

## 5.4 LEONARDSLEE HOUSE FORECOURT

### 5.3.2 PARKING REQUIREMENTS

There are currently 27 parking spaces to the forecourt which are used to service the hotel and restaurant. The design team have explored the possibility of removing the car parking from the front of Leonardslee House, and utilising the car park to the west.

The following analysis demonstrates the need for a certain amount of parking close to the house.

Requirement for parking to service the hotel and restaurant:

Area	Capacity	Parking Need
Leonardslee House	10 Hotel Rooms (20)	5 Spaces Min.
Restaurant Interlude	32 Guest Capacity	16 Spaces Min.
Overnight Staff	1 - 2	2 Spaces
Non Overnight Staff	15+	13 Spaces
<b>Total</b>	<b>59+</b>	<b>36 Spaces</b>

Following discussions with the management at Leonardslee, it is understood that in peak periods daytime overnight staff can park in the main car park, therefore reducing the parking requirement to a minimum of 23 spaces to adequately service the Leonardslee House hotel and restaurant Interlude. This represents a reduction of 4 spaces.

Relocating restaurant and hotel guest parking to the main car park was explored as part of the briefing process. As the gardens have to be secured during the night due to theft and vandalism, visitors must enter through the visitor Entrance Building. Therefore to allow hotel guests to arrive and depart during the night or early in the mornings, the entrance building would have to be permanently staffed which adds an additional running cost.

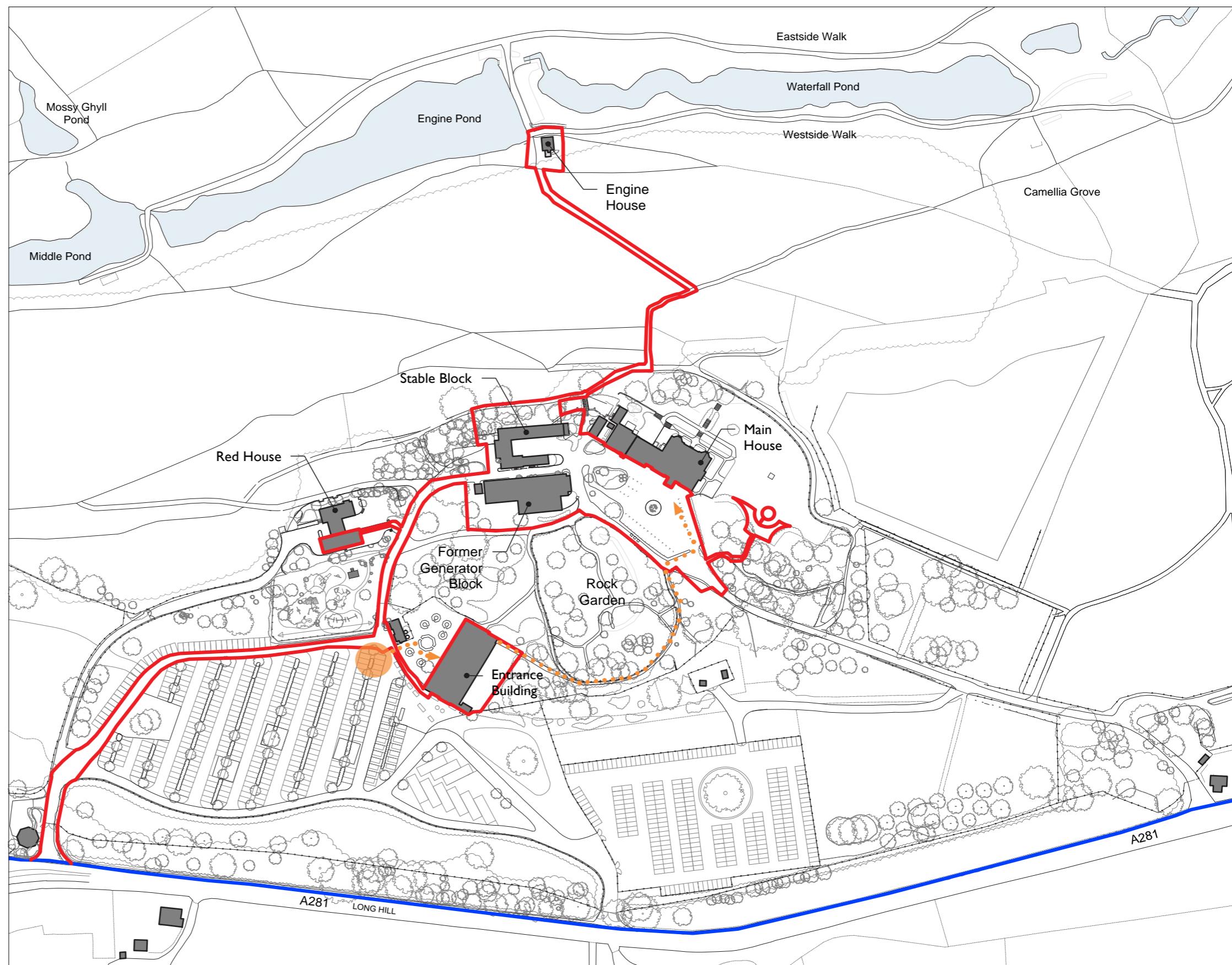
In addition, it would be a security and health and safety requirement adequately light the route to the car park, and the car park itself during the night to allow the safe use of the car park. This would lead to further light pollution and disturbance to the neighbours which is not desired.

Lastly, the hotel and restaurant interlude are premium offerings, whereby there is a certain expectation from guests that a premium service is delivered. To expect guests to walk from the main car park, through the entrance building would deter visitors from coming, and likely lead to loss of business to the estate and to the wider local economy.

#### Key:

- Route showing length of visitor journey from main car park through the Entrance Building up to the Main House

NET  
— Ownership Boundary  
— Application Site Boundary

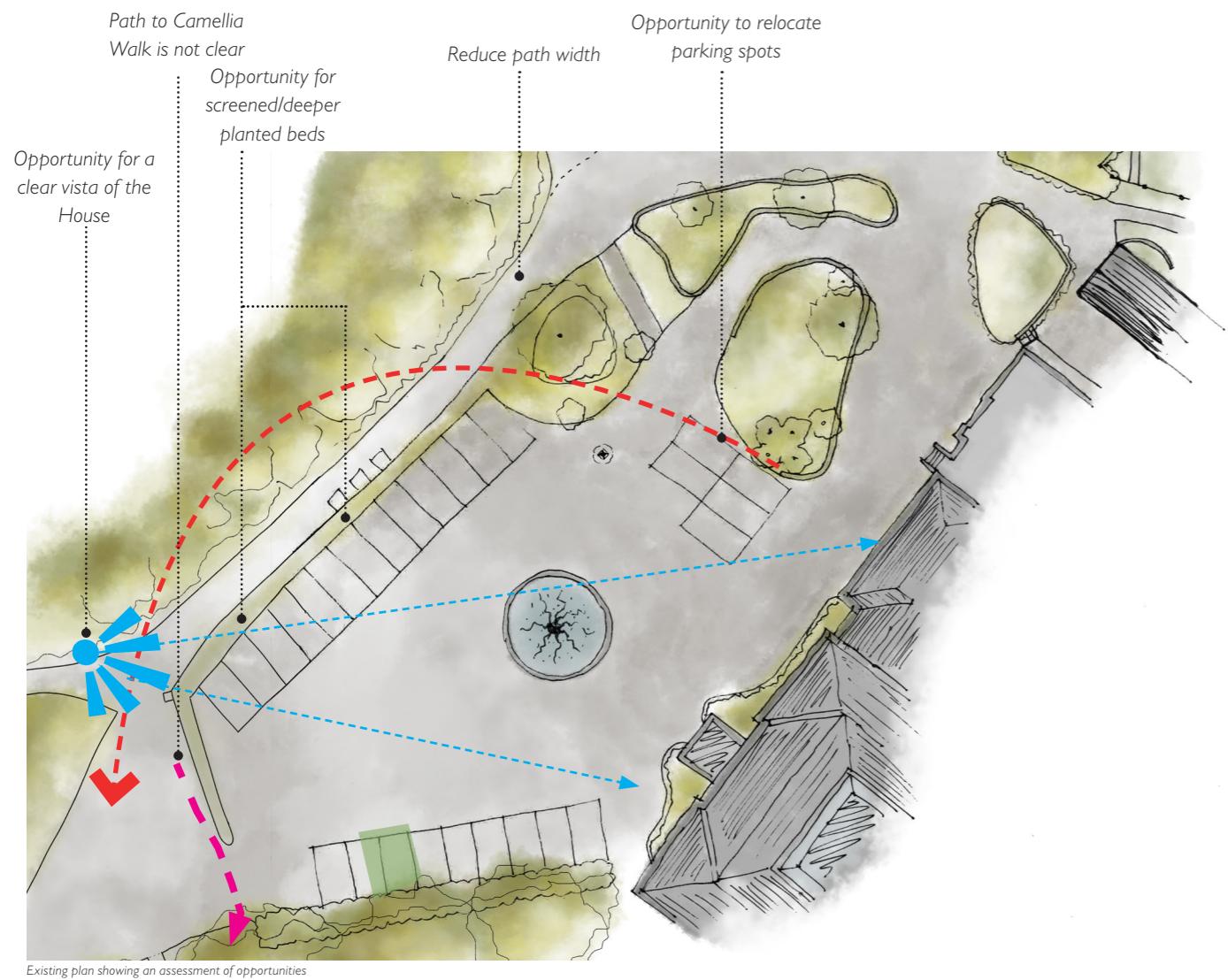


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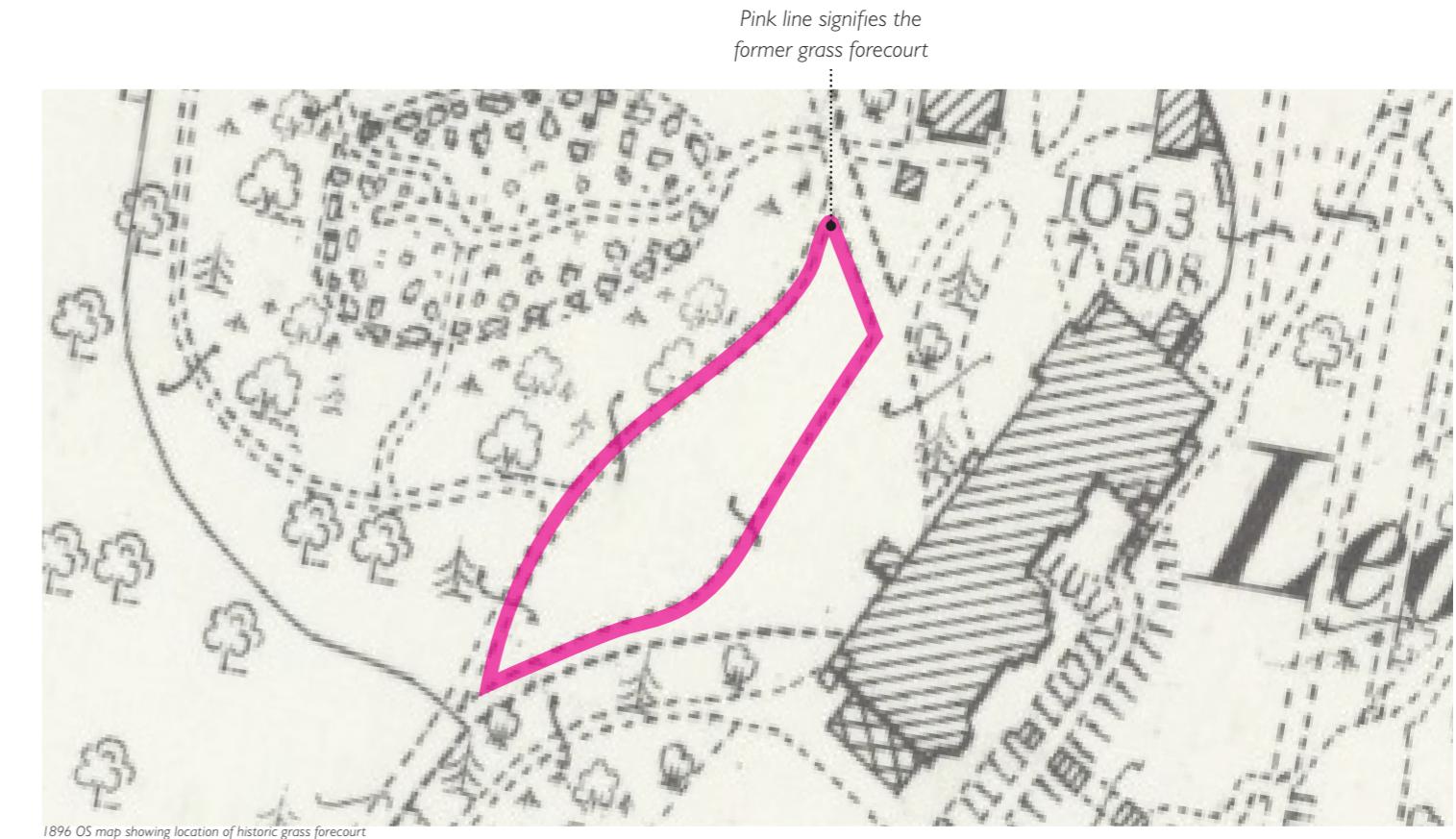
### 5.4.3 PROPOSED CAR PARK ALTERATIONS

Given the amount of parking cannot be reduced for functional reasons as described earlier in the document, the design team have focussed on relocating cars from directly in front of the House during day to day operation. This has been achieved by creating a small stretch of overflow bays to the south, which allow the overall capacity to be maintained whilst reducing the visual impact of cars on the front of the house.

In addition to the above, the existing path width will be decreased, and the existing small verge of grass replaced with a deeper bed of plants which can provide a higher screening to the parking. A larger bed has been introduced at the junction between the new path to the working area and Camellia Walk, which means that at this point no cars will be in the immediate foreground when viewing the main house.



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### 5.4.4 ANALYSING THE EXISTING VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The collection of ancillary buildings at Leonardslee are a pleasant surprise to visitors who enter the gardens. They are well hidden from the entrance views and are an unexpected in their proximity to Leonardslee House. The buildings slowly reveal themselves to visitors, which forms part of the charm of the estate, however with no clear anchor or signage, there is no obvious way to experience the site, with visitors often walking straight across the hotel car park to Leonardslee House, only to be diverted back to the Clocktower Cafe.

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The lack of clarity of multiple paths and building entrances results in confusion, which although is initially charming, becomes frustrating to the visitor experience. The proposals therefore seek to add a subtle order to the visitor experience whilst retaining the charming quality of the estate.

#### Key:

- Building Entry Points
- Long View
- Access Route
- Physical Connection
- Visual Connection
- External Informal Dining Areas
- Signage Point
- Vista / Key View



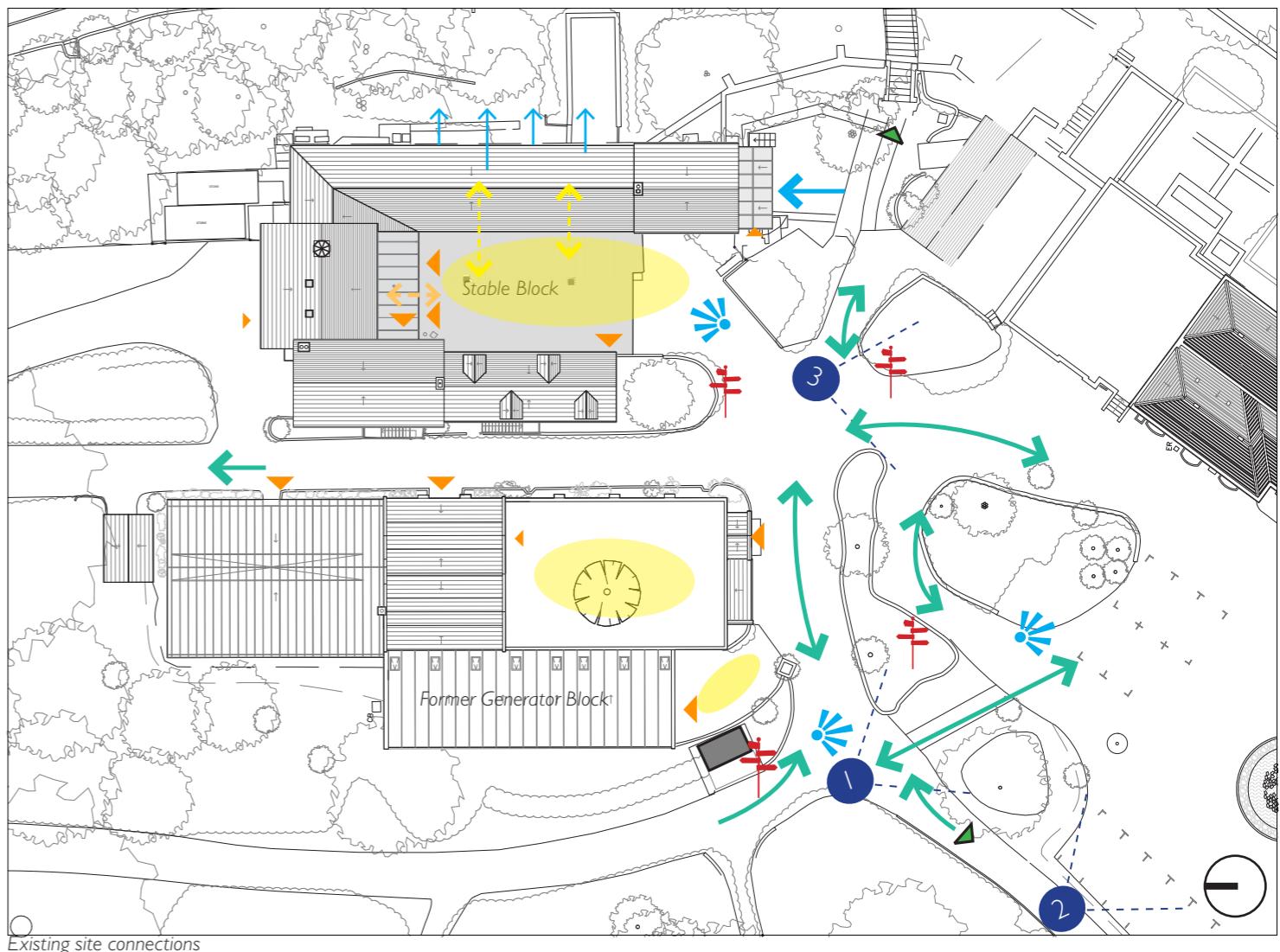
1 Existing confusing site signage



2 Existing grass verge between the Main House and path causing confusion due to lack of visual boundary between the Lakes and Gardens and the Main House



3 Existing pathway allowing visitors to the Lakes and Gardens access to the front of the Main House causing confusion within the visitor experience



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### 5.4.5 REINSTATING THE HISTORIC PLANTED SCREEN

Late 19th century maps and early 20th century photographs show that between the main entrance of Leonardslee House and the service wing lies a large planted bed providing some physical and visual separation between the principal part of the House and its ancillary parts. The bed similarly provided screening to the Stables and subsequent Generator Block.

Given the current separate uses of Leonardslee House (Hotel and Restaurant Interlude) and ancillary working buildings (for Garden only visitors), it is proposed to reinstate this historic visual and physical separation with a new planted bed which will also reduce the amount of hard standing in front of the House. A raised planted bed has been chosen in lieu of a low grassed lawn to provide visual screening to the reduced number of car parking to the front of the House.



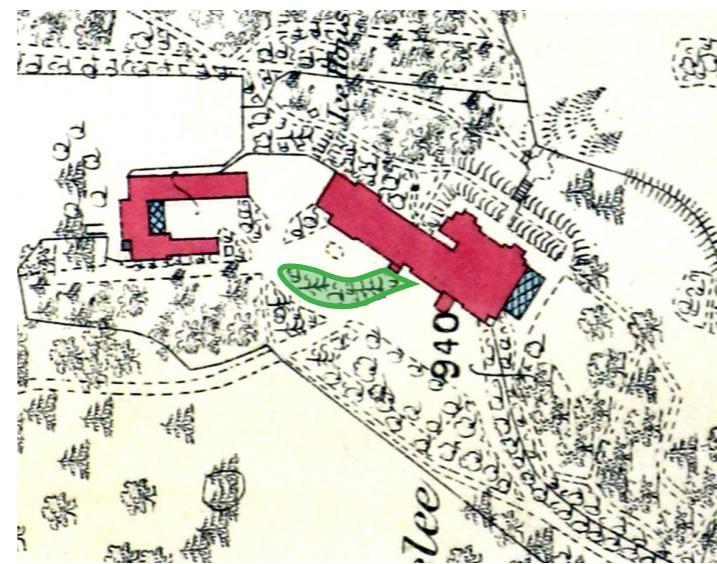
Undated 20th century photograph [mid-20th century] showing the narrow forecourt and lawn opposite with two trees and a rhododendron



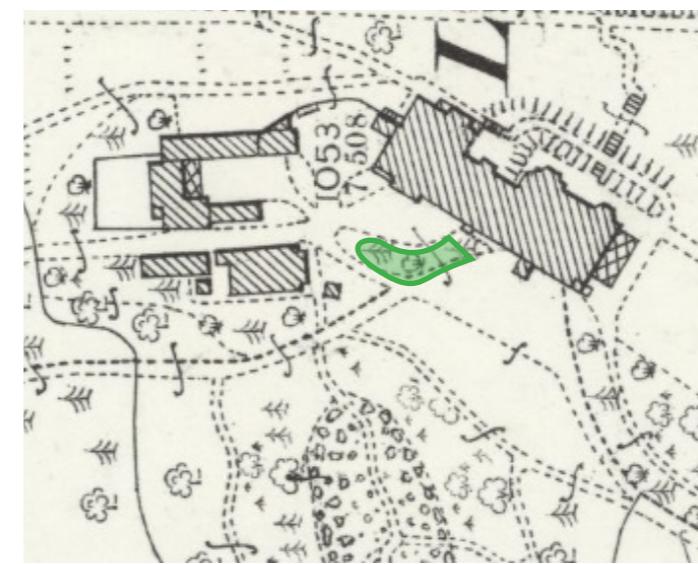
Undated 20th Century photo of Leonardslee House - date unknown - Showing the planted separation of the main house



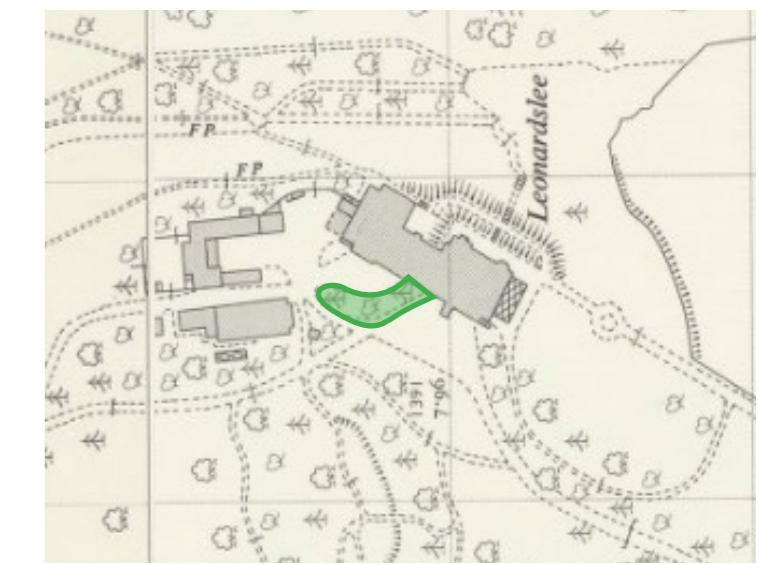
Images showing the Lawn in May 1979



1879 Ordnance Survey Map with the planted screen shown in green



1896 Ordnance Survey Map with the planted screen shown in green



1957 Ordnance Survey Map with the planted screen shown in green