academic as well as presentational value. The character of interiors of the 1660s is pretty well known; that of 1620s-30s interiors is not. To be totally immersed in a reasonable approximation of them could be interesting for all.
16.4.34 A pragmatic approach to the interior of the Little Castle which reflects the exceptional significance and rarity of its interiors is effectively dictated by the lack of a coherent conservation strategy in the past. The Little Castle offers the only opportunity in England to explore the appearance in use of the interior of a high status house of its period. It is an opportunity that on balance should be taken, but with care to ensure true reversibility of future interventions affecting pre-1751 elements of the internal fit-out. Furnishing the rooms is, in any event, likely to tone down the contrast between historic and new decoration. The approach could usefully be extended to, indeed trialled in, the Fountain Garden rooms or Forecourt Lodges (qv). But reconciling the narrative with c1751 outside the garden door will be an interesting challenge.

16.4.35 However, the Little Castle already suffers from wear and tear as a result of visitor pressure. It is the principal attraction on the site, but the most fragile, because of its interiors. Increased focus on the building as a result of the refurnishing project will require positive management measures to be introduced. Visitor numbers will need to be monitored and the number of people in the building at any one time restricted to, say, 100. This will require additional stewarding and/or timed entries. Maintaining and conserving the furnished interiors will require additional resources and expertise. In addition to regular basic cleaning (vacuuming, dusting, etc), deep conservation cleaning will also be required, to keep finishes and fabrics in good condition. It is suggested that, whether or not the house is re-furnished, the in-house site team should be given appropriate training so that some of this work could be done during opening hours, to engage visitor interest.

16.4.36 In redisplay of the Little Castle, more emphasis should be placed on engaging visitors with the basement and second floor, if only to spread them more evenly through the building. The original division of the basement into two non-communicating areas, for example, explains why there are so many stairs. The Beer Cellar is a most impressive architectural space, and ill-used by being blacked out, while the stair from it to the Hall via the servery C5 explains the way all those spaces were used. Unfortunately the filling of the flues with concrete prevents bringing the kitchens fully to life. At second floor level, enough survives in most if not all rooms to fill the gaps with reproduction panelling. The gap in absolute knowledge lies in the loss of what were almost certainly plaster entablatures like that in C17 above the panelling (‘roomes’) or a deep frieze and moulded cornice (‘closits’). There may be some further evidence as to detail, but leaving a gap would be more misleading than (reversibly) following the established model in the better-preserved rooms below.

Policy 32: Future interventions to the Little Castle affecting any elements of its interior fit-out known or potentially likely to predate the repairs of 1751 will be designed to be fully reversible without loss of surviving early finishes, and not result in substantially obscuring those finishes.

Policy 33: A detailed, research-based conservation policy will be developed specifically for the Little Castle, as a sub-set of these policies, before any major intervention is
contemplated. A key objective will be to develop, so far as is now possible, a strategy that minimises the impact of inherited treatments whilst minimising further loss of original finishes. Environmental monitoring will be established, and a strategy for environmental management implemented, within the limitations set by the fabric.

Policy 34: In order to minimise the effects of intensive use, visitor numbers will be monitored and management measures introduced to limit numbers in the building at any one time to an appropriate safe level.

Policy 35: The condition of the paintings will be regularly monitored, and if necessary the limited opportunities to moderate environmental conditions without major intervention will be explored. The in-house management team will be given training in basic conservation housekeeping techniques, in order to ensure that the interiors receive appropriate day-to-day care.

The lodges and forecourt
16.4.37 The original use of the ‘lodges’ (as they are called in 1751) around the forecourt is unclear. Provided with fireplaces similar to those in the Little Castle itself, they may well have been lodging rooms, or simply places to gather for private conversation (since the Little Castle appears to lack a Withdrawing Room in the conventional sense); the south-western one probably had a bath in its inner room. One lodge at least had painted decoration, and a trompe l’oeil shell survives in the alcove. Analysis of paint samples has shown the paint to be identical in composition to that found in the 1620s interiors of the Little Castle. In the 19th century, they were converted to domestic offices, with their former cellars infilled with domestic rubbish. Their structures are repaired and stabilised, and their roof structures largely renewed, but their interiors remain shabby, without ceilings, the north one with an inserted sash. The panels created by the Ministry of Works by recessing the infilling of the sashes on the west fronts of the west Lodges, flanking the gate, are misleading; the external ashlar should be reinstated flush.

16.4.38 Ideally these spaces should be repaired internally and made accessible, or used to support functions and activities on the site. In the absence of obvious uses or rôles in the presentation of the whole, they seem less of an immediate priority, for the want of a specific story to tell. They could, however, well serve as trial examples for the dressing of the Little Castle itself.

Policy 36: The Lodges will be repaired internally as and when opportunities for their use or presentation arise, although they could usefully be used as trial examples for the proposed dressing of the Little Castle.

The Terrace Range
16.4.39 The Terrace Range is generally in sound condition as a consolidated shell, although ongoing monitoring and maintenance is needed, particularly at high level, including reconsolidation of the wall tops. The overall conservation strategy for the site set out above logically demands incremental re-roofing in the long term. Meanwhile, any opportunity presented by works should be seized to further understanding of this least-understood block, through detailed investigation from scaffolding.
16.4.40 The interior of the skew block contains a re-used doorway, surviving chimneypieces, and evidence for the evolution of the Terrace Range which are all of interest, with the potential to explain to visitors the evolution of the building. It is desirable to make it accessible through the repair of the northern external stair and its balustrade wall, allowing the removal of the unsightly fence made of scaffolding, which has been in place for many years. This appears to be the result of the failure to complete this last element of consolidation at the end of the 1993-4 works.

16.4.41 Some of the details of the kitchens are weathering away – stoves and the remains of the brewing copper base in T3 – and need recording and small scale consolidation. These service rooms also need a couple of interpretive labels at basement level, like those at high level at the south end, to aid comprehension.

Policy 37: The external stair to the basement at the north end of the terrace range will be repaired, facilitating public access to the interior of the skew block. Interpretation panels in situ will better explain the function of the basement offices and the evolution of the building.

The terrace and viewing platform
16.4.42 The terrace wall has been repaired, its balustrade reinstated, and the gates and gate piers at the south end restored. The floorscape is appropriate (but is it accurate?), and panels explain the prospect without being intrusive. There are no obvious issues here.

The Riding House Range and the question of horses
16.4.43 William Cavendish was acknowledged as the most skilful horseman of his age even by a Frenchman; and by Clarendon as ‘most accomplished in those qualities of horsemanship, dancing and fencing...in which his delight was’ (Worsley, G, 2004, 59-60). Horses were central to William’s life and to the rôle and significance of his house at Bolsover Castle since at least the building of the Riding House Range probably from the 1630s. While the converted shells of two other English 17th century riding houses survive (Canons Ashby, c1610, and Welbeck, 1623, the latter also for Cavendish), Bolsover is the only one to retain its historic form, complete with viewing gallery. It is one of perhaps the two most important reasons why Bolsover is of such exceptional significance today.

16.4.44 The use of the riding house, and horses, therefore ought to be at the heart of the Bolsover ‘visitor experience’, its unique attraction. Thanks to decisions in the late 1990s, seeing the future of the riding house range primarily as a shell within which revenue-generating events could take place, it is not. It is, most of the time, a miserably depressing experience, which a sound track of manège fails to bring to life even when the ‘events floor’ is not in position.

16.4.45 Regardless of short term issues, therefore, if Bolsover is to exploit its unique survival, horses and the art of manège need to be reintroduced to the place. It needs to smell of horses, they need to be around the place. With suitable estate fencing, they could graze part of the Castle Yard. There is, of course, one practical problem; the works to the remainder of the Riding House Range left Bolsover without a stable. In the long term, the location for stabling, given
choices about retaining the late 17th century changes to the Riding House Range, is the former gallery; in the short term, the answer may lie in using the eastern part of the original stable area, blocking (internally) the inserted 1680s windows and producing something akin to the improvised arrangements of the 1770s. The public facilities would remain undisturbed in the space beyond to the west. In the eastern block, the viewing gallery would come to life with something to view, and the room behind supporting it, both dressed appropriately. The ground floor could, in the longer term, be dressed to reflect its original uses, but in the short term the practical value of the Education Room takes precedence.

16.4.46 In its uses of the western section of the building, this short- to medium-term strategy is in conflict with the overall long term one suggested for the site as a whole. But the technical incongruity would be of little concern beside the benefits of recovering the primary use of the Riding House. If horses and horsemanship can once again become central to Bolsover, moves to the long term strategy can be made incrementally, including, should funding and a need or use be found, the reinstatement of the garret floor/ceiling through the riding house and original stable.

Policy 38: The Riding House will be presented in its historic form and use, with the supporting spaces to the east dressed appropriately and, in the short to medium term, stabling (for resident or visiting horses) improvised probably in the space to the west.

The south drive
16.4.47 The south drive is a self-contained space, closed by gates at either end (those to the south being of 19th century date). Its terrace wall has been restored, and all is in good order. The grass is not kept close-mown, which is appropriate. The grass verge serves as an overflow car park for functions and at busy times, without showing damage (at least in 2011-12). There are no obvious issues to address here, other than a pile of abandoned architectural stonework, probably from the restoration of the gateway in 1997. The use of this historic formal entrance on special occasions/ for special events should be considered.

The western and northern slopes of the castle mount
16.4.48 Historically, the upper parts of the slopes below the Terrace and Little Castle were probably kept free of trees, with some planted, or allowed to grow up, at the foot of the slope, or on the shelving land beneath, as in the Kip view of 1698 (Appendix 4, 1.2.3). The aim seems to have been substantial visibility of the full height of the walls in long views of the castle, to maximise impact, and a neutral ground cover as seen below the terrace, so as not to distract the eye from the prospect. The first map to show footpaths around the Mount is the 1st edition 25” map of 1875 (Fig 86), but since the circuit started or ended at the gate in the 18th century outer court wall (Fig 84) they were likely to have been in existence earlier. Below the slopes on the west, the former park was, by the 17th century, pasture, and so appears in 18th century views. In recent years, the western slopes under the terrace have been to some extent managed to keep the trees and the shrubby under-storey within these assumed historic parameters, but a planned maintenance and renewal strategy is
needed, integrated with the management of the public open space below (qv). Further research (beyond this plan) into the historic landscape is needed, to inform the development of an appropriate strategy (see 16.5.23 below for Castle Fields).

16.4.49 The escarpment on the west, adjacent to the south drive, is bounded west, at its foot, by the street and a public path, but there is no longer a fence to the path. Unlike the slopes below the Terrace, further north, the slopes below the south drive have tall mature trees, which have blocked light to the ground; there is little by way of an understorey. It is used by local people as an exciting descent (presumably on mountain bikes), and access to the top is eroding the ground from around the wall by the gate (Fig 87). There are graffiti on the outside of the wall and litter from ‘hanging out’. This anti-social behaviour might be lessened if the slopes were subject to a management strategy like that of the escarpment in front of the Terrace itself, increasing overlooking and encouraging prickly ground cover, but perhaps a less defensive strategy would be preferable.
Policy 39: Further research into the historic landscape of the Castle slopes will be undertaken. A strategy will be established and implemented to ensure that tree and shrub cover below the terrace and Little Castle is managed to maintain appropriate visibility of and from the castle, and reveal and reinforce its historic character.

16.4.50 In fact, the access point shown on Fig 86 was historically the start/end point for circular walks around the Castle mount, the other end of which was the now-blocked gateway from the outer court (Fig 84). Their layout in 1875 is clear from Fig 86. Re-establishing them, with a connection through the area east of the Outer Court (773 on Fig 86) to the street, would provide another perspective on the Castle. As well as recovering an historic landscape, it could also encourage wider and more responsible public use of the Castle slopes, a more achievable aspiration than preventing current use, and capable of integration with visits to the Castle itself.

Policy 40: The potential to recover the historic paths around the Castle mount, and thus encourage responsible public use and enjoyment of the area, will be investigated, preferably in conjunction with the better management of Castle Fields below.

16.5 The local setting of the Castle in the Bolsover Conservation Area

The conservation area appraisal
16.5.1 The Bolsover Conservation Area embraces most of the medieval planned settlement, and the approaches to and local setting of the Castle as it now exists. Conservation area designation and policies should guide their management, although they do not outweigh the general duty to have regard to the desirability of conserving and enhancing the setting of the castle as a nationally important heritage asset.
16.5.2 A character appraisal of the conservation area was produced for Bolsover District Council by Sheffield Hallam University in 1995, identifying four ‘character areas’ within it. The appraisal was updated by the Council in 2010 to support its (unsuccessful) Stage 1 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) scheme. Under the heading of ‘Character and Townscape’, the appraisal notes that:

“The present character and townscape of Bolsover owes much to the topography. The Castle stands prominently on a limestone spur overlooking the Doe Lea Valley and can be seen for many miles along the valley, dominating the land to the west. The fields to the west of the Castle have remained undeveloped, apart from the development of the mining ‘Model Village’ at new Bolsover, which stands in stark contrast to the castle on the hillside above it. Spectacular views of the Castle exist from Craggs Road and Hill Top on the north side of the Hockley Valley, but the Castle is hardly seen from within the town itself.”

16.5.3 The appraisal does not include policies or management proposals. Nevertheless, para 4.3 states that:

The principal aim of any future conservation strategy for Bolsover should, therefore, focus on the reinstatement of a coherent town form, to reinforce Bolsover’s character and secure the integrity of its historic resource.

16.5.4 These general statements of principle are uncontroversial, indeed laudable, but the appraisal raises a number of specific issues, which are addressed in the

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78 The THI bid, which included major upgrading work to the New Bolsover properties, was resubmitted early in 2012, but was unsuccessful a second time.
sections that follow. The boundaries also might warrant extension in two specific areas. First, Area A on Fig 88 would include the whole of the historic route up the Hockley Valley, and encourage long term improvement to the rather nondescript houses whose backs the later road down the valley has made prominent in views from the castle. At present, contrary to current good practice, their omission forms a 'hole' in the conservation area. Second, given the importance of the medieval defences of Bolsover (qv), and the need to preserve or enhance their setting, consideration should be given to including Area B within the conservation area boundary.

Policy 41: English Heritage will encourage Bolsover District Council to extend the conservation area to include areas A and B on Fig 88, to rationalise its boundaries to include the historically significant areas of the town and its approaches.

The medieval town earthworks

16.5.5 Bolsover is remarkable as a medieval castle and defensible town, despite the lack of standing medieval secular buildings. While a programme of research intended to improve our understanding of the dating and sequence of its development is desirable, the greater priority is to improve conservation and presentation of what survives.

16.5.6 In relation to conservation, increasing mountain bike use, ad hoc footpaths, rubbish accumulation and inadequate management of trees and hedges is physically eroding the earthworks and diminishing their visibility. As to presentation, the northern part of earthwork 1 (Fig 6) forms the boundary between two modern housing developments (Hides Green to the south), but with no provision for public access. If, in the long term, a footpath could be created here, it would be possible to walk the line of the defences, making them more comprehensible and attractive as a major feature of the historic town.

Policy 42: English Heritage will seek to work with Bolsover District Council to develop a scheme to conserve, manage and further present the medieval earthworks of Bolsover town to complement its own presentation of the castle.

Connecting the Castle to the town

16.5.7 Way-finding to the Castle from the town, and information for Castle visitors about the town and its historic relationship to the Castle, are currently poor. Even finding the main entrance to the Castle from the car park is not obvious for those unfamiliar with the place (see 16.5.14 below). ‘Signing the Town’, an initiative developed by the Bolsover Civic Society and Old Bolsover Town Council (with assistance from Bolsover District Council) has provided some information about the town’s development from a Saxon settlement to the present day, but this is of a general nature. Key features of the initiative include: seven ‘Welcome to Bolsover’ signs, sited at each of the approach roads to the town; blue plaques on nine of the most significant historic buildings in the conservation area; publication of a ‘Bolsover Town Trail’; an audio version of the Town Trail that can be downloaded from the websites of the three sponsoring organisations and English Heritage; and provision of two interpretation boards at key points.
16.5.8 None of this is, however, well-integrated with the Castle, which is the primary attractor of visitors. Some additional interpretation boards, perhaps sponsored by English Heritage (one possibly in the modern Market Place, showing the medieval town plan and how the earlier market place related to the Castle gate) and some co-ordinated directional signs, signalling the Castle from within the town, would be helpful. The Bolsover Town Trail has a substantial entry on the Cavendish Chapel attached to the church, but for people to be able to see the splendid memorials, especially to Charles Cavendish, co-ordination with the Parochial Church Council is necessary to ensure that the church is open at peak visitor times and visitors to the Castle are directed there. A second substantial ‘destination’ in the town is perhaps the best way of encouraging visitors to move beyond the castle. At night the castle is invisible; floodlighting would make it the dominant element of the town and vale, but would only be effective on the town side if the tree cover were managed (see Policies 46-7).

Policy 43: English Heritage will seek to work with Bolsover District Council, Bolsover Civic Society, Old Bolsover Town Council, and Bolsover Parochial Church Council in addressing the need better to connect the castle with the town and provide complementary visitor information.

Arrival and entry to the Castle

16.5.9 Of the issues in and around the approaches to the Castle identified in the Council’s character appraisal, two have been resolved. The former works compound in the Castle Yard has been removed. Also, the hazard caused by parents waiting in their cars on a sharp bend in the narrow street to collect their children from the former junior school was eliminated by its change of use to an Adult Education Centre.

16.5.10 Two other sites were considered to mar the approach to the castle: the English Heritage car park, on the east side of Castle Street, and the large, unsightly building most recently known as the ‘Chilli Lounge’, immediately adjacent to the Castle entrance. Both sites were considered to detract from the character of the conservation area, principally because of their openness and the height and bulk of the Chilli Lounge, which blocks the right-hand side of the historic view of the castle from Castle Street (see Fig. 89, below). The appraisal suggested that the school site, the existing car park and the Chilli Lounge site should be identified as potential sites for future redevelopment and development briefs prepared accordingly. The appraisal further suggested that English Heritage might be asked to consider whether car parking for their visitors could be provided within the Castle grounds, either where the temporary works structures were located or on the site of the school, if this was moved elsewhere.

16.5.11 These suggestions were reiterated in the two (unsuccessful) bids to HLF for a Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme in Bolsover. Indeed, the development funding sought in the Stage 1 bid included £5,000 towards a feasibility study into potential development on the English Heritage car park site. The THI bid also suggested moving the Castle car park to Middle Street, to facilitate redevelopment of the current site and to ensure that visitors to the castle walked through at least part of the town centre. This suggestion seems
impractical, other than for overflow parking during events: the main castle car
park would be at a greater distance from the entrance to the castle, making
access difficult for people with limited mobility, or accompanied by small
children. The castle also would not be visible from this location. English
Heritage presumably has not yet been consulted.

16.5.12 With regard to the former Chilli Lounge, Bolsover Council recently received
a planning application for remodelling and change of use of the building to a
Wetherspoons public house. The application proposed retention of the
existing bulky building, with some external improvements. It is understood
that, despite objections to the proposals from English Heritage, consent has
been granted, with only minor modifications to the scheme. The scheme had
not been started in October 2012, but if implemented will make permanent, at
least for the immediate future, the existing harm to the character of the
conservation area and the blocking of the sole view from the town of the
visitor entrance to the castle (but as amended, does not make it worse).

16.5.13 The current entrance to the Castle is the principal medieval one, which
seems to have remained in use ever since. It stood at the end of the axial
street of the medieval town, which formed the south-west side of the putative
early market place, later substantially built over leaving Castle Street along the
main desire line (Fig 6) through it. Its frontages seem never to have been
densely developed, certainly not after the Civil War and, since slum clearance
in the 1950s, car parking is now the predominant use at the north-western
end, including for castle visitors.

16.5.14 The entrance itself is relatively inconspicuous, defined on the east by the
stone boundary wall to Chapel Walk curving into the site, retaining the foot of
the outer bailey bank (Views 1, 2; Figs 89-93). To the west, it is defined by the
boundary of the former school, a 19th century intrusion into the outer bailey,
for which the defences were entirely levelled. The approach angle means that
there is little sense of entering an historic site until one is more or less before
the gate, or on axis with it, further west at the public car park entrance (View
3, Fig 91). Some visitors arriving at the EH car park by contrast asked us
where the Castle was.

16.5.15 In the Castle Street approach (1, 2), views of the bank to the east, which
would visually signal ‘Castle’ along with glimpses of the buildings behind,
particularly the Little Castle, are blocked by the front section of the ‘Chilli
Lounge’. This crude, bulky, accretive modern structure seems to have begun
life as a gymnasium. It also dominates the secondary approach to the Castle,
along Chapel Walk, rising upwards outside the defences. Here the problem is
not so much the high-level lounge at the rear, but the messy accretions along
the side, extending to and embracing the stone wall of Chapel Walk itself (Fig
92).

16.5.16 Car parking should not be introduced into the Castle Yard. The restoration
of that space as an important part of the historic site has been a great visual
success, and avoids the conflict between people and vehicles that would arise
in the narrow entrance. While car parking in the vicinity of the entrance is
helpful, if not essential, to serve the Castle, we agree with the appraisal that its present domination of the approach is depressing. The (under-used) public car park to the west would be a preferable location in the long term to the current English Heritage car park on the east, since it presents a short frontage to the street which could, indeed, be narrowed by infilling (Fig 93).

Fig 89 Long view (1 on plan) of the approach along Castle Street, with the Riding House Range visible under the tree canopy. The cupola of the Little Castle is behind the bus stop sign (centre right; see inset, which shows Little Castle temporary roof): the ‘Chilli Lounge’ is on the right. Note the gap in the trees within the castle yard perimeter on the proposed view line

Fig 90 View (2 on plan) approaching the castle entrance along Castle Street in March 2011; the Riding House Range can be seen, but the entrance is inconspicuous. The English Heritage car park is on the right, the ‘Chilli Lounge’ behind it; the sight gap in the castle yard trees is evident.
Fig 91 View 3 from within the car park on the west side of Castle Street, the entrance is nicely framed, although the visitor centre still completely hidden. The EH portable kiosk was transient.

Fig 92 The approach along Chapel Walk (4 on plan) has the right 'Castle air', and the retaining wall on the left (largely cut into the rock) is the edge of the medieval town grid, but the experience is overwhelmed by the 'Chilli Lounge' where it rises almost sheer from the side of the footpath. It will remain thus under the current consent.
16.5.17 The inset sketch on Fig 93 provides a suggestion as to how this might be achieved. It suggests a development of these frontages inspired by the comparatively low density of historic development of the area as it was recorded 1700-1950 (13.2 above), not always on the frontage (eg on the Colbeck map, 1739, which is close to our target date for presentation of the site itself), although not following its precise form. In particular, it suggests setting back the building line on the north-east side behind the potential sight line to the castle bank and the Little Castle beyond, to signal the castle in the approach. For this to be achieved, however, the front block of the 'Chilli Lounge' Wetherspoons pub would need to be demolished as part of the redevelopment. This approach would go against current received wisdom, which tends to encourage building back to previously existing lines to heal the scars of 20th century redevelopment, but the benefits of doing otherwise here, keeping substantial building set back, would surely outweigh the departure. The street is, in any event, not part of the medieval plan and, for the space to open out in front of the Castle, as it historically does at the other end, would further signal the former open market place here.

16.5.18 On the south-west side of Castle Street, more should be made of the view
through the gate, while, as noted, ideally narrowing the entry to the car park by a built frontage. One might suggest separate houses to heal existing gable scars, or a recessed L-plan block with an entry for cars (see sketch, Fig 93). People coming out of the car park on foot would then have no problem in finding the castle (view 3). A raised table in the carriageway could help them reach it safely; there is an observed tendency for local traffic to speed around this corner. The vehicle exit would remain onto High Street, as at present.

16.5.19 Both car park sites are owned by Bolsover District Council. The lease to English Heritage of the present car park (1.5) allows transfer of equivalent space to the car park opposite if the current site is needed for redevelopment. The Council is therefore the organisation best placed to facilitate improvements along these lines, if a mechanism could be found to enable them to acquire the ‘Chilli Lounge’/Wetherspoon’s building in the future and so facilitate its replacement, or remodelling, as a part of a comprehensive package. Removing its front block is both the priority for beneficial change and the catalyst for a wider private sector scheme. Formal adoption of an appropriate planning policy under the LDF could help to ensure such remodelling was achieved through any future development proposals.

16.5.20 Tree management is vital if these current and potential views are not to be lost. The Lime trees lining the inside of the castle yard, behind the school, have in the past been managed to produce tall trunks and high crowns, so providing views beneath to the Riding House Range (view 3). This management needs to be reinstated. There is a gap to the east, around the visitor centre, which needs to be maintained and managed if long views to the Little Castle can be opened up.

Policy 44: English Heritage will work with Bolsover District Council to develop a detailed brief for the long term redevelopment of the area around the entrance to the castle, to improve its visibility, accessibility and setting along the lines set out in this Plan, and to identify a vehicle which could implement the project.

Policy 45: Trees north-west of the former school will be managed to maintain high crowns, and the gap in tree cover which should facilitate long views of the Little Castle cupola will be maintained.

The view from Town End

16.5.21 Views of the Castle from the modern town centre, other than in Castle Street, are limited by topography, but there is one significant view (shown on Figs 93-4) from Town End to the Little Castle, which depends on managing the trees on the eastern slopes, near the southern end. The (modern) landscaping alongside Station Road has been laid out to draw the eye towards the stair tower. The gap is currently becoming blocked by a self-seeded sycamore.
Policy 46: In managing the trees on the eastern slopes of the castle, a view from Town End to the Little Castle will be maintained.

Views from the northern approach along Hill Top
16.5.22 The approach along the scarp edge from the north provides a dramatic introduction to Bolsover Castle. Unlike the long approach from the west, the castle comes much more suddenly into view as one approaches the bend in Hill Top, then its form unfolds, or should unfold, as one moves south-east towards the town centre at more or less the same level as the Castle, seen across the Hockley Valley. While the view from the bend is clear of tree cover (Fig 95), these serial views are largely obscured by tree growth on the eastern slopes of the castle (Fig 96).
Policy 47: Tree growth on the eastern slopes will be managed to maintain appropriate views of the Castle from Hill Top, across the Hockley Valley.

Castle Fields

16.5.23 The conservation area character appraisal identified the Castle and Castle Fields (which lie below and to the north-west of the Little Castle) as a principal ‘character area’ of the town. Castle Fields occupy part of the former castle park, standing below the steep (limestone) cliff, and are extremely important in views of and from the Castle (as is the open area around the Model Village - see Fig 88). The appraisal comments, with regard to Castle Fields:

4.21 Castle Fields is an important natural feature within the urban area. Primarily, it provides emphasis for the strategic hillside setting of Bolsover Castle and, secondly, it supplies much-needed recreational space within an industrialised urban environment.

4.22 The area is not currently the subject of a management and, as result, is supporting a number of rapidly maturing self-seeded trees. However, even in its present condition, it is providing a valuable landscape and recreational resource for the area and should be maintained as such.

4.23 A justification for removing the trees, which would normally be a welcome feature in urban surroundings, is that they erode the historic strategic value of the slopes leading up to Bolsover Castle, which would have offered a high degree of visibility for the defending forces of the town.

4.24 In addition, the establishment of dense wooded cover may have a detrimental effect upon the perceived safety of travellers crossing Castle Fields by the many desire lines which are evident across the area.
4.25 The District Council should, therefore:
   a) Commission or prepare a management plan for Castle Fields, with priority being given to the removal of many, if not all, of the trees which are currently invading the area.

16.5.24 The substantial removal of the present tree and shrub cover to the north of the castle mount, and controlling the encroachment of scrub from the escarpment itself, are highly desirable, to return the Castle Fields below the scarp primarily to grassland. But some low standard trees are shown here in Kip's 1698 view, and on Colbeck's 1739 plan, both suggesting a deliberate planting scheme, adding to foreground interest in views from the castle and setting off the terrace wall in long views towards the castle. Their replanting, and possibly the selection of some existing trees for retention, would also add interest and amenity to the public space, which provides interesting views directly up to the castle itself. A landscape strategy here should be devised and co-ordinated with that envisaged for the Castle slopes (16.4.48).

Policy 48: English Heritage will urgently seek discussions with Bolsover District Council, as a first step towards agreeing a co-ordinated management scheme for the western scarp and Castle Fields, and the open area around New Bolsover, seek public responses to it, and procure implementation in its final form.

The Cundy House

16.5.25 The Cundy House, on the east side of the Hockley Valley, is part of the Portland bequest: it has been repaired by English Heritage and is subject to a local management agreement with Bolsover Civic Society. The building remains in good order, but its interior would be more visible (and safer to enter) if the small north gable window were unblocked. It stands in an area of open space managed by Bolsover District Council, but rampant growth of scrub around the base of a large tree all but hides it from public view (Fig 97). Apart from not making the most of the heritage asset, this increases the risk of anti-social behaviour.

16.5.26 Views of the Castle from the Cundy House should be spectacular, since the latter is directly opposite the Little Castle itself and set below the first view from Hill Top, with falling open space in the foreground. In fact, the views are largely obscured by trees on the eastern slopes; only the top storey of the ‘keep’ is visible (Fig 98). This further emphasises the need for improved management of the trees here, to make the castle more of a presence in the townscape.

Policy 49: The small north gable window of the Cundy House will be unblocked and iron stanchions reinstated.

Policy 50: English Heritage will work with the Civic Society and Bolsover District Council to ensure that the open space around the Cundy House is managed so as to reveal and frame, rather than obscure, views of the Cundy House.

Policy 51 In managing the trees on the eastern slopes of the castle, the view from the
Cundy House to the Little Castle will be opened up and appropriately framed, to provide substantial visibility of the crenellated top of the Fountain Garden wall.

![Fig 97 The Cundy House, close up and in context](image1)

![Fig 98 The Castle from the Cundy House, July 2011](image2)

The small conduit houses

16.5.27 The four small, ruined conduit houses (Fig 99) along the scarp west of High Street have been consolidated and have explanatory panels. They are accessible from the public path along the scarp.
16.5.28 The approach from Chesterfield

The conservation area extends almost to the bridge over the now defunct railway line serving Bolsover Colliery, the point from which Bolsover Castle effectively comes into view on the approach on the A632 from Chesterfield (Fig 100). Apart from being one of the historic main routes through the area, Chesterfield being the principal historic market town in north-east Derbyshire, this is the route along which visitors are directed from the M1 motorway (A617-B6425-A632), and probably the one along which most approach it. It also provides spectacular serial views of the castle, until one passes beneath its slopes in rising through the Hockley Valley.

16.5.29 The land on the south side of the road is largely open, part of Castle Fields. The northern end of the Model Village is barely perceptible in these views,
because of the lie of the land. Maintaining (preserving and enhancing) this important view of the castle depends upon it remaining open, with appropriate management of its landscape (above). However, the scruffy works site on the south side, by the bridge (‘C’ on Fig 99), is a very poor gateway to Bolsover and its castle, sending out the wrong messages about the place as a whole. Its improvement needs to be encouraged, with the aim of enhancing long views of the Castle from the bridge eastwards. The bridge has effectively (and unfortunately) superseded the crossing of the Doe Lea as the ‘point of entry’ to the Castle domain (Fig 100).

Policy 52: English Heritage will work with Bolsover District Council to ensure that the open landscape of Castle Fields and the land to its west along the A632 will be preserved and enhanced as the vital local setting of the castle.

Policy 53: English Heritage will work with Bolsover District Council to strongly encourage redevelopment or relocation of the works site (C on Fig 88) to enhance the setting of the castle and the improvement of the approach to it.

The Model Village
16.5.30 Views from the Model Village provide an interesting variation on those from the Chesterfield approach, and a conjunction of one heritage asset seen across the open space in the centre of another. Management issues are essentially the same for both. If a new building is ever contemplated to replace the lost schools which once stood on the west side of the square, it would have spectacular views up to the Castle.
16.6 The wider setting of the Castle and long views

16.6.1 Perception of Bolsover Castle, from both far and near, as a dominant element in the landscape is an exceptional aspect of its character and significance. Prospects from the Castle, particularly those which have influenced its siting or design, equally are of considerable importance. Local views, of the Castle from within the town and the immediately surrounding area, culminating in the approach to the castle entrance, have been considered above; this section addresses long distance views, of the Castle in its wider landscape setting.

16.6.2 The topographical context has already been described in section 2.1. In broad terms, the Castle sits on and commands the edge of a steep escarpment, looking out over a broad, shallow valley, which is contained westwards by a rising series of low ridges. The prospect from the Castle over this dish-like valley is therefore panoramic, sweeping round in an arc from the north-west to the south (see Fig 102, C-E). The most important - and sensitive - section is a smaller arc, or view cone, from due west round to the south-west and Sutton Scarsdale Hall (C-D). This arc is framed by, or originates in, the open green ‘wedge’ of Castle Fields to the west of the Terrace Range, which slopes down to the Doe Lea. The Model Village appears in the middle ground, but its modest height and weathered roofs mean that it has no detrimental impact on the longer view.

16.6.3 Some key long distance views from and to the Castle are significant because of its historic relationship with neighbouring properties. Building at Bolsover from 1612 was inspired by a sense of competition with a number of other impressive Elizabethan houses (Worsley 1991): Hardwick Hall, which stands on the edge of the same limestone scarp directly to the south of Bolsover and just visible (on a clear day) from it (G); and Oldcotes (or Owlcotes, as in the present place name) also built by ‘Bess of Hardwick’, Sir Charles Cavendish’s mother, and Sutton Scarsdale Hall, by Sir Francis Leake, both directly visible across the Doe Lea valley, to south-west of Bolsover.

16.6.4 The issue of whether Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping is needed should be discussed with Bolsover District Council. Figs. 2 and 102 seek to map the topographical context of Bolsover and, in a more formal version, could be used to recommend to potential developers when a ZTV should be produced. This could also be a requirement if particularly tall or bulky buildings are proposed within the Markham Vale Enterprise Zone (Fig 102, K).

Policy 54: English Heritage will seek to engage with Bolsover District Council on the need for ZTV mapping to inform development affecting the wider setting of the Castle and how this could relate to development within the Markham Vale Enterprise Zone.
The principal prospect to and from the west and north-west

16.6.5 The prospect that the Terrace and Viewing Platform were designed to exploit, across the vale (Fig 102, C-D; Fig 104), is of exceptional significance for Bolsover Castle. The view back, from Sutton Scarsdale (Fig 102, arrowed; Fig 103) is of equally exceptional significance. It provides one of the iconic views of the Castle dominating the valley, with the historic town of Bolsover stretching...
southwards along the top of the scarp, terminating with the tower of the church of St Mary and St Lawrence.

**Fig 103** View from Sutton Scarsdale Hall north-east towards Bolsover, over the Doe Lea valley

**Fig 104** The view west from the castle terrace

16.6.6 The area between Sutton Scarsdale and the Castle is largely open and substantially green (the former colliery to the south-west of New Bolsover having been cleared and ‘greened’ over). The north-south line of the motorway is barely visible, apart from vehicles moving along it. (Bolsover, like Hardwick,
is also seen and appreciated by travellers along the motorway). The green wedge of Castle Fields immediately to the west of the Castle, which was formerly part of the medieval castle park, is of very high significance and sensitivity, as shown in Fig 100 and discussed earlier.

16.6.7 The important panoramic view from the terrace, and the wider setting of the castle, would be affected by any development taking place in the vicinity of the M1. On the motorway itself, the M1 J28-31 Managed Motorway scheme is due to commence in 2013/14. Such schemes typically require overhead sign and variable speed limit gantries at frequent intervals along the motorway, with the potential greatly to increase its visual intrusion in views across the vale. English Heritage is in discussion about the proposals with Mouchel on behalf of the Highways Agency.

16.6.8 Currently, however, the principal issues in this view relate to the middle ground. Land on the southern edge of the Castle Fields character area of the conservation area has a tendency towards urban fringe activities – 'horsiculture', yards, stored caravans and so forth, which detract from the quality of views down from the castle terrace (Fig 105). Whether or not these are lawful established uses, persuasion backed by the potential service of a S215 notice by Bolsover District Council may be helpful.

Policy 55: English Heritage will work with Bolsover District Council and Chesterfield Council to ensure that the essential openness of the landscape in views of and from the Terrace front of Bolsover Castle is not compromised by substantial or inappropriate development.

Policy 56: English Heritage will encourage Bolsover District Council to use its planning powers to safeguard the amenities of areas critical to the setting of Bolsover Castle.
16.6.9 The view to the north-west (D-E) shows how longer views are possible through the gap towards Staveley (L on Fig 102), especially from the viewing platform. The middle ground here is largely the sprawl of low-rise housing north of the Chesterfield Road, beyond which lies the substantially-cleared former Coalite works (Fig 102, H; Fig 106). The extensive re-development of this site would cumulatively urbanise much of the view in this direction. The view in the opposite direction, from the B6418, not surprisingly provides fine views of the castle itself (Fig 107). Beyond Coalite, but partially obscured by the landform, is the Markham Vale Enterprise Zone (Fig 102, K), which also has the potential for visually intrusive development. However, a design framework was agreed for the site in 2008 and English Heritage is proposed as a signatory to a Planning Performance Agreement, under which it would be a critical consultee.

16.6.10 Until recently, consent existed for use of the Coalite site for storage of hazardous substances: This was considered by Bolsover District Council to pose a significant potential threat to the north-west side of the town, and it is understood that the consent has recently been rescinded. Discussions about possible alternative development of this site, which remained on hold while the consent was extant, should now resume. Development here will have a major impact on the setting of the Castle and one of the key approaches to it. The costs of remediation for residential or other biologically sensitive uses are believed to be extremely high, which may bring pressure for a development of a scale and density that would not otherwise be considered, extending, as ‘enabling development’, beyond the former developed area. A preferable solution might be to undertake limited remediation and grow biomass on the site. English Heritage is understood to have worked with Bolsover District Council to identify ‘areas of sensitivity’ and what should be done to protect views from the castle; this should be resumed and incorporated into a brief.
Policy 57: English Heritage will work with Bolsover District Council to seek an appropriate future use for the Coalite site; and with Chesterfield Borough and North East Derbyshire District Councils as necessary to seek to protect longer views from, and the wider setting of, the castle to the north-west.

From Palterton and the south

The historic route to Bolsover from Hardwick and further south, which survives in the landscape as footpaths, followed the edge of the plateau above the Doe Lea Valley to Palterton, and thence to Bolsover (Fig 102, F). A fine
view (arrowed) of the Castle on its promontory and the town on the plateau can be had from the end of the metalled road at Palterton (Fig 108), over the edge of the steep escarpment. This is a location (and a potential walk) that deserves to be better known.

Views south to Hardwick

Due south of Bolsover, and linked to it by the River Doe Lea which rises there, lies the Hardwick estate. Only inter-visible (along view corridor G on Fig 102) in clear conditions from the Little Castle, the presence of Hardwick Hall is discerned as much through the landscape (the eye being drawn towards it as the southern focus of the valley) as through actual perception: its influence is nevertheless strong.

This historically important view is sensitive to tall structures within the linear view itself, or in close proximity to it. The plateau to the east, beyond Palterton, is understood to be the location for two possible wind farm developments, one of which (the nearer to Bolsover) is at application stage. Depending upon height and distance, they seem unlikely to have a negative impact on this view. They would, however, be visible from the top of the Little Castle, given that the plateau is at a similar level to the castle site.

Policy 58: English Heritage will work with Bolsover District Council to seek to avoid development involving tall structures in the view corridor between Bolsover Castle and Hardwick.

16.7 Condition, maintenance and repair

Monitoring condition and routine maintenance

In line with all English Heritage sites, the castle is subject to Periodic Condition Survey and Report, the latest having been carried out at the end of 2007 (PCSR 2007), and the previous one in 2001. The next Survey should be imminent. The condition of high level masonry on the terrace range is checked by abseiling survey, and weed growth removed or poisoned, the latest inspection by Conservation Solutions (witnessed by us) being in July 2011.

Policy 59: Quinquennial condition surveys will be carried out by suitably qualified professionals, in accordance with English Heritage’s Standard for Periodic Condition Surveys and Reports (EHS0004/2:2006) and their recommendations for maintenance and repair normally implemented within the quinquennial cycle.

Policy 60: Arrangements will continue to be made for the prompt and regular implementation of cyclical maintenance work.

External painting

There is a surprising range of red/brown paintwork around the site. The source is understood to be paint research undertaken by English Heritage c2000, which established that the original external joinery colour was a lead-based paint coloured with a roast ochre: the front door to the Little Castle is believed to retain the accurate colour. However, painting contractors have
'matched' that colour in modern paint systems over more than a decade, and the results have varied considerably from the original. Although interesting as a process, some strange outcomes are evident. A standard colour and paint finish needs to be agreed and specified, which can then be used by all contractors.

16.7.3 A further example of inappropriate paint finish can be seen in the recent over-painting of the authentic lead paint to the balcony of the Little Castle in pastel green gloss paint, subsequently modified to an egg-shell finish. This undoubtedly dilutes the significance of the decoration and the general fashion of the early 17th century.

Policy 61: The significance of the colour and finishes of the various elements of painted finishes at Bolsover needs to be fully understood before any repainting is undertaken. No changes will be made without first consulting the relevant English Heritage Inspector.

The stability of the hill

16.7.4 Bolsover appears to stand firm on a rock of Lower Magnesian Limestone, but that rock is only about 8-10m thick, above softer Permian Marls and the Coal Measures. The transition is particularly visible in the change of slope on the west and north-west of the castle promontory, where springs emerge at the geological interface at the foot of the 45° scarp. It is this geology that has been, historically, the prime cause of Bolsover's structural woes.

16.7.5 A report by the Building Research Establishment (Thomson & Longworth 1978) provides a useful overview of both the then-current situation and previous investigations and interventions. The report concluded that:

'Damage to the castle and adjacent buildings has been influenced by subsidence from coal mining, which first approached the Castle in the 1920s. Total subsidence, as judged from Ordnance Survey levels, has been in the order of half a metre. More importantly, the subsidence has resulted in a zone of ground tension in the vicinity of the Castle due to the effect of a pillar of unworked coal left under Bolsover town. As a result of tilt and tension in the ground, natural cambering of the stiff cap rock over the softer marl has almost certainly been intensified. This in turn is thought to have triggered the occurrence of a landslide on the scarp to the south-east [actually south-west] of the Castle in the 1930s. It appears that no substantial subsidence has occurred for a number of years, however, creep movements are continuing.'

16.7.6 The effect of tensional movement is to cause cracks to open in the rock, and buildings founded on it, without any relative vertical movement. Cracks caused by this kind of movement, parallel-sided and up to 50-70mm wide, are visible particularly in the Riding House Range, the north end of the Terrace Range, and the forecourt and viewing platform, now made good with set-back pointing and evidently stable. Walls founded on the very edge of the cap, like those on the east side of the Great Court and east and north sides of the Fountain Garden, tend to rotate outwards.

16.7.7 Coal mining up to the edge of the scarp, and in 1922 its partial undermining, therefore probably exacerbated natural cambering of the limestone cap, which
equally naturally leads to fractures in the rock which are eroded and lubricated by water penetration, here visible in the form of springs at the scarp foot. Confirmation of this is provided by Major Rooke, whose illustrations to Pegge's paper of 1785 (Fig 109) show rends in the retaining wall of the viewing platform (ibid, pl1). Medieval collapses (3.2) of structures built on the very edge of a precipitous escarpment would also have been aided by this slow natural process.

Fig 109  Extract from Pegge 1785, pl 1, showing early movement of the west corner of the viewing platform

16.7.8 The 1978 report recommended implementing, ‘as early as is feasible’, ground investigation and monitoring of movement both vertically and horizontally, ending ‘despite the recent apparent quiescence of the situation, creep movements can culminate in major events’. And so they did, in 1993, when a new landslide further to the south-east along the scarp affected the rear of properties behind Castle Street. The report was re-issued as background (Longworth 1993), the investigations recommended seemingly not having taken place.

16.7.9 As Longworth pointed out, and the 1993 slip demonstrated, a period without movement is no guarantee of future stability. The cessation of coal mining means that it is no longer exacerbating the risk, and structural strengthening has given the buildings and walls greater resilience; but a residual risk remains. Indeed, some evidence of recent movement of the walls at the north-east
corner of the Fountain Garden was noted in the 2007 condition survey (PCSR 2007, 10, 21), and monitoring of all structures showing signs of historic movement recommended.

Policy 62: The risk of future ground movement will be monitored and the results regularly assessed.

Stone erosion
16.7.10 The rate of stone erosion in the 20th century appears to have been rapid, particularly affecting the brown sandstone dressings favoured in Period 2.3 and 2.4, not least by Samuel Marsh on the 1660s reworking of the Terrace Range. The problem has traditionally been attributed to heavy pollution from the Coalite works (1930-2005: 13.4.4), particularly its emission of sulphur oxides (SO$_2$, SO$_3$), which react with rainwater to produce dilute sulphurous and sulphuric acid (but it is the sandstone that has suffered most). The castle has thus been the subject of various trials, including monitoring of experimental coatings, notably the alkoxysilane ‘Brethane’ (eg Wheeler 2005).

- **Little Castle**: Seemingly among the least affected parts, although there has been extensive re-facing which has generally now weathered down to the point where the extensive 1960s interventions (including reversal of 19th century changes) do not stand out too harshly. Decay seems to have been worst at roof level – not surprisingly given its exposure - with extensive repair in 1750 and many occasions since; the corner turrets have been substantially (but not wholly) rebuilt.

- **Terrace Range**: The brown sandstone on the terrace range, used primarily by Marsh in Period 2.4 for dressings, including for window tracery repairs to the rest of the block, has suffered most. Erosion seems to be exacerbated by accelerated wetting/drying cycles caused by air movement within the southern end of the range. Some further losses will be inevitable within 10-20 years at the current rate of erosion. The surviving historic mullions and transoms of windows are particularly vulnerable, and can become dangerous.

- **Riding House Range**: As with the Terrace Range, the worst problems lie in the brown sandstone used for the stable and riding house portals and generally for dressings in the primary construction of the range. A strategy for the consolidation of the stonework to the north wall needs serious consideration. As a matter of urgency the lead capping behind the portal pediments needs to terminate in spouts to throw water clear of the wall (Fig 110). Re-glazing has already involved complete renewal of the surrounding window stonework.
Policy 63: Ongoing post-industrial decay of the stonework will be monitored, its causes and progress investigated, and a strategy for conservation implemented.

Repair needs
16.7.11 Repair needs are foreseen primarily through the periodic condition surveys noted above, and a major project, renewing the leadwork of the Little Castle roof, was completed early in 2011.

16.7.12 In general, the condition of the buildings and structures is fair to good, within the objectives of maintenance which necessarily differ between roofed and used buildings and roofless structures, including the Terrace Range. The PCSR 2007 notes many areas where relatively small-scale stonework repairs are required, and there will be an ongoing need for this. Only in a few areas were problems noted, which, if not rectified, will escalate:

- The dry-stone wall of c1777 around the south-east corner of the Castle Yard. Voids are developing and eroding at low level on the outside face of the wall (Fig 111), which, if not repaired soon, will lead to collapse of sections of the wall, and much greater expense.
• Water from one of the roof spouts of the Little Castle discharges into the east external stairwell, causing water ingress and dampness within, affecting the plaster as well as the operation of the Little Castle. A lightweight pent roof over the affected area, preferably in metal (e.g., iron/zinc), following the evidence left by a 19th century predecessor, would cost comparatively little, be reversible, and prevent escalating harm.

• There are somewhat similar problems on the west side, both in terms of lack of effective drainage from the bottom of the historic stairwell and a 19th century open well on the north side which effectivly directs water from the spouts into the basement. It should be eliminated (covered over or filled) and paving reinstated. That might provide a good opportunity to relay the modern paving on the east side of the forecourt to the historic pattern remaining on the west.

• The stair down to the roof of Lodge 5 is crumbling and needs repair and consolidation.

• The parapets, cappings and chimneys at high level on the Terrace Range are in need of further repair and consolidation. This was noted as far back as 2001 (PCSR 2007, 14). The 2007 PCSR (246) also noted that lightning protection should be considered for this range.

As noted above, the decorative repair of the interiors of the garden houses and lodges would be advantageous in presenting the site.

*Policy 64: The short term repair needs summarised here and comprehensively identified in the PCSR 2007 will be addressed within the survey cycle.*

*Services*

16.7.13 Most site services were renewed in the works of 1998-2000, and installed in the historic buildings with considerable sensitivity. The only mildly obtrusive
elements are the CCTV cameras in vulnerable entry areas, for example, along the Terrace Range (lead was stolen c1996), but they are a necessary evil: part of their deterrence lies in their visibility. Vandalism and theft have been drastically reduced since the installation of the CCTV system in 2009.

16.7.14 More intensive use or dressing of the Little Castle will require the sensitive upgrading and intensification of services. This needs to be done with the minimum impact on the historic fabric; concealing them is desirable, but not to the extent of damaging historic (rather than replacing modern) fabric. The work may provide some opportunity to improve environmental conditions in the building (see Policy 33).

Ecological management

16.7.15 The site is, on present evidence, of moderate ecological significance, with potential for enhancement through encouraging biodiversity. This can be achieved through management in ways that are also desirable from the point of view of revealing or recovering its historical and aesthetic values, particularly on the castle yard and the outer slopes (16.4.9, 17). The major tension lies in vegetation growing in walls, where some balance needs to be struck, with some management of plant growth, especially dry-stone ones around the site perimeter. Woody plants must be prevented from taking a grip on masonry, given their destructive potential, but small ferns and other like plants might be tolerated to a greater extent, based on assessment of their potential for material harm.

Policy 65: Vegetation will be managed to maximise opportunities to sustain and enhance biodiversity to the extent that this is compatible with conservation of the heritage values of the site, as indicated at Policies 21 (slopes) and 18 (castle yard).

Policy 66: A detailed strategy will be developed and implemented by 2014 for managing specialist wall plants at Bolsover.

16.7.16 At least three species of bats make use of the site. All bats are listed as European protected species and protected by law.79 It is therefore an offence deliberately to disturb bats in a way that would significantly affect their local distribution or abundance, or ability to survive, breed or rear young, to damage or destroy a roost, or intentionally to disturb a bat at a roost.

16.7.17 All works at Bolsover should be designed to anticipate the presence of bats, both in roofed buildings and ruined structures. Any repair or alteration works to the areas thought to act as a habitat for bats, or other areas which could be suitable for bats, should be preceded by a bat survey. If bats are present, then works should be timed to avoid disturbing them as much as possible and a method statement prepared to mitigate the impact of the works on the bats. The advice of Natural England should be sought in advance of planning any such works. If works to areas not identified as a bat roost reveal the presence of

bats, the works should stop immediately and the advice of Natural England should be sought.

Policy 67: A bat survey will be undertaken in advance of any works where bats are known or likely to be active. Advice from Natural England will be sought in advance of works.

Policy 68: Where bats are found during building work, the works will halt immediately and advice from Natural England will be sought.

16.8 Record keeping and management

Archive sources
16.8.1 English Heritage has commissioned transcriptions of some of the key documentary sources for the history of Bolsover, copies of which were located in the Northampton office and have been used in the preparation of this plan. However, it is clear (e.g. from the guidebook) that other documents were copied or transcribed in the course of research at that time (for example, Bassano’s description in the College of Arms Library, re-examined for this Plan), but copies can no longer be found. This is wasteful, when resources should be focused on tracking down further relevant information in the apparently un-indexed later parts of the Portland archive. A comprehensive, indexed archive of transcripts/copies of original documents relating to Bolsover needs to be established and maintained. A similar approach to secondary sources is also desirable.

Records of works
16.8.2 As so often, it is records of recent works – particularly those between 1945 and 1985 by the Ministry of Works and its successors – that are most difficult to trace. Many seem to have been lost when the works compound was finally shut down. Part of the problem of modern archives of works is their size; informed selection for archiving, particularly in a working archive rather than dead storage, is essential.

Records of investigations
16.8.3 A great deal of research and investigation has been undertaken over the years, recorded largely in ‘grey literature’. It became clear in writing this plan that English Heritage does not keep copies of all of this material, at least not in one accessible place. It does not, therefore, necessarily inform future activities. A comprehensive list of archive reports prepared by Trent Peak Archaeology and its predecessors in title has kindly been prepared by Richard Sheppard, and copies made available: it forms Appendix 6. This needs to be expanded to capture other archive reports, and copies of them maintained in a working archive.

Artefacts
16.8.4 It has not been possible within the scope of research for this plan to examine the artefacts from Bolsover held in store at Atcham (but soon to move to Wrest Park). Identification and study of the architectural fragments, especially those from the clearance of the Terrace Range, would probably produce worthwhile results.
Policy 69: A working archive will be established and maintained by the curatorial team/curator, including copies of basic surveys, records of investigation and research, secondary sources, transcribed archival sources and graphic sources. The material gathered together and sourced for this plan will form the basis of this working archive.

16.9 Research objectives

16.9.1 Research has tended to be quite narrowly focused, to inform proposed works to a particular part of the site, notably the Riding House Range and the Little Castle. Even within the latter, it has been focused within the two principal floors, ground and first; the only overview is provided in the successive guidebooks. The earlier sections of this plan have sought to draw together a ‘model’ of the development of the site, which can be tested and corrected in the future and, in doing so, the gaps in our knowledge of it have been drawn out.

16.9.2 Cross site study of the identification, sourcing and patterns of use of the various building stones, and of mason’s marks on them, is likely to shed much light on the process and sequence of construction, and thus of the understanding of the evolution of the site. It has been undertaken to good effect on other sites (eg Apethorpe) and is highly desirable at Bolsover, taking advantage of any occasions when buildings are comprehensively scaffolded.

16.9.3 Of the major 17th century buildings, the Terrace Range is the least well understood in terms of its evolution and function; the emphasis has been on the architectural parallels for, and sources of, the Terrace elevation. The opportunity to understand it in detail during the last major phase of consolidation work was not taken (or if it was, we have yet to locate the records: ‘recording was not completed after the last phase of work’: Worsley 1999a, 52). The next opportunity should not be missed. The conundrum of the date of the first build of the Riding House Range remains; it might be solved by dendrochronological dating of first floor timbers in the eastern block, if nothing else to see if they are clearly different in date range from the 1660s roof and other timbers already dated.

16.9.4 On the landscape, the eastern slopes, indeed all the slopes, are in serious need of study as the basis of their better management.

16.9.5 Observations of service trenches, particularly, have shown that the buried archaeology has great research potential, particularly for the light it can shed on the medieval castle and earlier settlement. Indeed, it is clear that successive waves of service trenches have inflicted considerable cumulative damage to the buried deposits, without (because of the nature of the work) a commensurate recovery of useful information. If further major disturbance becomes necessary, the opportunity should be taken to expose, and excavate, areas large enough to understand and hopefully date the features encountered.

Policy 70: Future research and investigation should be used to correct, update and, if necessary, supersede the model for the development of Bolsover put forward in this Plan.
The priorities in terms of filling gaps in our knowledge of the 17th century house are dating the Riding House Range and further and better understanding the Terrace Range.

Policy 71: Future ground disturbance for buried services (other than on-line replacement of existing services) will be preceded by archaeological excavation in areas likely to be large enough to yield interpretable data about the evolution of the place.

16.10 A conservation philosophy for Bolsover Castle in its setting

16.10.1 In the preceding sections, the conservation of Bolsover Castle has been considered, both within the site and in terms of its setting. While the core significance of the site lies in its 17th century phases, the latest period at which the site could be presented without internal incongruity is c1751, by which date little had irrecoverably changed from the period when the state apartment in the Terrace Range was dismantled before 1717. Restoration of that range, as discussed, could reasonably be considered as a long-term objective. The setting of Bolsover needs necessarily to be treated differently, in that, while an internal consistency of presentation can be achieved, it will always be experienced within an ever-changing present.

16.10.2 An overall conservation philosophy can be summarised thus:

Bolsover Castle will be conserved and presented so as to emphasise its significance as a singular house, as it evolved through the 17th century in the hands of Charles, William and Henry Cavendish. The established policy of reversing expedient interventions of the late 18th to 20th centuries will be continued, limited as a general strategy by changes c1750 which removed elements without record, ruling out authentic restoration to any earlier period, even externally.

The unique survival of the substantially intact, exquisite interior of the Little Castle, completed in the 1620s, will be used to facilitate deeper understanding and appreciation of the architecture and interior decoration of high status apartments in the early 17th century.

The central importance of the art of manège to William Cavendish, and the status of the Riding House as the only intact survivor of its kind from the 17th century in England, will be celebrated in the return of horses and horsemanship as one of the principal attributes of the site.

The improvements in the setting of the site consequent on the de-industrialisation of the area will be consolidated in preserving and enhancing views of and from the castle, both in the wider landscape and in reconnecting it to the historic town of Bolsover.
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‡  *Not seen; noted from Sheppard 2000*