

Attractive park and recreation ground created by the Corporation in the late C19 from former water meadows.

Jesus Green is one half of a former water meadow that was bisected in 1890 by the construction of Victoria Avenue, the other half became Midsummer Common. In the wider context it forms part of the important ring of green spaces that run around and define the historic city centre. The Cambridge Corporation was granted rights over the common land in 1884 and

1922, but it was not heavily used as a recreation ground until the 1920s. Today, the green retains its role as an area for formal and informal recreation, which is crossed by well-used pedestrian and cycle routes and benefits from lines of mature trees.



Jesus Green

SIGNIFICANCE - HIGH

General Overview

The wide, open space and long vistas of Jesus Green provides a sharp contrast with the closely built housing of the New Park Street area just to the west. The spaces retain a semi-rural character due to the lines of trees that break up views and the absence of roads or obtrusive structures within the park. The riverside provides a focus of activity including a well used cycle path and a cluster of structures made up by the pavilion, footbridge, lock and lock keepers' cottage. Some of these help to illustrate the historic importance of the river as an economic highway for Cambridge in the C18 and C19.



Pavilion



Views towards the city centre

Views across the green space take in the tree lines and skyline buildings in the city centre including the chapel of St John's College and the spire of All Saint's Church. The river and buildings beyond are also visually important in views while the footbridge and Victoria Road Bridge are further features of architectural interest.

On the southern edge of the park, the sinuous course of a stream that forms the northern boundary of the grounds of Jesus College, is a reminder of the network of small streams that must have watered these meadows in the past. This stream has the

potential to have a high value for ecology.

Jesus Green is an important recreational resource used by residents, visitors and schools. It also hosts various performances and events in addition to being a popular cycle and pedestrian route. The space also has a wider ecological significance as part of the river corridor.

The long, blank elevations of the swimming pool buildings and its tall evergreen hedge appear somewhat incongruous in the park, and may provide an opportunity for enhancement.



Skate park, with swimming pool hidden behind hedge



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The pool lies next to children's play areas and a skate park and together they form a focus of activity within the park.

Landscape Features

- The River Cam forms the northern boundary with properties behind on Chesterton Road providing a fairly continuous solid edge with locally-typical architectural features such as the mansard roofline and pantile roof covering to Nos. 2 -12 Chesterton Road.
- Tree lines mark the northwest and east boundaries of the park and form an avenue that bisects it, limiting views across the area.



Terraced houses to Lower Park Street and Park Parade

- Early C19 terraced houses at Lower Park Street and late C19 terraced houses of Park Parade form a pleasant group of buildings which provide a sense of enclosure to the west and south west.



An avenue of trees

- Trees within the grounds of Jesus College form the southern boundary.
- Avenues of trees tend to define vistas.
- St John's College Chapel is a notable focal building on the western horizon, its fine quality details and materials confirming the wealth and prestige of the college.
- All Saint's Church Spire performs a similar



The lock keepers' cottage

function in views to the south marking the routes into the city from the east.

- There are less celebrated views of the Varsity Hotel in Thompson's Lane to the west and Henry Giles House in Chesterton Road to the north.
- Riverboats on the River Cam add colour and life to views towards the lock.

Enhancement Opportunities

The appearance of the outdoor swimming pool and associated boundary treatment is detrimental to the view east along the northern boundary towards Victoria Bridge.

The spaces around the lock, swimming pool (including the inappropriate tree screen) and tennis courts are important elements affecting the appearance of the character of the area.

Similarly, the adequacy and condition of the paths crossing the park are important to the appearance and functionality of the green space.

The tree avenues will also require attention as the existing trees reach maturity.

The general maintenance of the existing facilities, and the design of the lighting, signage and other park features, would all benefit from improvement.

Note: For further details on this area please refer to Cambridge City Council's "Jesus Green Conservation Plan" (1998).

Feature / Structure	Age	Notes
open air swimming pool	1923	4 single storey associated buildings, bounded by timber fencing and leylandii hedge
pavilion	1920s	render & red brick single storey, tile roof (positive building)
refreshment kiosk	1960s	single storey, timber boarded, tile roof
children's play area	C20	various play equipment, timber post fence & railings
London plane trees	c1913	avenue of trees running north west - south east
pathways	mostly 1920s	although several paths are historic routes, there was no overall layout until 1920s
Victoria Avenue horse chestnut trees	1890s	planted when Victoria Avenue was built
trees	probably 1920s	avenues of trees along Jesus Ditch path & path from the lock to Portugal Street
skateboard ramps	early C21	painted steel & concrete
Jesus Green Lock House	early C19	Grade II Listed grey Gault brick, hipped slate roof
Jesus Green lock & bridge	1832	Grade II Listed lock, sluice gates & weir, footbridge over. Engineer William Chadwell Mylne. Brick with stone dressings. Lock: white brick, red brick patching & stone coping. Wooden lock gates. Iron footbridge with gas lamps.