



**Mavisbank Policies**  
Designed Landscape  
Conservation Management Plan



Historic Environment Scotland

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Conservation Management Plan

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## **Survey and proposals plans**

(as separate PDF file in digital version; at back of report in printed version)

- Plan 1 Site and Inventory boundaries
- Plan 2 Site designations: Inventory, Conservation Area, listed buildings
- Plan 3 Zones of distinct landscape character
- Plan 4 Visual landscape survey, incl views
- Plan 5 Buildings and built features
- Plan 6 Access and circulation
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## 0 Executive summary

This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) is a stand-alone document that develops a practical plan for the future development and management of the Mavisbank designed landscape, independently from plans from the house. It has been finalised concurrently with a new initiative to achieve a viable future for the house and the plan's policies can be used to support that bid. The broad aim of the CMP is to provide an informed basis for the future management of the designed landscape within the context of the wider Inventory designated site balanced with the architectural, archaeological, historical and ecological significance of the place.

Mavisbank house and policies are sited in the valley of the river North Esk between Loanhead on the west and Lasswade to the east, on the north bank of the river, approximately 10km south-south-east of Edinburgh, in the Midlothian Council area. The A768 Lasswade-Loanhead road runs to the north of the site, but with no direct link to the policies which have limited access.

Mavisbank is compact country estate landscape, rated as outstanding in the *Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland*, focused on the Category A listed but ruinous house of 1725 designed by Sir John Clerk and William Adam with surviving evidence – documents and vestigial physical remains – of an early 18th century landscape design including radiating formal avenues and vistas, an ornamental canal, a *Roman Station* and a circular walled garden. Modifications made in the late 18th century and 19th century created a landscape park with parkland and specimen trees and transformed the canal to an informal lochan which is predominantly what survives. Later embellishments included Victorian shrubberies and tree planting and later additions to the house and landscape related to its use as a mental hospital. The mid-20th century brought increasing levels of neglect and misuse, although stabilisation and a halt to further deterioration has been achieved since the landscape was acquired by Historic Scotland (now Historic Environment Scotland, or HES) in 1995. The wider valley setting of Mavisbank house and policies are designated an outstanding Conservation Area.

Both the house and its landscape are recognised as outstanding in their design, their integrated concept and as the work of Clerk and Adam. Despite their neglected state, they are a remarkable survival within the scenic Esk valley within an otherwise heavily urbanised and industrialised part of Midlothian.

The CMP adopts the methodology of the Conservation Plan process addressing in sequence a full understanding the site, based on research, site surveys and consultation (including a Gazetteer of features), assessment of the significance of the site and its features, identification of conservation and management issues that need to be addressed, and establishment of conservation policies with actions derived from them. A number of studies in support of the CMP have been undertaken concurrently, updating previous work, covering archaeological features, tree survey, ecology and archival research. The CMP builds upon various studies and plans for the landscape and house that have been undertaken since 1992 and refers to findings from them, although it assesses significance differently and concludes with a new approach derived from a different rationale that reflects the changed priorities of stakeholders and funding agencies.

### Understanding the Mavisbank landscape

The Understanding section of the report considers the landscape in detail commencing with a description of thirteen distinct landscape character areas. The history of the place is covered in an illustrated 20-page chronology of the development of Mavisbank designed landscape divided into six phases as follows:

Phase 1, 1692 to 1722, Mavisbank farm before the house and landscape

Phase 2, 1722 to 1775(?), Mavisbank – the formal landscape of Sir John Clerk

Phase 3, 1775(?) to 1840, Mavisbank – the natural-style landscape

Phase 4, 1840 to 1877, Mavisbank – the Victorian landscape

Phase 5, 1877 to 1954, Mavisbank – the institutional landscape

Phase 6, 1954 to present, Mavisbank – decline, fragmentation and revival.

A comprehensive gazetteer of designed landscape features – existing and lost – includes descriptions of all the archaeological features, buildings and structures, drives and paths, water bodies, channels and drainage, and plantations, woodlands compartments and garden elements that comprise the landscape. Each entry covers its history, current condition and significance, and many incorporate information from previous studies.

The findings of the 2019 ecological survey are included as an essential consideration in future management alongside the cultural landscape issues. Key features from the updated archaeological gazetteer are integrated in the landscape features gazetteer, as is information from both a 2014 woodland management plan and 2019 tree survey.

### **Statement of significance**

The most important section of the CMP is the statement of significance where we assess the importance of the Mavisbank landscape in its cultural context, revisit and add to the Inventory evaluation of significance and draw out the particular aspects of significance in the designed landscape.

The Inventory and previous studies have placed the greatest significance in the history of landscape gardens on the early 18th century landscape created by Sir John Clerk, 2nd baronet of Penicuik, particularly when considered with the focal feature of the landscape, Mavisbank House, and its widely acknowledged eminent status in architectural history and design in Scotland. We continue to recognise this significance. However, when assessing the potential of site's future and developing realistic plans we consider that a more balanced appraisal is now needed that more accurately reflects all the aspects in the surviving landscape that give Mavisbank value, and that can be developed in a financially feasible plan whose long-term management can be afforded and that offers optimum public benefits.

Our assessment questions the idea of Mavisbank in the early 18th century as a *ferme ornée*, as expressed in several previous works. In our view there is little evidence for the landscape in this style in Clerk's writings, descriptions in other accounts or in maps of the period. But if not a *ferme ornée*, other aspects of the period landscape identified in previous studies – the *patte d'oie* of *allées* and *vistas*, possible wilderness planting, formal canal, the *Roman Station*, and the *villa suburbana* concept remain proven and relevant.

But this was a transient phase, possibly even evolving during Clerk's lifetime. It is the later phase of the landscape from the late-18th or first half of 19th century that is most in evidence today – drives, paths, plantations, parkland, lochan and most garden buildings are all in this later form. This is the site that we have to manage and make best use of for the future. While reversal by restoration to the earlier period is possible, continued evolution to make best use of the historic and natural assets could be considered more justified in conservation terms and certainly more practicable.

There are at least three good reasons at this time for not restoring the policies to their early 18th century form which, it is recognised, would best complement the original house

1. We have limited evidence for the early 18th century layout, certainly insufficient to enable a competent restoration or reconstruction. Much of the evidence we do have is circumstantial or fragmentary and lacking in physical detail.



2. What survives at Mavisbank is the designed landscape in its 19th century form that has been present for considerably longer than the transitory early-18thC landscape, and even this has been altered by natural processes, which has considerable cultural and natural values in its own right. The 19thC landscape would be largely destroyed in restoring the earlier landscape, together with the natural character that developed.
3. The very high cost of restoring the early landscape, compared to working with the landscape we have and the natural processes at work.

In reconsidering the HES Inventory evaluation of the Mavisbank landscape we generally concur with the existing assessment, ie.

Work of Art value, Outstanding  
Historical value, Outstanding  
Horticultural, Arboricultural, Silvicultural value, Little  
Architectural value, Outstanding  
Scenic value, Some  
Nature Conservation value, High

But we question whether the 'art historical' reasoning for Outstanding value as a Work of Art is justified for the present day landscape and think that a lower value is due. At the same time, some particular viewing points could give Mavisbank a High Scenic value. The removal of Mavisbank as a Scheduled Monument may affect the Archaeological value, although the reasons for the outstanding evaluation remain the same. And lastly, we add Recreational value as another important value common to all designed landscapes and rate the site as High.

The CMP describes the particular significance of Mavisbank as follows.

- Survival of a natural valley containing the remnants of a designed landscape, virtually intact in terms of area within a highly developed part of Midlothian.
- The whole site including the house and landscape is recognised as of outstanding significance in the architectural and garden history of Scotland and the UK.
- Collaboration of Sir John Clerk and William Adam in the house design, both premier figures in the Scottish cultural history and the Enlightenment.
- Extensive documentary evidence in the Clerk of Penicuik archive (GD18) including the manuscript of *The County Seat* and other documentary sources.
- Survival of both Penicuik and Mavisbank add to this site's significance and are a major asset within Midlothian.
- A complete set of estate buildings including the mansion house, walled garden, various garden buildings, doocot, game larder / ice-house and lodges, although in varying degrees of preservation and alteration.
- Landscape features including lochan and old trees that show the evolution of the landscape through its different periods.
- Veteran trees from the earliest and later periods of the designed landscape.
- Archaeological evidence for the evolution of the Mavisbank landscape with high potential for investigations to reveal information useful for understanding and restoration.
- Evidence of coal mining from different periods that is significant in relation to the source of the Clerks' wealth that made Mavisbank possible.
- Later use of the house by the Mavisbank Company as a Private Lunatic Asylum under the direction of Sir John Barry, one of the most influential British psychiatrists of the late-19th-early 20thC, with large sums spent on building extensions and improvements.
- Mary E Burton, head gardener for 38 years, the first female head gardener in Scotland, and her pioneering position as a woman within the gardening profession and in the therapeutic use of gardening for the mentally ill.

- In decline aspects that show the landscape in transition and a return to a natural state, including landslips and regeneration.
- One of chain of designed landscapes and post-industrial sites along the valley of the North Esk and North Esk Way.

### **Management issues**

Further analysis takes the form of identifying broad management issues that need to be tackled and are affecting the significance of the landscape. These issues include the following.

Coordination of conservation priorities and uses for the designed landscape with those for Mavisbank house

Overcoming the division of the house and the landscape

Loss of the use of the north and south drives and the need vehicular access to the site for essential visitors, maintenance and construction

Good access for visitors on foot

Provision of off-site car parking for visitors

Protecting the setting of the landscape

Balancing community interests with viable future uses for house and landscape

Balancing conservation of the cultural landscape with nature conservation

Achieving a sustainable future for the landscape

Sufficient evidence for a period restoration of the landscape

Restoration of views

Archaeological investigation

Resolution of long-standing drainage problems

Dealing with landslips and reinstatement of East drive

Visual intrusion of buildings and power lines

Grassland management

Woodland and individual tree management

Water and wetland management

Protection of valued species

Control of non-native invasive plants

### **Overall vision**

To manage and develop the Mavisbank policies to preserve and enhance their cultural and natural significance and to create a distinctive visitor attraction based on their intrinsic values in coordination with restoration of Mavisbank house.

The future of Mavisbank policies lies in celebrating the site as it is now, recognising its seminal flowering as laid out by Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, but also the evolution of the landscape in the natural style in the 19th century, its subsequent use for psychiatric therapy, and the present environmental values of the more naturalised landscape and its topographic and scenic setting.

The future therefore lies with working what we have on site rather than turning back the clock, to maximise Mavisbank's value for all audiences and to adapt and manage the site to reflect the needs and priorities of 21st-century society.

While aiming to prevent further loss of features of the 18th and 19th centuries and restore significant features where practicable – for example, by reopening key vistas, restocking parkland, avenues and woods and restoring historic paths – the revitalisation of the landscape will also respect the site's ecological, geological and other scientific values. This will create many ways to use and appreciate the policies, significantly improve accessibility and provide opportunities for new activities.

## **Conservation management objectives**

The CMP sets out the following simple statements of what it is intended to achieve in the planning and design of the project, as the basis for management policies and any actions derived from them.

- To conserve historic features of all periods by protection, stabilisation and restoration as appropriate
- To achieve integrated development of the house uses and proposals with those for the landscape
- To maximise accessibility of the landscape for all users and provide links with and between local communities
- To plan for the use of Mavisbank by both local people and visitors and involve them in planning and management
- To preserve and enhance the separation of the local settlements provided by the wooded valley
- To encourage mental and physical health and well-being in the local and wider community by enjoyment of the outdoors and exercise
- To promote understanding of the history and development of Mavisbank and its natural values and make good use of its educational potential
- To enhance the existing natural habitats and increase their species diversity, including care of protected species
- To incorporate new uses and features where compatible with the significance of the place that will benefit future viability
- To increase knowledge and understanding of the development of the landscape by research and site investigations
- To manage using environmentally sustainable methods, minimising environmental impacts
- To develop proposals that make full use of funding opportunities and income from the resources of the site.

## **Management policies and proposals**

The CMP concludes with proposed conservation and management policies, as summarised in Plan 13. Actions derived from each policy are included. In abbreviated form the policies are as follows.

MP1. Manage the landscape to conserve its extant character, features and surviving historic artefacts of all periods, prioritising management or restoration of features that survive intact or for which there is good detailed evidence, while not precluding the possibility of more complete restoration of the key early Clerk landscape in the future when understanding and resources allow.

MP2. Prioritise archaeological investigation and recording of garden buildings, allées, path routes, former building locations etc as a basis for restoration of key features.

Priority projects for research and recording are listed.

MP3. Restore or stabilise garden buildings and recreate lost features.

MP4. Develop and restore the immediate curtilage of the house and pavilions to new uses balancing historic reconstruction with the requirements of public amenity and access.

MP5. Restore water and drainage system (main drains and land drainage), including the informal lochan, and deal with land instability where this affects access and safety.

MP6. Maximise accessibility within the landscape on foot and cycle using the historic system of routes, adapted to present ownership boundaries and with new links to create a comprehensive system of circular walks and through routes.

MP7. Provide for convenient access for car-borne visitors and essential users while planning for the use of public transport.

MP8. Maximise access to Mavisbank on foot and by cycle by maintaining or upgrading existing routes, ranging from informal worn paths to core paths, in cooperation with Midlothian Council, land owners and other stakeholders

MP9. Re-establish the historic visual structure of clearly-defined open spaces, routes, viewpoints, vistas and views, by managing existing tree cover to re-create period features, so enhancing the visitor experience.

MP10. Manage the enhancement of all habitats of value as contained in the Ecological report, including woodlands, grasslands and water bodies or wetlands, including their natural scenic value.

MP11. Manage woodlands, scrubland and individual trees for mixed objectives including those for access, amenity, designed landscape and habitat values, including replanting / restocking to add to these values and respecting historic plantation boundaries.

MP12. Recreate parkland and wilderness landscape character areas by restocking trees, shrubbery etc.

MP13. Manage grassland and other open ground sustainably to enhance landscape character and the value of habitats.

MP14. Manage the lochan and wetlands to conserve or enhance their ecological value in coordination with aims for access, landscape restoration and new uses.

MP15. Conserve animal and plant species protected by law, together with species of local and regional value, and enhance their habitats

MP16. Control non-native invasive plants

MP17. Supplement the protection of the Mavisbank site and enhance the Conservation Area by off-site planting and landscape management in cooperation with owners.

MP18. Plan for and encourage the use of paths and spaces for easy general access for walking, cycling and running while planning and equipping specific routes and exercise and as interpretive trails

MP19. Incorporate appropriate new features and facilities in keeping with the *genius loci* where this will benefit the appeal and viability of the project.

MP20. Promote understanding of the history and development of Mavisbank by on-site and web-based interpretation, and by site works.

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*Mavisbank Policies, view south-west from the doocot*



*Mavisbank house and policies site location*

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This report is the result of a commission from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) to Peter McGowan Associates in September 2018 to produce a conservation management plan (CMP) for the policies of Mavisbank house dealing specifically with the Guardianship Area managed by HES. The broad aim of the CMP is to provide an informed basis for the future management of the designed landscape within the context of the wider Inventory designated site balanced with the architectural, archaeological, historical and ecological significance of the place.

## 1.2 Location and general description

Mavisbank house and policies are sited in the valley of the river North Esk between Loanhead on the west and Lasswade to the east, on the north bank of the river, approximately 10km (6.5 miles) south-south-east of Edinburgh. The local authority is Midlothian Council, in the parish of Lasswade. The A768 Lasswade-Loanhead road runs to the north of the site, but with no direct link to the policies which are accessed from Polton Road at Polton bridge to the south.

The two historic routes into the property, the north and south drive are now privately owned and inaccessible. The main access is from Polton bridge, where a small car park is provided at Springfield Mill, via the public path alongside the river – the North Esk Way – and a gate east of the former walled garden that gives entry to the grounds. Pedestrian entry is also possible from Kevock Road to the east, either near the former east lodge on to the line of the east drive or via North Esk Way to enter the site near Glenkevock.

The policies occupy a 1.1km (0.68 mile) length of the river valley with house and most built features lying at the west end of the site, together with *Roman hill* at the back of the ruinous house. The landform of the site is a valley side dropping first to the level of the east drive and then, south of a long pond or lochan (the former ornamental canal), another drop down a river terrace to the riverside floodplain. The main areas of woodland cover the upper valley side and terrace slopes, parts of the intervening area and narrow riverside strips.

The whole designed landscape was included in the *Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland* when first compilation in 1987 and remains an Inventory site. The parts now owned by Historic Environment Scotland were acquired in 1995 and amount to 27.687 hectares, compared to 52.082 hectares in the Inventory.

## 1.3 Historical outline

Mavisbank is a small country estate landscape focused on the Category A listed but ruinous house of 1725 designed by Sir John Clerk and William Adam with surviving evidence – documentary or vestigial physical remains – of an early 18th century landscape design including what have been termed a *ferme ornée* (ornamental farm) with a *patte d'oie* (goose-foot) of *allées* (rides) and vistas, a formal *wilderness*, an ornamental canal, a *Roman Station* and walled gardens with gazebo (note that this study will question some of these interpretations). Modifications made in the late 18th century and 19th century created a landscape park with parkland and specimen trees and transformed the canal to informal lochan which is predominantly what now survives. Later embellishments included Victorian shrubberies and tree planting.

The early 18th century landscape at Mavisbank marked the transition from principles of formality to the beginning of natural style landscape or the picturesque movement in Scotland. Its creator, Sir John Clerk 2nd baronet of Penicuik (1676-

1755) was a major figure in Scottish cultural history. He introduced ideas into Scotland that were sweeping through contemporary gardens in England and was instrumental in the Scottish Enlightenment. Clerk gave expression to his antiquarian interests by incorporating a topographical and archaeological feature that he regarded as a *Roman Station*, the landscape forming part of an innovative experiment to bring the *villa suburbana* ideal of Ancient Rome to the lowlands of Scotland. The survival of documentary evidence and Clerk's influential poem *The Country Seat* on the perfect country retreat, are significant aspects of its value, as are the successive layers of landscape development that have survived.

The property had a number of different owners after being sold out of the Clerk family in 1815 and continued to be actively managed, developed and replanted. In 1877 it was purchased by the Mavisbank Company Ltd and became a private mental asylum, and its name changed to *New Saughton House*. Under pioneering psychiatrist Sir John Batty Tuke large sums were spent on extensions to the house and development of the landscape, with the gardens and landscape becoming an asset for therapeutic use in the treatment of the mentally ill. The long-serving head gardener, Mary E Burton, was central in this treatment and a pioneer in her own right as female profession gardener.

In 1953 the Mavisbank Company went into voluntary liquidation and further changes in ownership followed, with a growing degree of neglect. In 1973, Mavisbank House was gutted by fire, destroying the interiors and roofs and the landscape fell further into decline. In 1985, British Coal started to extract coal from seams lying near and directly under the house that lead to serious further deterioration and to stabilisation works to counteract the impact of mining subsidence.

The house and policies were designated a Conservation Area by Midlothian District Council in November 1977. The house now has, in effect, no owner, while the policies were acquired by Historic Scotland (now HES) in 1995. Various studies and funding initiatives have taken place since then by the Mavisbank Trust and others, as recorded in the chronology, and management works have been carried out by HES to retain key site features and prevent further loss.

#### **1.4 Brief and purpose of Conservation Management Plan**

The CMP will be used to inform a long-term maintenance and management strategy and identify maintenance and management resources, as well as identifying a design strategy to bring the policies into more public use.

The purpose of the plan and the resultant landscape design proposals arising out of it, as given in the project brief at the time of tender, is to:

- identify key management policies and maintenance works that need to be carried out to safeguard the historic designed landscape and its features of all types from loss or deterioration
- consider the implications for balancing natural and cultural heritage issues, including planting and archaeological / architectural conservation
- explore how greater public benefit can be gained from the policies
- identify, and give impetus to creating, a 'shared vision' for the landscape that respects and builds upon its historic features.

Its purpose is to direct maintenance and management works within the landscape owned by Scottish Ministers and managed on their behalf by Historic Environment Scotland, and subject to funding being secured the resulting design proposal for the landscape will be implemented as part of a partnership with the linked consolidation/re-use of the house. Opportunities for HES to work with the local community and other bodies that have a shared interest in the area will be identified to maximise the potential common benefits.



## 1.5 Approach and presentation

The methodology adopted for the study is that of the conservation plan process, including management and conservation proposals, in the following stages:

- Understanding the site, based on research, site surveys and consultation, including a Gazetteer of features
- Assessing the significance of the site and its features
- Defining conservation and management issues, including threats to significance
- Establishing conservation policies for the retention of the significance
- Preparing an overall strategy and management policies
- Developing proposals for conservation, restoration and management. (A detailed landscape masterplan was included in the original brief for the project, although this was held in abeyance pending the development of a masterplan under the evolving project to conserve and restore the house and landscape with National Lottery Heritage Fund grant aid)

A number of subsidiary surveys and updates of previous work have been undertaken as part of this commission or as separate commissions from HES to help inform the CMP as follows:

- *Gazetteer of Archaeological Features* by Addyman Archaeology, updating and adding to their 2004 gazetteer of landscape features.
- *Tree Survey* by Donald Rodger Associates, updating their tree survey of 2014 for the Mavisbank Trust.
- *Ecological Survey Report* by MBEC, updating their Mavisbank Restoration Ecology Report 2014 for the Mavisbank Trust and the initial ecology survey completed by MBEC in 2004.
- Archival research by William Kay identifying, copying and transcribing all documents relating to the landscape, gardens and horticultural interest of Mavisbank in GD18 Clerk of Penicuik MMS, complementing the eight volumes of research into house and place generally for the Mavisbank Trust.

This CMP builds upon several previous studies and plans for the designed landscape undertaken by others over many years, principally:

- *Mavisbank, a survey of the landscape* by Debois Landscape Survey Group 1992
- *Mavisbank Conservation Plan Landscape Report* by Mark Turnbull Landscape Architect February 2005; Addendum version dated January 2012; and *Mavisbank House and Policies Conservation Plan* by Simpson & Brown Architects January 2005; all commissioned by the Mavisbank Trust.
- *Mavisbank Policies Condition Survey and Conservation Strategy*, Historic Scotland 2003
- *Mavisbank Policies Landscape Management Plan 2011-2016*, Historic Scotland 2011

These are referred to extensively in this CMP and direct quotations are acknowledged.

A number of previous planning and technical studies add to the understanding of the Mavisbank house and policies, of which the following are the most valuable:

- *River North Esk Woodland Management Plans, Site 8 – Mavisbank*, Lothians and Fife Green Network Partnership for Midlothian Council, October 2011
- *Mavisbank Conservation Area Character Appraisal*, Midlothian Council, 2006

- *Mavisbank House Policies Drainage Investigation*, Millard Consulting for the Mavisbank Trust, May 2014
- *Geophysical Survey Report Mavisbank*, Kirkdale Archaeology / Rose Geophysical Consultants, March 2016
- *Report confirming the Vehicular and Pedestrian Access Rights to HES Mavisbank Policies, taking into account the Scottish Outdoor Access Code*, Joy Fotheringham, HES Estate Factor July 2018

Other surveys and reports are referred to in the body of the CMP and list of sources.

Survey plans are used to show boundaries, illustrate the visual assessment, identify the component features of the landscape and show policies and proposals. Historic maps and graphic works – prints, sketches, painting and photographs – are included to illustrate the text and provide sources of evidence.

## 1.6 Physical scope of the plan

The CMP considers primarily the area of the policies owned by Scottish Ministers and maintained by HES (as shown in Plan 1).

The wider area of the designed landscape defined in the Inventory of *Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland* (see Plan 1) is considered where relevant to understand the whole of the landscape composition. Parts of the historic estate are outwith HES's management but should be considered for the purposes of the CMP together with the rest of the designed landscape. These areas include parts of the North Drive and South Drive, land to the west and north of the house, the walled gardens, and a strip of land along the river North Esk.

The wider landscape of the locality including the relationship to other designed landscapes, landmarks and cultural sites, is considered as necessary to understanding its setting and design.

## 1.7 Statutory and other designations

The whole designed landscape and the house itself are the subject of various statutory designations that are both a measure of its significance and imply certain restrictions or responsibilities in development or management.

- HES Guardianship site
  - Listed buildings – the house and many other buildings and features are listed (see section 3.3)
  - Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland site (see Plan 1)
  - Conservation Area – lies within Mavisbank CA, which also includes parts of the Polton side of the valley (see Plan 2).
  - Ancient Woodland – Mavisbank contains woodland features recorded on the Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland Inventory (ASNWI) as being 'Ancient Woodland of Semi-Natural Origin' and as 'Long Established Plantation Origin' woodland (see section 2.5.7).
  - North Esk Valley Special Landscape Area – the entire site lies within the area.
  - Local Biodiversity Site – the site lies within the 'Mavisbank Local Biodiversity Site', a nationally recognised non-statutory designation.
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## 2 Understanding Mavisbank designed landscape

### 2.1 General description and context

(Plan 4)

Mavisbank policies lie entirely within the well-defined incised river valley of the North Esk between Loanhead on the west and Lasswade on the east, occupying the north side of the river, with the settlement Polton on the high ground to the south and houses in well planted grounds on the south valley side. The effect is a very enclosed landscape with very little intruding from the outside, an effect enhanced by woodland belts. The main landforms are the steep north valley side that defines the north boundary, a secondary river terrace through the west-centre of the site – all these being well wooded – and a prominent small hill (known as Roman hill) at the west associated with further hilly land to its north. All the principal views are therefore contained within the valley, with wider views only obtained from the top of Roman hill and the upper valley sides, from where housing in Polton is visible.

Mavisbank house lies in the west of the site at the foot of Roman hill with a north-easterly outlook across parkland along the valley towards a long informal waterbody or lochan. The ruinous house is propped by scaffolding and timber and protected within a security fenced compound. The other main buildings are a dairy/stables /south lodge group at the end of the south drive near to the river and its tributary, Bilston burn, and close to Polton road and the walled garden with various bothies etc that are now private houses. Another notable building is the tower-like doocot that acts as an eyecatcher on the edge of the valley to the east.

Routes in the landscape and access are as described above under 1.2.

#### Soils and drainage

The soils of the lower slopes and flood plain of Mavisbank are undifferentiated alluvial soils, while the soils on the upper slopes are gleys and brown earths. These soil types are of a fertile nature.

There are no open watercourses within the site although the river North Esk runs close to the south boundary and land drains and ditches are directed to it. The main aquatic feature is the man-made lochan in the central part of the site. The drains which are assumed to have been installed as part of the improvements to create the designed landscape, and which feed the lochan, now appear to be in disrepair, resulting in boggy ground in various parts of the site (see Plan 7). Other drains and issues of water relate to features from coal mining under the site. The lower ground suffers from occasional ponding, although for the most part the soils are free-draining.

### 2.2 Zones of distinct landscape character

(Plan 3)

Identification of areas of distinct landscape character is an aid to the description of the landscape and to understanding its structure. Such zones can also be useful in organising survey work and in planning management.

The main determinants of variations in character that we use are:

- landform (natural and man-modified)
- vegetation cover and pattern
- watercourses and main routes
- walls, buildings and other designed features
- land use.

The Mavisbank designed landscape has been divided broadly into thirteen zones in our assessment shown in Plan 3 and described below, concentrating on their existing character as seen today rather than as informed by known history. All spaces, major features, routes, planting areas etc are described in more detail in section 2.5.

- Zone 1 Mavisbank house
- Zone 2 Roman hill
- Zone 3 South approach and woods
- Zone 4 North approach and woods
- Zone 5 Clumps parkland
- Zone 6 Walled garden and estate buildings
- Zone 7 Central parkland
- Zone 8 Lochan and setting
- Zone 9 Valleyside woods, west
- Zone 10 River terrace woods
- Zone 11 Valleyside woods, east
- Zone 12 Garden park
- Zone 13 Cumming and Kevock parks

### **Zone 1 Mavisbank house**

A small zone at the south-west of the site covering the ruinous shell of Mavisbank house, its two wings and remains of various outbuildings, and the immediate wooded slopes and forecourt area that provide its setting to the north, east and south. The house stands on a level platform with the ground rising to the north and falling to the south, with the Roman hill (see next zone) rising steeply at its rear and gentle slopes across the forecourt area at the front. A high steel palisade security fence with gates encloses the ruin which is stabilised by propping and scaffolding. Views out are to the north-east, framed by trees but limited by foreground undergrowth, across parkland (Zone 7) to the lochan (Zone 8) and to the south-west to the slopes of Roman hill.



*Zone 1 Mavisbank house, seen from south-west (lower Roman hill)*

*Zone 2 Roman hill, seen from the north*



### **Zone 2 Roman hill**

A prominent small hill that rises 21m from the rear of the house, with remains of terracing on the lower slopes near the house and further embanking below the flat summit. Although apparently a freestanding hill seen from southerly and easterly positions, it is a continuation of the complicated topography of hillocks to the north that comprise Zone 5 and overlook the hill top. The slopes are mostly grassy, but with the remains of dense rhododendron growth that has been removed from the lower slope in recent years. A number of veteran beech and other species of tree stand on the side slopes, several in the oldest class of the site's trees. The hilltop makes an outstanding panoramic viewpoint, including views over the house to the major part of the designed landscape to the north-east and other parts of the North Esk valley.

### **Zone 3 South approach and woods**

An area characterised by mixed woodland and shrubbery on mainly south-east facing slopes lying between the house and Roman hill to the north-west and the south approach and walled gardens to the south-east. Within the general slope the landform is complex and hilly, reflecting the natural topography of the open parkland zone to the north. The woodland cover includes a few veteran and mature trees of various ages, with beech and sweet chestnut prominent, natural regeneration of sycamore, ash and birch, and areas of dense rhododendron. Remains of paths and steps can be traced through the area where the undergrowth permits. The game larder with ice-house beneath lies in the west part of the area with paths leading to it, with a prominent ridge and knoll to its north, such as might be chosen to site a garden building or viewpoint. Views are limited due to the dense vegetation.

*Zone 3 South approach and woods*





*Zone 4 North approach and woods, south part of route of old road / drive*

#### **Zone 4 North approach and woods**

Part of the former north approach is present as a grassy or grassed over drybound track (with gates at its top end, and securely padlocked iron gates further up the route), with horse chestnuts and a few lime trees of three distinct ages along its sides, along the side of a wooded shallow side valley. To the east is scrubby woodland with the ground rising from the valley bottom to the height of the main river valley. A clear older drive or track with banked sides runs parallel to north drive on the opposite side of the valley at a slightly lower level. Apart from views that open out from the north drive as you emerge from the chestnut avenue, views are limited by woodland and other trees and scrub.

#### **Zone 5 Clumps parkland \***

An area of rising hillocky grassland with scattered mature parkland trees lying to the north-west of the house and Roman hill and continuing around the west and south of the hill that appears as an integral part of the same landform when seen from these sides. Overall the ground rises to the main valley edge along the north-west boundary. One or more grassy tracks or paths run the length of the area. The trees here are some of the oldest of the site and mostly the same age, predominantly oak and some beech. Outstanding views across and along the North Esk valley are obtained from several high points, including down to the house and the Roman hill that is lower than the high parts of this area. The name *The Clumps* was given to the area in the Debois 1992 survey.

(\* outwith HES ownership)



*Zone 5 Clumps parkland, looking south-east towards house location*

*Zone 6 Walled garden and estate buildings, from north-west (South drive)*



**Zone 6 Walled garden and estate buildings \***

An area of privately owned buildings and garden spaces (not visited during the CMP surveys) comprising the walled gardens, dairy and south lodge of the former estate that are an integral part of the designed landscape and lie along its south approach. The river runs along the south-east of the area with a short length of the south drive and a narrow public path (signposted North Esk Way) beside it, between garden walls and river-edge retaining wall for most the length.

The walls of the garden form a horseshoe shape with old gates on the north-west and north-east marking cross paths within the garden, which is mainly laid to grass. A new house and outbuildings lie on the south-east side, close to the river, with old garden buildings within a separate walled enclosure to the south-west. The drive end is marked with stone gate-piers with the south lodge on the north side of the entrance, with the building of the dairy in a courtyard behind. The drive is securely gated at the north end, preventing public use.

(\* outwith HES ownership)

**Zone 7 Central parkland**

An area of open grassland with a few parkland trees lying between the house and the lochan (Zone 8), gently inclined toward the lochan with the remains of a central ride evident in the landform along the main axis. The east drive runs through the north part. Only five mature trees (oaks) remain in the parkland south of the drive, too few to definitively be recognised as part of any avenue. Good views are obtained over the lochan and to a lesser extent back to the main façade of the house, which due to its north-easterly aspect is only lit by the sun early in the morning. Other longer views are channelled by the wooded hillsides to the north (Zone 9) and south (Zone 10).

*Zone 7 Central parkland, looking towards the house*





*Zone 8 Lochan and setting,  
 seen from south bank*

### **Zone 8 Lochan and setting**

The lochan is a long water body lying centrally in the landscape overlooked by the house and central parkland to the south-west. The lochan is silted and overgrown at the north-east end with invasion by rushes also at north corner of the west end, while rhododendrons hide a small island midway along the north side. Scattered mature trees, mostly of poor shape, and birch regeneration cover the shallow slope up to the east drive on the north, while the south side is embanked indicating the artificial origin of the waterbody (see W02, W03). Good views are obtained along the length of the lochan and from the south bank.

### **Zone 9 Valleyside woods, west**

Woodland covering the valley side to the north of Zones 7 and 8 comprising broadleaved plantation woodland with remnants of historic plantings, younger naturally seeded broadleaved woodland and dense continuous scrub. A worn path runs through the wood near the top boundary, with another less distinct route near the base of the slope.



*Zone 9 Valleyside woods,  
 west*



*Zone 10 River terrace woods,  
from east*



#### **Zone 10 River terrace woods**

A strip of semi-mature broadleaved woodland on the steep river terrace between the floodplain of Zone 12 and the parkland of Zone 7, with a small number of veteran trees within the plantation and a ditch or bank along its south edge. The area is fenced continuously along the top edge with no paths through it and no views within it due to the woodland cover, although with openings the top would make a good viewing terrace.

#### **Zone 11 Valleyside woods, east**

Valleyside woodland similar to Zone 9 but often more open in character, and with areas disturbed by landslips and resulting in disturbed and waterlogged ground and younger natural regeneration, overall comprising broadleaved plantation woodland with remnants of historic plantings or mixed woodland, largely broadleaved and of self-sown origin, but with some mature planted broadleaves and one small block of spruce, prominent among the otherwise mainly broadleaved / deciduous woodland and scrubland of the site; also dense continuous scrub. Towards the east, the tower-form of the semi-ruinous doocot is a prominent landmark perched on the valley edge. The east drive is the main route within the zone, but this is lost due to the landslips in the east half, where alternative worn paths find their way to the north and south of the disturbed ground. Locally views from the upper parts of the slope are very good, looking over the river valley generally and back towards the house area, including at the doocot.

*Zone 11 Valleyside woods,  
east, seen from south*





*Zone 12 Garden park, from north-east*

### **Zone 12 Garden park**

A flat area of grassy floodplain parkland, but with no trees within it, lying between the wooded river terrace of Zone 10, the walled garden and the river boundary with its treed banks and margins. Includes capped mine shafts, evidence for previous use as a cricket ground and an area that has been subject to seasonal ponding.

### **Zone 13 Cumming and Kevock parks**

A continuation of the parkland of Zone 12 north-eastwards above a transition bank to the sloping ground of Cumming Park and the more steeply sloping 'amphitheatre' of Kevock Park, with a small area of floodplain at its base and mostly poorly drained slopes above with extensive native wetland vegetation such as sedges and meadow-sweet that has invaded as natural drainage and land drains have been impeded by landslips and blockages and that can give the impression of an unkempt appearance.



*Zone 13 Cumming and Kevock parks, from south-west*

## 2.3 Main development phases of the Mavisbank landscape

The designed landscape has developed over a period of almost 300 years during which six phases of activity can be identified. These dated periods follow those in the 2005 Conservation Plan (MTLA 2005), although the titles have been amended to reflect our interpretation of the character of the periods.

Phase 1 1692 to 1722, Mavisbank farm

Phase 2 1722 to 1775(?), Mavisbank, the formal landscape

Phase 3 1775(?) to 1840, the natural-style landscape

Phase 4 1840 to 1877, the Victorian landscape

Phase 5 1877 to 1954, the institutional landscape

Phase 6 1954 to present, decline, fragmentation and revival

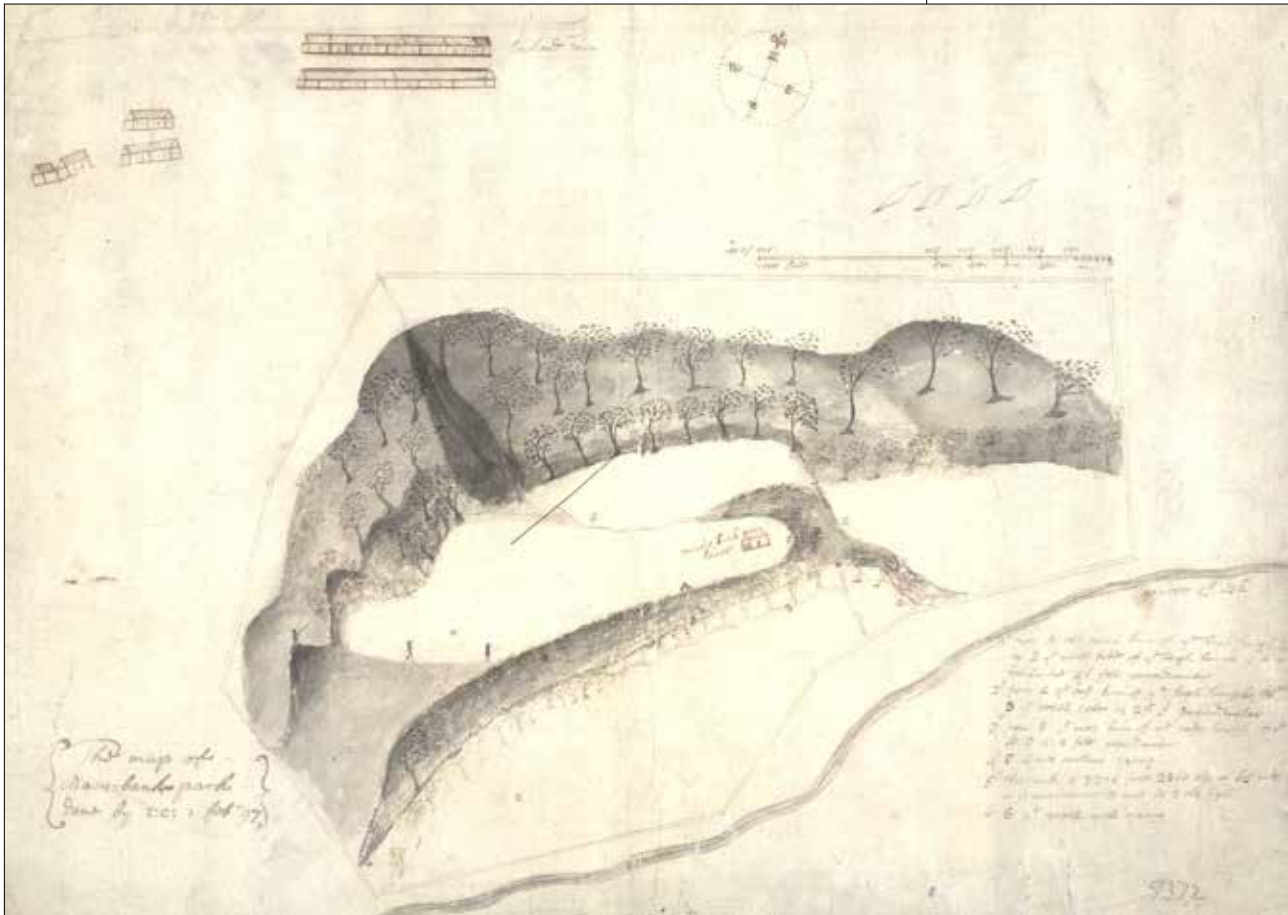
## 2.4 Chronology of the development of Mavisbank designed landscape

The following chronology describes key events in each period – in the lives of the creators of Mavisbank house and landscape, the major works undertaken and relevant associated events, including parallel significant developments at Penicuik.

The chronology incorporates information from the thorough historical survey in MTLA 2005 together with our own assessment of written and graphic sources.

### 2.4.1 Phase 1, 1692 to 1722, Mavisbank farm

- 1611 John Clerk, the 1st Laird of Penicuik, is born in Fettercairn, Grampian. (dates from *Complete Baronetage*)
- 1620 John's father, William Clerk, merchant-burgess in Montrose dies.
- 1634 John Clerk settles in France and amasses considerable wealth before returning to Scotland c1646. He marries Mary Gray of Pittendrum, with whom he has five sons and five daughters. (Burke)
- 1654 The Penicuik estates are bought by John Clerk.
- 1674 John Clerk dies and is succeeded by his eldest son, also John, who marries twice. He has three sons and three daughters with his first wife, Elizabeth Henderson of Elrington, and four sons and four daughters with his second wife, Christian Kirkpatrick. Encloses 300 acres at Penicuik and plants parks, avenues and new garden.
- 1676 John Clerk (eldest son) born at Penicuik.
- 1679 John Clerk (senior) created as Baronet of Nova Scotia by Charles II and serves in the Parliament of Scotland.
- 1679 John Clerk (son) is sent to Leiden to study law. He undertakes the Grand Tour, travelling through Germany to Italy (where he visited Rome, Florence, Genoa and Turin) and returning through France (including Paris) to Scotland 12 years later (*Memoirs*); he learns French, Dutch and Italian and studies music in Rome. Letters show that, to the irritation of his father, Clerk's time on the continent seems to have been filled with distractions from his law studies. During his time in Holland his interest in horticulture and music evolved and in Rome under Corelli and Pasquini his musical abilities developed. Clerk's cantatas, considered by some to be among the finest contributions to Baroque music from Britain, were composed soon after his return to Scotland.



- 1697 *Map of Mavis-bank park done by J.C: 1 Feb'97* (look like I.C. but probably J.C. = John Clerk) (SRO:RHP9372) shows lands of Mavisbank (farm) as quite wooded before Clerk built his house and gardens. Shows a building, known to be the farm but not annotated as such, which stood '300 elles farther east' of the present house. 1st Baronet is believed to have undertaken some planting within the valley. The plan is possibly part of a study for proposed mining (the annotation refers to level and heights). It shows Mavisbank farmhouse, woods on the valley slopes and open ground. Rows of trees follow the edges of the wooded areas and probably represent stylised depiction of woodland rather than deliberate planting.
- 1699 On his return from the Continent John Clerk (son) makes improvements to Penicuik. Of these he writes that "I took great delight in planting nurseries, and tho' I lived not always with my father, yet in the Spring seasons I keep'd a dozen men as work for two to three months yearly" (GD 18/1758).
- 1700 John Clerk (son) admitted to the Scottish Bar and begins work on plantations at Penicuik.
- 1701 In March John Clerk (son) marries Lady Margaret Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Galloway and niece of the Duke of Queensberry. She dies in childbirth in December of that year.
- 1705 John Clerk (son) appointed a Commissioner to the Union with England; visits Galloway.
- 1706 John Clerk (son) has an audience with Queen Ann in London.
- 1707 Union of the Scottish and English parliaments; John Clerk (son) represents Scotland in the first parliament of Great Britain.

*1697 Map of Mavis-bank park done by J.C: 1 Feb'97 (SRO: RHP9372, with permission of Sir Robert Clerk)*

- 1708 John Clerk (son) spends three months in London; appointed one of the Barons of the Exchequer.
- 1709 The 1st Baronet devolves responsibility for the improvement of Penicuik entirely to his son (*Memoirs*, p74). In November he marries Janet Inglis, daughter of John Inglis of Cramond. Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, father-in-law of John Inglis, was a Chief Justice of Scotland and an influential early landscape improver. (*Memoirs*)
- 1710 Cammo estate is acquired by John Clerk (son). He visits Bath and Bristol, returning to Scotland via Oxford and London.
- At Cammo between 1710 and 1719 John Clerk planted the wilderness in the garden, made sloping banks and the parterres, planted groves, the orchard, stables garden, the avenue through the east park, the south avenue using lime trees from England, with the great gate at the end, made the long walk and built the summer house (from Memorandum as to the Lands of Cammo by Baron Clerk). He also created a long narrow canal to the south-west of Cammo house.
- 1714 Death of Queen Ann.
- 1717 John Clerk (son) visits Kinross; William Stukeley visits Clerk at Penicuik. Stukeley was creator of the antiquarian group known as *Equites Romani* or the Roman Knights. He remained a correspondent with Clerk, who had the name *Agricola*, symbolising Clerk's Roman interests. (Iain Gordon Brown 1980, *The Hobby-Horsical Antiquary*)
- 1720 John Clerk (son) visits the Earl of Glencairn in Renfrewshire (Findlaystone and Houston). In the early 18th century, Findlaystone estate landscape mirrored Clerk's rural form of gardening. (Fiona Jamieson research notes)
- 1721 Clerk visits Drumlanrig and Bargaly estates, Dumfriesshire.
- Clerk manages the affairs of his old patron, the Duke of Queensberry, frequently visiting south-west Scotland.
- 1722 John Clerk 1st Baronet dies; John Clerk 2nd Baronet inherited the family estates.

#### **2.4.2 Phase 2, 1722 to 1775(?), Mavisbank – the formal landscape**

- Clerk began looking for a suitable place to develop and refine his ideas on estate improvements that he had experimented with at Cammo. The family seat at Penicuik had recently been refurbished and Clerk saw no justification in further expenditure there. Instead he turned his attention to Mavisbank acquired by his father 30 years before in its sheltered south-facing valley. The 1st Baronet had not progressed his project to build 'a small house' beyond sketches.
- 1722 John Clerk 2nd Baronet engaged William Adam to prepare designs for a small villa. It seems from later correspondence between Clerk and Adam that concurrent with the development of designs for the building, Clerk was formulating ideas for the landscape – developing and refining his ideas on estate improvements that had begun at Cammo and carrying forward his idea to bring the Roman villa ideal to the lowlands of Scotland. His instincts may have been moved by the site, an Arcadian setting that on a smaller scale bore similarities with landscapes like the Villa Adriana at Tivoli.
- Clerk expressed endless concern about cost and resisted Adam's attempts to enlarge the building. He was also concerned about being overlooked from a distance by Polton house. A scheme for enclosing walls was drawn but it is not clear if this was ever executed. The ground

level between the two pavilions was lowered in the 19th century to let more light into the basement, so archaeological evidence for the enclosing wall and courtyard parterre is likely to have been lost.

- 1723 Foundations of Mavisbank house laid. Concerns about cost are a continuing theme of the development of the house and grounds. Both are characterised by minimal ornamentation and simplicity. (“I would have made much finer improvement ... but I chosed to do no more than 2 or 3 men can easily keep in good order at the expense of 20 or 30 Li yearly”).

The siting of Mavisbank house at the foot of a hill facing north-east (the coldest aspect) was a deliberate decision. Clerk recognised that “the situation of [Mavisbank] house should have been about 300 elles more easterly” but “choised the ground where it now stands for the sake of the round hill above it.” He believed this ancient tumulus to be “a Roman station” and integrated it into the garden by making a “winding ascent up to it, with hedges planted from the bottome to the top”, so he could view a Roman “trench & agger” from his salon window. (Scott Cooper)

- 1724 Garden walls built and fruit trees planted. The walled garden laid out as a full circle as shown clearly on Roy’s map of c1752, although later altered to its present shape, with a rectangular enclosure to the south-west that does not survive in this shape, and a garden building or gazebo that does survive. The ground sloped gently towards the river so that the growing areas had a south aspect.

The house was roofed this year. Correspondence with Adam in December makes the first reference to office pavilions, after Clerk’s realisation that the villa was too small.

Clerk visits Naworth castle, Scalesby and Corby castle; visits Hadrian’s wall with his friend and fellow antiquarian Roger Gale.

- 1725 Quantities of fruit trees bought for Mavisbank. The south pavilion is completed for use as a stables and coach house. Allan Ramsay writes *The Gentle Shepherd*.

- 1726 The north drive from Loanhead was formed along the bed of a burn culverted to feed the canal and the pond made in the walled garden. (Memoirs)

- 1727 Clerk visits London in the company of William Adam; visiting Wilton, Chiswick and Castle Howard. He lives at Mavisbank for the first time – it was used purely as a summer residence, occupied during June and July each year when the Court was in session in Edinburgh. (Memoirs)

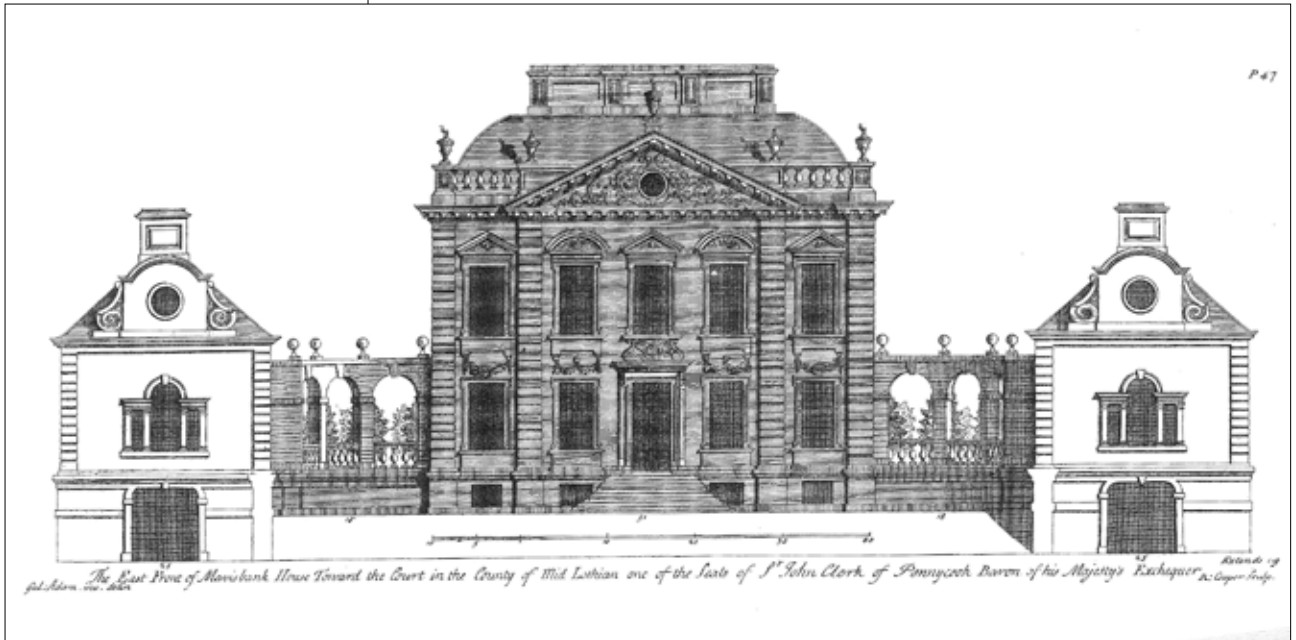
Clerk completes his poem *The Country Seat*, in which he encapsulates the character of his chosen setting for Mavisbank house ...

*First then maturely let us choose the Field  
 Where we intend to bound our rural bliss ...*

*The darling Country Seat must only be  
 Where good and bounteous Nature seems inclin’d ...*

*Choose not a Seat too lofty nor too low,  
 But on a River’s Bank of downy Plain  
 That gently slopes to the meridian Sun.  
 Let many lofty Trees with spreading Tops  
 Defend you from the Cold of Northern Blast.*

Bought the lands of Dumcrief, near Moffat. “I began to do things there in order to live there once a year for a month, for the benefits of Moffat



Mavisbank House, east front, from Vitruvius Scoticus, 1753

water, and for the diversions of shooting and fishing, which were there in greater perfection than any other place I knew.” (Memoirs)

Also bought some land of Craigieburn to run contiguously to Dumcrieff.

1728 Construction of the north pavilion begins. The house is more or less completed.

By this date the orchards and woodland plantations were either established or in the process of being planted. Letters between Clerk and Adam regarding the siting of the pavilion. Clerk was concerned that the south pavilion would obscure views to his orchards from the dining hall whilst Adam advised the pavilions “can be scituated nowhere but some part of the prospect of the field must be lost, and I look upon the whole of the bottom to be the Rurall Garden, and the distant view with watter the best.” (SRO GD18 4735/2) The main effect of the pavilions and their linking arcades was to concentrate views north-eastward to the goose-foot and canal.

1730 Clerk alters the face of the moor of Loanhead by enclosures with hedges and ditches; continues with his gardens and hedges.

Elected a member of The Royal Society. (Memoirs)

1731 Builds the rectangular walled garden including gazebo that bears this date; visits Carlisle and Penrith. Writes to Dr Hermann Boerhaave (one of the most celebrated physicians of the 18th century who then held the Chair of Medicine and Botany at the University of Leyden) (Memoirs)

Alexander Pope writes his Epistle to Lord Burlington – a plea to follow nature and respect the *genius loci*. Although this post-dates Clerk’s *The Country Seat*, Pope’s influential essay from *The Guardian*, where he talks of ‘celebrated seats, or if you will Villa’s of the nation’, was written in 1713.

1733 Clerk travels to Norfolk, London and Cambridge, visiting Houghton, Woolerton, Raynham, Richmond park and Kensington gardens.

1734 Visits Moffat (Dumcrieff) and Carlisle (Corby castle).

1735 *A Map of Midlothian* John Adair shows three pairs of parallel lines or avenues stretching north-east from the house to the edge of the enclosed landscape, which is shown planted with trees; the circular walled garden is also indicated.



1735 A Map of Midlothian, John Adair

- 1737 Visits Perthshire (Invermay).
- 1738 The doocot is built on the escarpment edge terminating the vista along the central *allée*.
- 1739 Travels to Inverness visiting Gordon castle, Fochabers and Duff castle. A 'great storm' – "most of my old trees were destroyed" [at Penicuik]. Roger Gale and Dr Knight, one of the founders of the Society of Antiquaries, visit Mavisbank ... Gale writes "you would think yourself rather in a valley near Tivoli than Edenborough".
- 1740 Allan Ramsay refers to a walk through the woodland garden between the house and walled garden.
- 1741 *Schem of Improvements* at Penicuik written. Develops Hurley ponds and begins the park at Penicuik. Visits England and Corby castle again.
- 1742 At Penicuik, he cuts the tunnel named Hurley cave and forms the gateway to Hurley ponds and moor, and continues with the parks, finishing them in 1743. 50 beeches are transported from Mavisbank and planted on the east side of the "Avenue Bridge at Pennicuik on the south side of Knight's Law" and elsewhere (GD 18/1283). A further 300 beeches are transported from Mavisbank during 26th-29th December, with 55 trees planted on the east and south sides of the "Garden near the Cave of Hurley & over against it in Brunstane side" (GD 18/1283; PH&PFS v1)
- 1743 Beeches are transported from Mavisbank and planted on the Dovecoat Crest(?), the "brae beneath the loch" (apparently referring to the slopes to the south of Hurley pond); and, along with two chestnuts, around the entry to Hurley Cave (GD 18/1283; PH&PFS v1).
- 1746 Enlarges the pond in Mavisbank circular walled garden. According to his own account, Clerk finishes his improvements to Mavisbank.
- 1748 The landscape and the house in its setting would have been viewed from paths or walks. One of these walks is described this year by Allan Ramsay in his *Epistle Written from Mavisbank*.
- ... along the margin of the Burn  
 Wher fishes will divert your Eye  
 While jumping up to catch a fly" ...  
 until it reached the garden where  
 art adds life to Nature's grace.
- Clerk writes to his wife, Janet Ingles confirming that Mavisbank its grounds and indentures and his Edinburgh house are disposed to her for lifrent returning to James Clerk and his heirs on her death. This letter also contains a reference to Mavisbank "at no time depend it for the chief residence of my family". He also sets down several advices to his wife the first being to discourage members of the family from settling down at Mavisbank.
- 1750 Allan Ramsay's poem *Verses Adressed To The Mavis Well Which Flows In the Gardens Of Mavis Bank* apparently referring to the fountain at the centre of the circular pond in the walled garden.
- 1750s The first of the Lasswade paper mills (Polton/Springfield) was established beside the North Esk, this together with the local coal mines indicates the degree to which the valley was becoming industrialised by the mid 18th century. Such industry will have impacted on the character of Mavisbank as a rural retreat and may have discouraged Clerk's direct descendants from using the house, even in the summer.
- 1751 Clerk builds Knight's Law Tower at Penicuik.





1752-55 *Military Survey of Scotland, General William Roy*

Memorandum, Sir John Clerk (GD18/1284) – containing hints and advice on gardening and tree planting – see section 2.7.7.

1752-55 General William Roy extends the Military Survey of Scotland to include the Lowlands and southern Scotland. The map records Mavisbank house and landscape as Sir John Clerk left them ‘completed’ and is the best and most detailed representation of Mavisbank in the mid 18th century, apparently accurate in its representation of features. The major part of the landscape is shown wooded, with open spaces within it, extending as far as the east end of the canal. The three *allées* of the goosefoot are clearly shown extending from a rectangle of open ground in front of the house. The central *allée* is aligned at the south-west on Clerk’s *Roman Station*, represented by a small circle, and on the house itself and the courtyard formed between the two pavilions. The central *allée* includes the canal (scaling shorter than present lochan) and terminates at a junction of field boundaries that remain on later OS maps and is the site of the doocot (not evident on Roy). The north *allée* terminates at a building in open ground just beyond the boundary of the planted landscape, although the map features here are not clearly defined (could this building possibly be doocot at the end of wrong avenue?). The south *allée* extends through open ground east of the planted area of the landscape. North and south approaches are shown, the north on a slightly different alignment to the present and the south on the line of the old drive, joining a road running south from Loanhead and then to the north of the Bilston burn (ie. to the north of present road and bridge). The circular walled garden is shown divided into quarters by paths, with a perimeter path and central circular pond with path, and with a rectangular compartment to the south-west. An axial path runs SW-NE through the two garden areas and appears to extend further NE to the centre of a circular space at the edge of the wooded area. Two paths descend the slope between house and walled garden in the form of a saltire, equating to the line of a surviving derelict path and part of the present south drive route.

1753 Publication of *Vitruvius Scoticus* by William Adam including *The East Front of Mavisbank House Towards the Court ...*



1766 *A Plan of Edinburgh and Places adjacent*, John Laurie

- 1755 *List of trees growing in the enclosures at Mavisbank*: the best record of exactly what was planted at Mavisbank at the end of the Baron Clerk phase, totalling 15,412 trees of seventeen different kinds. (GD18/1285 – see section 2.7.7)

Sir John Clerk 2nd baronet dies and is succeeded as the 3rd baronet by his eldest son James. The house and landscape passed to his wife, Janet Inglis, and it is likely that it fell into a state of quiescence during her tenure.

- 1760 29 January. Janet Ingles dies (aged c73 years) and Mavisbank passes to the 3rd baronet James Clerk. Up until his mother's death James restricted his work at Penicuik to garden maintenance, completion of the terrace walling (1756), introducing the Chinese gates (1758) and building the Ramsay Monument (1759). After the death of his mother he turned more attention to Penicuik House.

- 1761 Penicuik policies are probably redesigned and Old Penicuik House pulled down to be replaced by a new house. (PH&PFS v1 1999)

November James Clerk conveys that part of the Barony of Loanhead that contained Mavisbank estate including the mansion house (but excluding the coal mining interest beneath the property) to his cousin Mr Robert Clerk (Edinburgh merchant who may have been born at Mavisbank c1745); the two men shared a paternal grandfather. Mr Robert Clerk paid Sir James Clerk £5000 for Mavisbank. (SRO GD/18/1770, 1771)

- 1762 Fragmentary note of estimate of the cost of “communications at Mavisbank designed to be raised a story higher”.

- 1763 *A Map of Mid-Lothian*, John Laurie, with south to the top of the map. Shows *Meavisbank* in a landscape densely planted with trees without much detail, with an approach from Loanhead. No avenues are shown. To the east a tower stands in open country, which is likely to represent the doocot, although the house faces towards a straight section of the river, rather than the tower, and no canal is shown: Roman hill and walled gardens also are absent.

- 1766 *A Plan of Edinburgh and Places adjacent*, John Laurie. Shows *Meavisbank* again with a densely planted landscape, with just one broad central avenue and a long oval pond within it; the walled gardens, Roman hill and doocot are not shown. Two clearings are shown



1763 *A Map of Mid-Lothian*, John Laurie (south to the top of the map)

within the woods south of the avenue, which Debois conjectured, by comparison with Roy, suggests a *ferme ornée* with thickened hedgerows along the fence lines. Planting extends to the boundary running north from Glenkevock, with open ground to the east. North of the house two more enclosures in the trees are shown, with the tree planting extending to the Lasswade-Loanhead road on the north.

1775 There is some evidence that the formal landscape continued until around this time although when it started to transition to a naturalistic style is not clear. For present purposes we continue with the period dates in MTLA 2005.

### 2.4.3 Phase 3 1775(?) to 1840, the natural-style landscape

This period is difficult to define because it is not clear how much the landscape changed in the later 18th century before sold out of the Clerk family. We have assumed that the transition of the policies into an informal romantic landscape was gradual. The process of change that had begun when Robert Clerk opened up the courtyard and introduced the carriage circle continued as the formal wooded landscape was transformed into natural style landscape. A key feature was the formation of the east drive driven from the Kevock end of the landscape on a long approach past the canal remodelled as a naturalistic lochan to the east front of the villa.

There are no proposals plans of how the landscape was planned in the early 19thC but later mapping shows that modifications included:

- Redesign of the canal from a narrow rectangle to the wider and longer natural-looking pond or lochan with a small island that now exists.
- Clearance of much of the wilderness between the lochan and villa to create parkland with clear views to the water between a scattering of parkland trees.
- Extensive tree planting at the east end of the landscape.
- New stables built to the south of the walled garden by the confluence of the North Esk and the Bilston Burn.
- The south drive – probably a service drive rather than a designed approach – realigned south of its original route (1840), necessitating the removal of the north-west part of the rectangular walled garden (with south-east part removed on river side).
- The introduction of apartments to the rear of the Adam/Clerk villa required the redesign of the forecourt and the introduction of retaining walls to create flat building platforms for the extensions.

There is no evidence that the weirs on the North Esk were formed as part of the 19thC landscape improvements but instead done to manage the flow of the water to Polton paper mills. The change of the circular walled garden (and south-east part of rectangular garden) to its present horse-shoe shape is likely to have occurred about this time.

1782 James Clerk (3rd baronet) dies without issue and is succeeded by his brother, George.

1784 George Clerk (4th baronet) dies, succeeded by his son, John.

1786 *A plan of the Barony of Loanhead* (SRO:RHP22602) commissioned by Sir John Clerk (5th baronet), surveyed by J Stevenson. The plan excludes Mavisbank house and policies, apart from the doocot on the lip of the valley, the north lodge and the start of the north drive at Loanhead.



1786 *A plan of the Barony of Loanhead, J Stevenson; detail showing doocot and setting of east end of the landscape (SRO:RHP22602, with permission of Sir Robert Clerk)*



c1786 A painting of Mavisbank house seen from the canal, now at Strathtyrum house near St Andrews, Fife (over page; the painting probably passed from Clerks to the Cheapes of Strathtyrum as part of a marriage settlement), is believed to date from about this time, showing the designed landscape in a state of transition. The painting is attributed to J[ulius] C[æsar] Ibbetson [1759-1817] and dated 1880 on the fame, although this attribution is questioned on account of the style and primitive perspective and very likely earlier than 1800 on account of the state of the landscape. The main axis, with the wooded Roman hill, house and narrow canal, is central in the view. However, the enclosing walls around the courtyard (if they ever existed) are gone, the courtyard parterre has been replaced by grass and a looped drive, and the woodlands appear to have been thinned or cleared, and the avenue trees have been spaced out, at least on the north. The painting shows a landscape that is a transition from John Clerk's well-treed formal landscape to a more natural style.

*Mavisbank seen along the canal, attributed to J C Ibbetson and dated 1880 but both unlikely, possibly c1786 (Strathtyrum House, photo William Kay)*

A second Strathtyrum painting, in Ibbetson's style and correctly attributed, shows a long view from a high viewpoint in the east (from the direction of Polton House) showing Mavisbank house set in woodland with the river to the left and a group of women and children, plus cows, in the foreground and the Pentland hills in the background. The costumes of the figures in the second painting suggest a date of c1800. The extent of woodland is significant, but the painting is otherwise is uninformative.

1798 John Clerk 5th baronet dies, succeeded by his son, George.

c1800 George Clerk commissions J C Ibbetson to paint picturesque landscape of Rosslyn Castle (NGS Catalogue *Rosslyn, Country of Painter and Poet*). This possibly coincides with the Strathtyrum painting (view from south-east) which may have been painted as part of a wider commission.

View of Mavisbank from the south-east, J C Ibbetson, c1800 (Strathtyrum House, photo William Kay)



- 1814 May Robert Clerk dies at Mavisbank. His wife had predeceased him and there appear to have been no children. He had a considerable personal fortune at the time of his death.
- 1815 Graeme Mercer (born 4 July 1764) buys Mavisbank. Mercer came from a distinguished Perthshire family. He entered the Bengal Service as assistant surgeon, was the East India Company's Resident (surgeon) at Scindiah's court, and secretary to the Marquis of Wellesley in India, accompanying Lord Lake as a diplomatic agent c1805. Mercer returned from India to take up residence at Mavisbank house.
- 1828 Sharp Greenwood & Fowler's map is the first to show the east drive running from the direction of Kevock Mill. Otherwise the landscape planting is shown fragmented and lacks convincing detail, the house, for example, facing the river rather than a small rectangle representing the canal or lochan.
- 1834 Johnson and Gellatly's map generally lacks detail with no avenue shown and no clear alternative structure to the landscape, but does show a new bridge across the Esk to the south of the Bilston burn, with the old road still serving the end of the south drive, but no dairy or walled garden are shown.



1834 Johnson and Gellatly's map



1828 Sharp Greenwood & Fowler's map

The changes to the designed landscape are shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 6" maps, surveyed in 1852 (below).

1841 Graeme Mercer dies unmarried aged 77 and Mavisbank is sold, although there is some confusion regarding who purchases it. According to the valuation rolls and census of 1851 a John Dinning or Denning, Solicitor of Customs in Scotland, was the proprietor and resident of Mavisbank house.

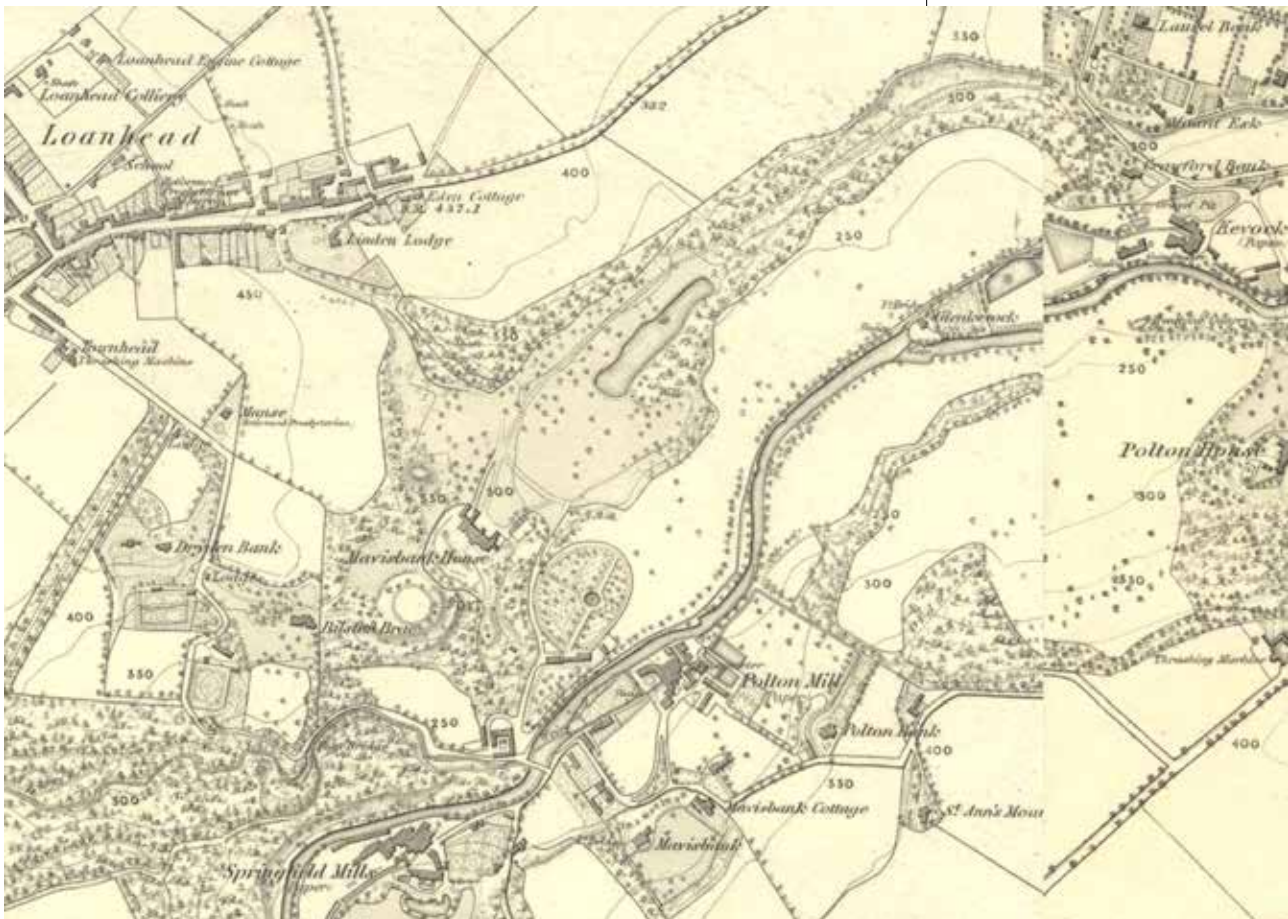
The end notes to the *Memoirs* state that a George Clerk Arbuthnot (Liverpool merchant) acquired Mavisbank in 1842 and that the Crown Charter in his favour is dated 1843. George Clerk Arbuthnot's name does not appear on the Valuation Rolls until 1855 and on the census until 1861 and 1871.

Clarification regarding who was living at Mavisbank would help to determine the dates of some of the changes. During the 1830s, 1840s and first half of the 1850s the valuation rolls and census indicate that Mavisbank was occupied by wealthy but elderly men and it seems unlikely (though not impossible) that they would have instigated major changes. It seems most likely that Mercer presided over changes between 1815 and 1835 or that Clerk Arbuthnot was responsible.

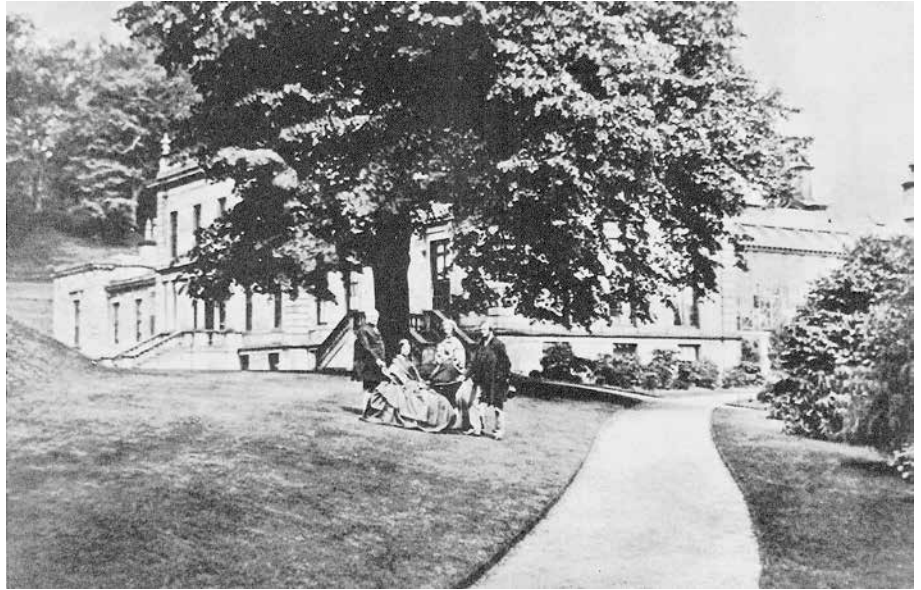
#### 2.4.4 Phase 4 1840 to 1877, the Victorian landscape

1852 1st edition Ordnance Survey (6" to 1 mile) map surveyed 1852, engraved 1856. The first large scale mapping of Scotland shows the policies in detail, only improved by the 25" map in 1892. It shows the landscape transformed into a natural style layout with the valleyside planted with woodland, as are areas south of the house and between house and walled garden. North and south wings are shown either side of the house behind the quadrant arcades. The game larder and

*1st edition Ordnance Survey  
 (6" map) surveyed 1852,  
 engraved 1856*



1860s Photograph from the south showing west and south sides of the house with path to south drive woodland or shrubberies



summerhouse are mapped in this area but not annotated. Most of the rest is parkland with scattered trees, with a distinction between the upper parkland – including between the house and lochan, Roman hill and slopes north-west of the house – all shown stippled as *Parks and Ornamental Ground* (OS Key), and the fields along the south-east boundary which are one unfenced area of open land, presumably grazing, with a few widely spaced trees and trees along the riverside boundary. The middle river terrace bank is shown as parkland and sparsely planted. The north drive is shared with Linden Lodge and has two lodges at its entrance on the east side of Loanhead. At the house end, a service drive runs parallel with the final approach to a small court on the north of the north pavilion.

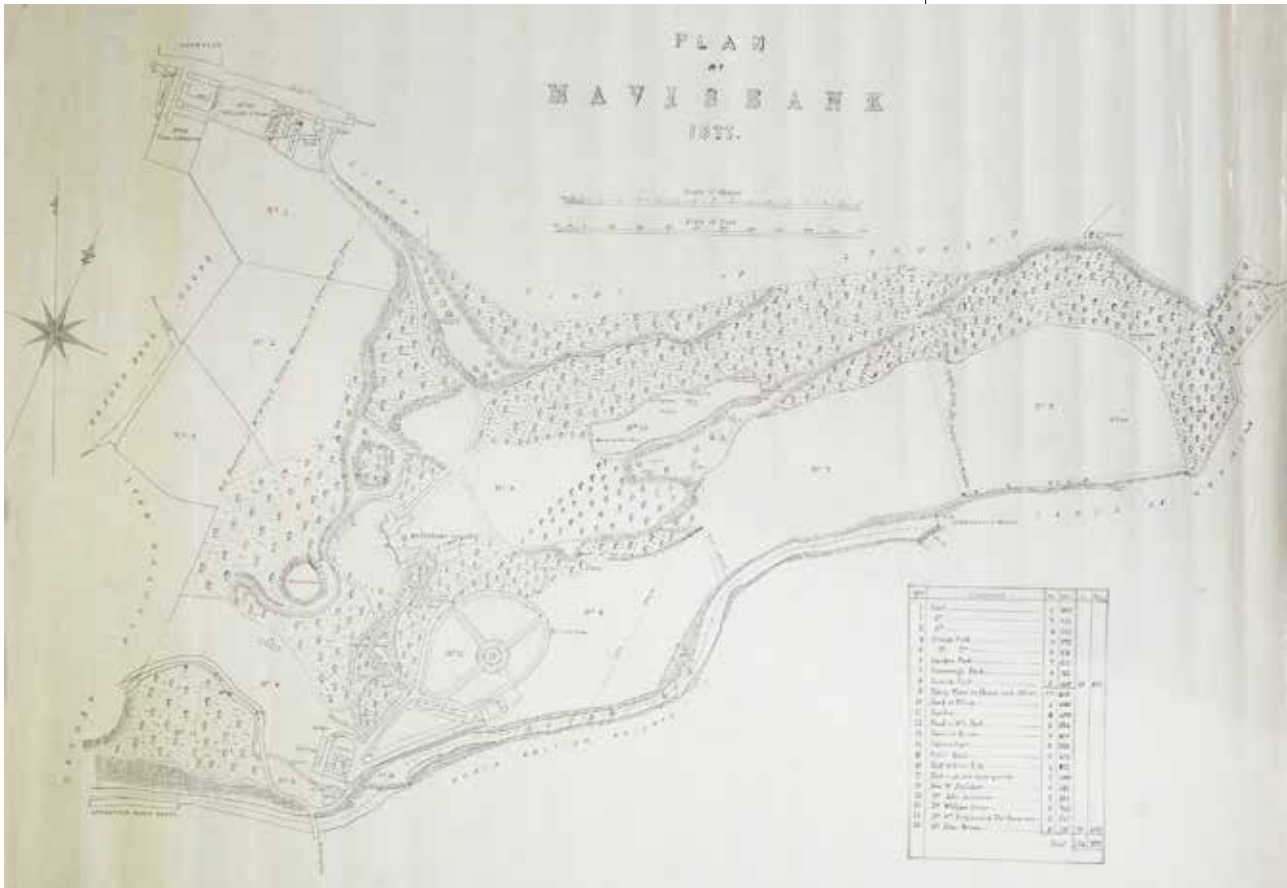
The south drive now passes a new stables courtyard building immediately adjoining the Polton Road on the north side of Bilston burn, before skirting the walled gardens and doubling back to approach the house and east pavilion from the north-east, with a branch continuing to join the north drive. The new east drive makes a long and fairly straight approach from Kevock Road, where there is a lodge with large rectangular garden. The walled gardens have been reduced to their present horseshoe and triangular shapes (with new bothies between the two compartments), probably due to the realignment of the North Esk and construction of two weirs to feed mill lades to Polton paper mills. Further change came with the construction of the Esk Valley or Polton Branch of the Peebles Railway through the North Esk valley that began running in April 1867, operated by the North British Railway.

The canal has been reformed to a wider and possibly longer pond or lochan and all signs of avenue planting have disappeared. The terraced form of the main Roman hill is indicated, annotated *Fort*, separated from lower terracing between hill and house by a haha or terrace wall, that extends to the north and south. The doocot is not shown, although obviously present at this time.

1855 George Clerk Arbuthnot and family at Mavisbank.

1860s A number of photographs show the Clerk Arbuthnot family (probably) in the grounds of Mavisbank, including two shown here.

From the west (above): parkland runs up to the house with scattered mature trees that may date from John Clerk 2nd baronet's time. A path from the South drive woodland / shrubberies runs towards the south side of the house through short mown grass. Shows a family group of four.



From the east (right): shows east front of the house and pavilions with trees on the slopes of Roman hill behind to the west and north. Shows a couple with a pony and worker.

*Plan of Mavisbank, 1877 (SRO:RHP2.604 with permission of Sir Robert Clerk)*

**2.4.5 Phase 5 1877 to 1954, the institutional landscape**

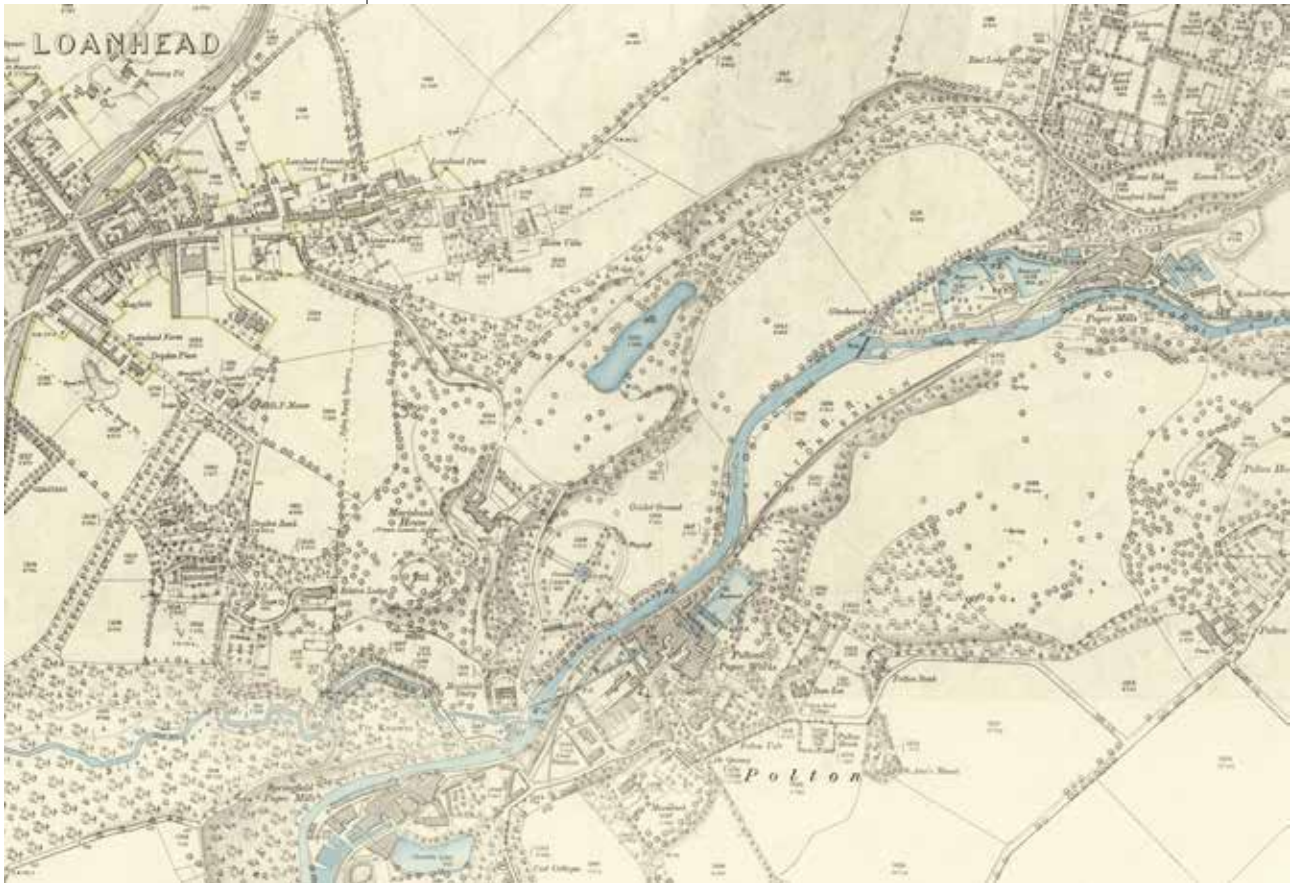
1877 Mavisbank House sold to Heritages Association Ltd and purchased by the Mavisbank Company Ltd (registered as a company on 12 November 1877) for £25,037 in December. Mavisbank becomes a *Private Lunatic Asylum* (as shown on 1892-3 6" & 25" OS maps) or mental hospital. The company expenditure sheet shows that from the beginning sums from £100 to £300 were spent on alterations and improvements to the building and grounds.



*1860s Photograph showing East front of the house*

*Plan of Mavisbank, 1877* (SRO:RHP2.604) is clearly redrawn from the OS mapping by then available but includes additional information or notes not on any published maps. The date of the plan and the fact that it shows the property divided into 22 areas with a Contents schedule of areas and acreages suggests that it was produced in connection with the sale to the Mavisbank Company in 1877. The plan distinguishes between wooded or tree planted areas and open ground or parkland, but individual trees are not shown. Three different symbols are used to show planted areas, but it is not clear if they represent existing, new or proposed planting, or types of tree cover, or even if they are an accurate spatial representation of what was present at that time. Some areas shown planted are devoid of trees by the time of the 1892-3 OS maps. Some parkland areas are shown as if evenly planted, eg. north side of Roman hill and Clumps area. In particular the central parkland is shown with some formality with open ground funnelling towards the lochan enclosed by solid planting on the north side of the water body and on south side in the area of the old farm etc. The southerly parkland is now shown divided into three parks:





1st edition Ordnance Survey  
25" County Series map, re-  
surveyed 1892-3, published  
1894

Garden Park (with a *Cricket House*), Cummings Park and Kevock Park. The *Dove Cot* is shown. At the north of Garden Park or crossing it are shown a *Spring*, *Mouth of Day Level*, *Day Level* and *Pipe Track*, all associated with mine drainage or water supply to paper mills. The lochan is shown in its widened state with notes about springs feeding it from the north, the principal inlet in the north-east corner and the outfall in the south-west corner. Roman hill is annotated *Roman Camp*. The *Summer House* is noted without its precise location in the woods south of the house, and the game larder is drawn but not annotated, as is the gazebo in the triangular walled garden. On the east side of the main walled garden, a *Cricket House* is shown.

The Polton Road has been re-routed to the south of the Bilston burn to a new bridge across the North Esk, with part of Sheep Park and a pond between the burn and road. The North British Railway south of the river is shown for the first time.

- 1892 Publication of *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, 1676-1755*, edited by John Miller Gray. The memoirs include passing references to Mavisbank, particularly to Clerk living there during the summer months, but are more concerned with Clerk's improvements to Penicuik.
- 1892-3 1st edition Ordnance Survey 25" County Series map (above), re-surveyed 1892-3, published 1894, confirms much of the information on the 1852 6" map, with greater clarity but little change or new detail. The parkland retains a scatter of trees which at this scale represent actual individual trees. It shows terraces with some planting across the east front of the house. Etchings from this period provide further information about the setting of and approach to the house.

c1896 Mary Burton becomes head gardener at Mavisbank asylum with responsibility for engaging patients in gardening as an aid to their cure, a post she held for 38 years.

Mary Elizabeth Burton (1865-1944) can lay claim to being the first woman in Scotland to obtain a post as head gardener and over her long career, her professionalism and horticultural expertise encouraged a growing acceptance of women gardeners in the first half of the 20th century. She was expert in the cultivation of flowers, fruit and vegetables, particularly tomatoes and potatoes, and a prominent figure within the Scottish Horticultural Association before its amalgamation with the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, and subsequently became a valued member and office-bearer of the society, and later with the Royal Horticultural Society.

In the second half of the 19th century emphasis began to be placed on a gardener's skill based on theoretical as well as practical knowledge and the provision of more formalised practical training and education. The mechanisms put in place for the provision of horticultural education and practical experience, however, excluded women, whose only role in professional gardening was as weeding women. So Burton of necessity was largely self-taught, probably by gaining practical horticultural experience from working in the gardens of her great aunt at Liberton and her uncle at Duddingston and by attending evening classes at Heriot-Watt College.

Burton's opportunity to break into professional gardening came as a result of her great aunt's extensive social circle. Professor Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) was a close friend and around 1896 Mary was invited to lay out the garden at Craufurd Bank, a large country house at the east end of Mavisbank policies, which Geddes had purchased to convert into a retreat for members of the Edinburgh Old Town community. After several months there, her work came to the attention of Dr George Wilson, Medical Superintendent of the Mavisbank private mental asylum, who engaged her to try and interest the lady patients in gardening as a cure. So successful was Miss Burton in her efforts that she was appointed head gardener soon after her engagement at Mavisbank, prompting claims that Burton was the first woman in Scotland to obtain a post as head gardener. By 1907, the private patients at Saughton Hall Asylum in Gorgie had been moved to Mavisbank and the institution was renamed New Saughton Hall.



*Mary E Burton, from c1896 head gardener at New Saughton Hall, in glasshouse c1914*



*Mary E Burton, centre, and her gardeners at New Saughton Hall c1914*

*New Saughton Hall,  
Loanhead: early 20thC  
postcard of Mavisbank seen  
from the west end of the  
lochan*



Burton's work at New Saughton Hall was extensive and included responsibility for the walled kitchen garden of over four acres, and was required to provide the hospital with vegetables, fruit and flowers on a daily basis. One description survives of the kitchen garden during her tenure:

The fine brick walls are now clothed with healthy fruit trees, which yield good returns. Large brakes are filled with small fruit, among which Black Currants take a leading place. Vegetables in variety are liberally cultivated, as there are many mouths to fill. Numerous ample flower borders are tastefully planted with the cream of hardy and half-hardy plants ... tomatoes are very largely and very successfully grown, all in boxes." (Chas Comfort, *Some Scottish Horticulturists*, The Scottish Gardener and Northern Forester, 7 November 1908, p.697)

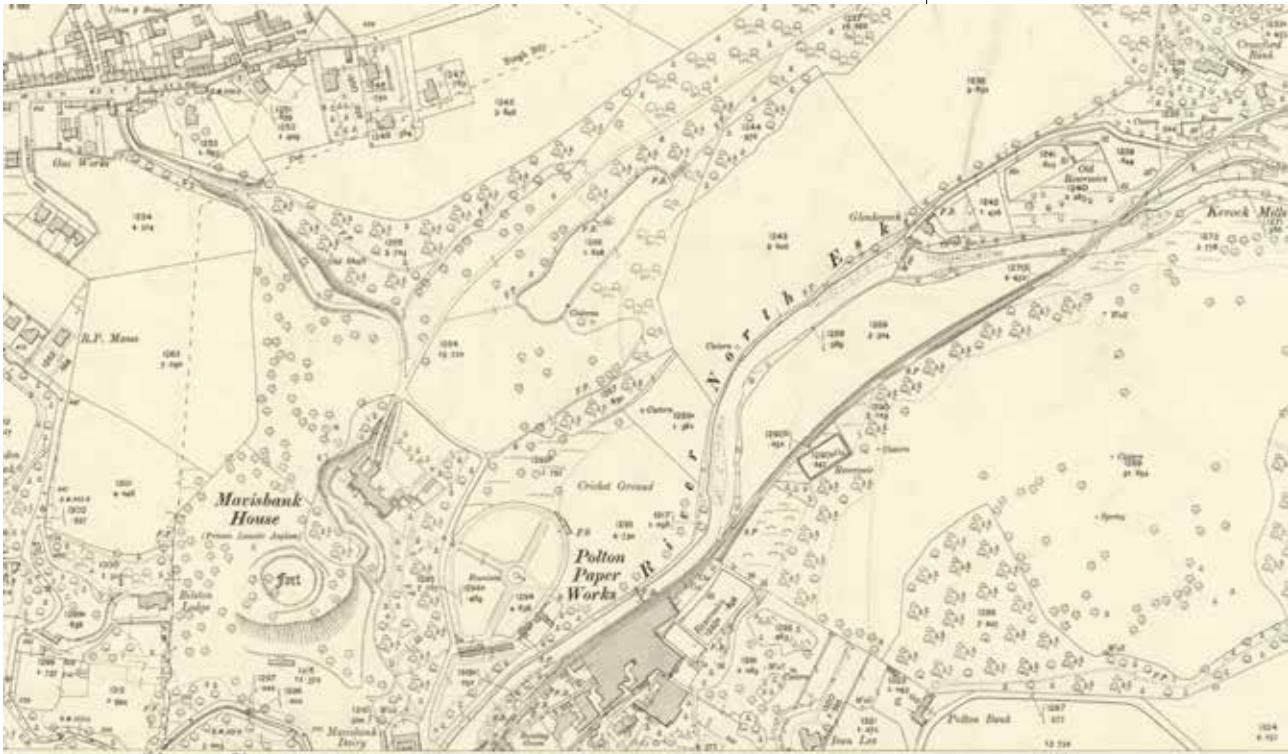
In addition to the productive garden, Burton was responsible for over 100 acres of the policies, including maintenance of a golf course, the cricket pitch, croquet and tennis lawns, and the day-to-day management of her gardening team.

Burton eventually took up residence on the estate and introduced sheep, pigs and poultry, with as many as 300 chickens reared annually.

Burton eventually retired from New Saughton Hall after 38 years' service, continuing at the age of 70 to undertake private work in laying

*c1910 Mavisbank House seen  
from the park*





*2nd edition OS 25" County Series (revised in 1905-6, issued 1908)*

- out gardens. Her considerable contribution was recognised in 1934, when she became the first woman to be awarded the Associate of Honour medal by the Royal Horticultural Society for her distinguished service to horticulture (an award limited to 100 at any one time). In Scotland, her devotion to the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society was rewarded when she was nominated for the Patrick Neill Medal in 1942, again, the first female recipient of the prize. (Based on Deborah A Reid 2020, *Mary Elizabeth Burton: a Horticultural Pioneer*, pp17-22 The Pleasaunce / Scotland's Garden & Landscape Heritage Feb 2020)
- 1906 The Mavisbank Company balance sheet shows that a large sum – £4807, equating to about £2.5 million today – was spent. New buildings erected and alterations to old buildings under agreement with Sir John Batty Tuke. The house was renamed New Saughton Hall in this period, after the asylum's original home in Saughton Hall, at Saughton Park on the west of Edinburgh. Tuke was a prominent figure in mental health care and seems to have financed the extension either personally (the subsequent schedules of payment indicate he was re paid annually) or by a charitable society.
- 1908 2nd edition OS 25" County Series (revised in 1905-6, issued 1908) shows a similar general arrangement to the 1894 edition. Photographs from this period show a much enlarged Mavisbank house facing onto terraced close-mown lawns.
- 1914 3rd edition OS 25" County Series (revised in 1913) (not included) shows the enlarged Mavisbank house, renamed *New Saughton Hall*, within a landscape that had been modified to accommodate the extensive new wings. The terraces were removed and replaced by a gentle slope. The final approach was realigned to the middle of the slope, curving gently round from the north, terminating in a circular turning head in front of the entrance steps. This layout has survived to the present day.
- 1953 Mavisbank Company goes into voluntary liquidation bringing to an end a period of good investment, expert horticulture and husbandry, and specialist therapeutic use in the landscape that could be seen as one of its finest periods.

1956 East front of Mavisbank house, viewed from north (HES)



### 2.4.6 Phase 6, 1954 to present, decline, fragmentation and revival

1955-56 The property was sold by the Liquidator for the Company to various purchasers, the major part including the house and policies to the east going to Dr W M Harrowes (former superintendent of the asylum), with access rights for the south and east drives. The north drive and land to west of drive and house and the Roman hill area went to J & J McCall (Loanhead Farm), while the walled gardens, Garden cottage and lower south drive went to Helen Clements (aka Helen M Y Collett). A plan dated 26 April 1955 records these land areas. The north lodge had earlier been sold to John Morris (December 1953) and the east lodge and east drive entrance sold to Barbara Aitcheson (or Pillman) (Sept 1954).

Dr Harrowes procured a grant for the demolition of the former hospital wings and mid 19th century apartments from the Ministry of Works. This restored the original appearance of the house and the original name of Mavisbank was reinstated.

1950s (late) Harrowes's Mavisbank property sold to Mrs Willis Stevenson.

1969 Wayleave granted to South of Scotland Electricity Board by A Stevenson for overhead line on poles across field 4356.

1971 Date of listing as LB7404. Mavisbank house, (formerly New Saughtonhall), including service wing, terraces, retaining walls, and steps. Also walled gardens, including gates and gatepiers (LB44166); and gazebo (LB7387). All Category A. Plus Ice house (LB44165) and Game larder (LB44164); both Category B.

1973? East front of Mavisbank house (HES)

1973 Mavisbank house was gutted by fire, destroying the interiors and roofs, and the landscape fell into decline.



- 1977 November. Mavisbank house and its policies were designated a conservation area by Midlothian District Council. The conservation area was enlarged to its present extent by the inclusion of land on the south side of the valley in February 1992. In May 1993 Historic Scotland classified the area as outstanding.
- 1979 Mrs Willis Stevenson sells house and land to her daughter, Mrs Jean Martin, resident in USA.
- October. Jean Martin sells house and pavilions separately to three owners in USA, all fictitious or unknown: James Brown, south pavilion (with access rights southwards over old farm track to Polton); Bryan Jackson, north pavilion (with shared access rights as in 1955-56 above); Bruce Jamieson, Mavisbank main block (with access rights as North pavilion).
- September. Mavisbank house doocot listed (LB7386).
- 1982 Walled garden purchased by Harley Weston and Civic Trees Ltd who operated a tree nursery in the garden.
- 1985 British Coal announce their intention to extract coal from seams lying both near and directly under the house. Engineers Babbie Geotechnical & Babbie Shaw & Morton appointed by Scottish Office to advise on possible subsidence effects – see *Mavisbank House Structural Protection against Mining Subsidence* report.
- 1987 Midlothian Council announces its intention to demolish the property; the Secretary of State issues an emergency Repairs Notice under Section 97 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 73. In April 1987, the Historic Buildings Branch of the Scottish Development Department stabilised the house.
- Publication of *An Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland* by the Countryside Commission for Scotland and Historic



1983 Mavisbank house,  
Roman hill and part of walled  
garden, SC01680788 (HES)

*1998 Mavisbank house,  
Roman hill and walled garden  
in use as a plant nursery,  
SC01734131 (HES)*



- Buildings and Monuments Directorate, Scottish Development Department, prepared by Land Use Consultants; includes Mavisbank in volume 5.
- 1989 Lothian Building Preservation Trust undertakes feasibility study into restoration of Mavisbank house.
- 1991 January. Mavisbank (New Saughton Hall), house, doocot, policies and earthwork scheduled (Scheduled Ancient Monument). Removed as a Scheduled Monument in October 2016.
- 1992 Debois *Historic Landscape Survey* commissioned by Historic Scotland.
- 1995 The policies were acquired from Mrs Martin by Historic Scotland.
- 1997 March. Date of listing Mavisbank house, dairy (comprising south lodge, the coach house and the barn), including gatepiers, gates and walled yard (LB44163).
- 2002 Feasibility Study and Economic Market Analysis commissioned by the Edinburgh Green Belt Trust, funded by the Architectural Heritage Fund and Midlothian Council.
- 2003 Mavisbank featured in Series 1 of the BBC 2 TV programme *Restoration* and was a Finalist. Mavisbank reached the final round of public voting but lost out to Manchester's Victoria Baths. Thirty buildings featured in ten regional heats, with money raised from the telephone vote being added to the prize fund. Viewers chose which of a selection of the United Kingdom's most important, but neglected, buildings should be awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant of £3m.
- 2004 HES undertook drainage works in the Kevock park area.
- 2005 The Mavisbank Trust, a subsidiary of the Edinburgh Green Belt Trust (ELGT), commissioned and developed proposals to renovate the house for use as a public venue and to restore the designed landscape, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Architectural Heritage Fund and Midlothian Council. Community consultations by Mavisbank Trust but no HLF grant bid submitted whilst Trust awaited the outcome of HES 2007 project options appraisal (LDN Architects) and Mavisbank Landscape Options Appraisal (Marta McGlynn Associates).

*Mavisbank House and Policies Conservation Plan*, Simpson & Brown Architects, Mark Turnbull Landscape Architects and others.

- 2006 August *Mavisbank Conservation Area Appraisal* was published by Midlothian Council.
- 2011 Historic Scotland prepared a *Landscape Management Plan 2011-2016* for the area of land under the ownership of Scottish Ministers as managed by Historic Scotland, which represents the core of the designed landscape excluding a number of peripheral areas now in private ownership. This LMP was based on a document prepared by Land Use Consultants (LUC) on behalf of Historic Scotland in March 2010. The final version of the LMP takes forward the preferred option of an 'As found minimal approach' as modified through a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process.
- 2011-12 Mavisbank Trust consulted community and prepared revised project plans and business plan.
- 2012 Mavisbank Trust, Historic Scotland, ELGT and Midlothian Council signed a Concordat to jointly work to take forward the restoration of Mavisbank. The Scottish Government committed £500k towards the project, time limited to three years.
- 2013 Mavisbank Trust submitted a Stage 1 project grant application to HLF which was unsuccessful although the HLF recognised the importance of restoring Mavisbank and invited a re-submission.
- 2014 The Mavisbank Trust undertook various surveys and studies in support of a planning application to Midlothian Council to create car parking and a new access into Mavisbank from Lasswade Road to join the East drive.
- Mavisbank Trust carried out work to upgrade the riverside footpath from Polton to Lasswade and created two new access points into Mavisbank and paths within the grounds, together with signage and an interpretation panel. The Trust also undertook drainage and culvert work in the cricket field to alleviate flooding and damage to paths.
- 2016 Roman hill and policies de-scheduled.
- HES and Landmark Trust commenced working together towards a long term solution to save Mavisbank's heritage and restore the relationship between the house and the policies.
- 2017-19 Mavisbank Trust carried out LIDAR and photogrammetry surveys to create digital models of Mavisbank house and the landscape. Together with architectural and archaeological research this allowed the preparation of reconstruction drawings of the house exterior, a number of interior rooms and the landscape as it might have appeared in 1750.
- 2018 HES undertook slope stabilisation works to the bank below the doocot to reduce the risk of further landslips.
- 2018-19 Mavisbank Trust, ELGT and HES programme of community events in the policies and Loanhead to encourage awareness and use of the grounds.
- 2019 October HES and Landmark Trust submitted one of 146 expressions of interest to the Heritage Horizon award programme of the National Lottery Heritage Fund following a call for bids earlier in the year. Results were announced in December and eighteen bidders invited to interview in London in February 2020. Then twelve bidders including HES/Landmark Trust with Mavisbank bid invited to submit a Development Phase application by February 2021 (now delayed until year 2021-22).



## 2.5 Survey of designed landscape features (Gazetteer)

### 2.5.1 General

This section gives accounts of the main extant features of the landscape – buildings and other built structures, archaeological features, drives and paths, water bodies, woods and planted features and notable views, together with lost features.

Each individual feature in the survey has been given a reference number with a prefix letter describing its type as follows:

A = archaeological feature

B = built features (other than bridges) including estate buildings, walls etc

C = circulation feature (drives, paths, bridges and car parks)

P = planted feature, plantation or woodland compartment, gardens

W = water feature.

Survey photographs of the major features are included in the Gazetteer, together with key historical representations where they exist. To provide a comprehensive record of the landscape today, the survey includes modern features and recent buildings, which require to be considered under management as well as the historic features.

### 2.5.2 Archaeological features

The archaeological interest of Mavisbank lies predominantly in the surviving features that are evidence of the development of the landscape as a whole and the particular features of the 18th and 19th century landscape. These have been recorded in a parallel exercise to this CMP in the Archaeological Gazetteer by Addyman Archaeology (AA 2019), updating their 2004 gazetteer. That in turn incorporates features identified in the Debois 1992 survey.

There are no scheduled monuments at Mavisbank following the removal of Mavisbank from the schedule in 2016.

Since the AA gazetteer is available and many of the same features as in the archaeological gazetteer are included in the following designed landscape features – whether built, landform, water, circulation or planted features – no further archaeological coverage is included here. Information from the AA gazetteer is referred to and features cross-referenced where relevant in the following sections, as is data from the Debois survey.

### 2.5.3 Built features

(Plan 5)

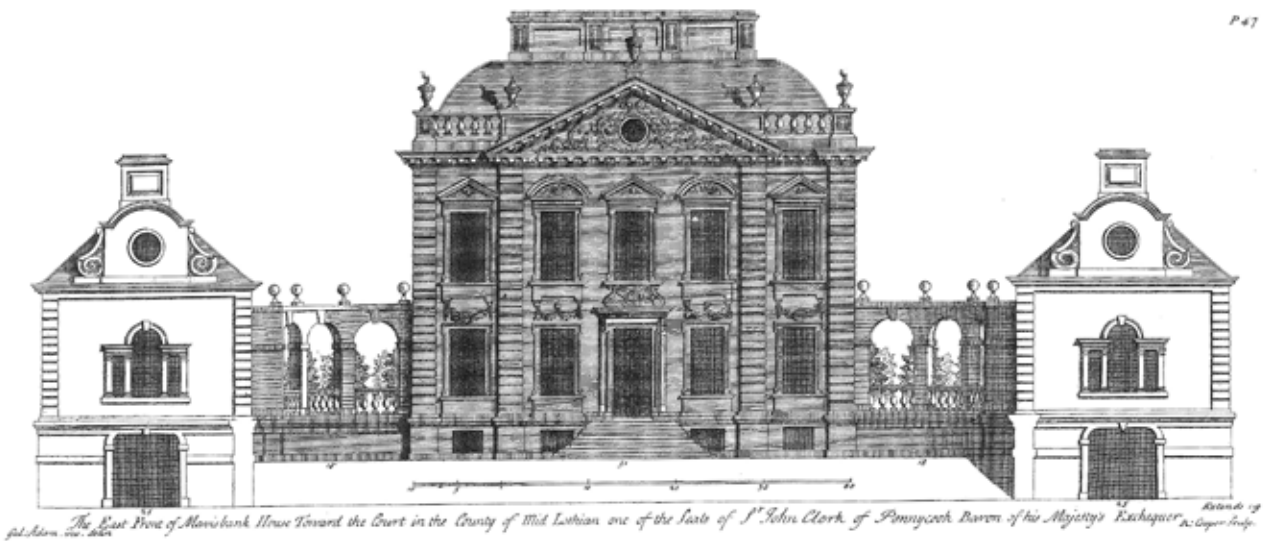
#### **B01 Mavisbank house & pavilions Listed Cat. A**

(based on HES List entry)



*B01 Mavisbank house, pavilions and forecourt, model by Simon Montgomery (1980s)*

A classical country house or villa comprising 2-storey over basement, 5-bay square plan *corps de logis*, with flanking quadrant screen walls curving forward and linking to symmetrically disposed rectangular plan single storey over basement pavilions; designed and built by Sir John Clerk of Penicuik and William Adam, from 1723 to 1727. Cream sandstone ashlar principal elevation and quadrants, rubble (formerly harled) walls to side and rear elevations, and pavilions, all with polished ashlar dressings and margins. Base course, eaves course, modillioned cornice at eaves, balustrade above with regularly spaced corniced and panelled dies surmounted by urns (missing 1996). Horizontally channelled strip pilasters framing centre 3 bays and clasping corners at principal and 1st floors, pilaster pedestals to outer left and right with Latin inscriptions. Margined window jambs



with cill and lintel courses forming grid pattern at principal floors to side and rear elevations of main block. Margined windows to screen walls and pavilions.

Principal elevation (north-east): splayed ashlar forestair rising to corniced entrance porch projecting at principal floor in centre bay; architraved doorpiece surmounted by armorial panel with flanking foliate scrolls. Lugged architraves to window at 1st floor in centre bay, and regularly fenestrated flanking bays; carved stone swags with masks over ground floor windows; alternate triangular and segmental arched pediments to 1st floor windows. Pediment with modillioned cornice over centre

Quadrant screen walls: 2 storey, 2-bay regularly fenestrated quadrant screen walls (with single storey rubble vaulted passage surviving to rear of the south wall) flank the principal elevation of main block, curving forward to pilastered corners, and down-swept to single bay sections adjoining pavilions.

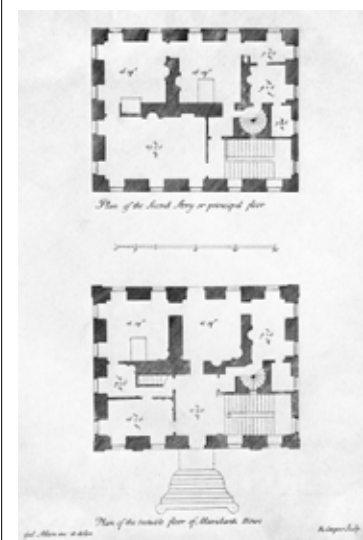
North pavilion: 2 x 1-bay, symmetrical principal elevations with string course at principal floor, margin and cornice at eaves, and horizontally-channelled pilasters clasping corners. Single bay elevation to north-east comprising basket-arched cart arch at basement, with Venetian window centred above, now brick-infilled with modern opening inserted at left. Decorative wallhead stack comprising corniced and panelled shaft over open-pedimented base with flanking foliate scrolls and blind oculus at centre. Regularly fenestrated south-east (courtyard) elevation. Matching wallhead stack with less elaborate scrolls centring south-west elevation.

South pavilion: mirrored image of above, with matching principal and south-west elevations; 3-storey south-east elevation; tall rendered brick chimney obscuring pilaster to outer right; segmental-arched openings with fluted keystones to sub-basement presiding over walled service courtyard enclosed by high rubble wall with monopitch service wing (possibly c1840) at right.

Most openings to main house now brick-infilled. Single 12-pane oak sash and case window with radial upper sash surviving in north quadrant; some 12 pane windows and shutters remain to pavilions. Roofs now removed. Single panelled, pilastered, and corniced polished ashlar multi-flue stack rising through centre of main block.

Retaining walls: extending to north and south at rear elevation of main block, and to east from service courtyard with doorway and steps immediately to east.

*William Adam, The East Front of Mavisbank House Toward the Court, from Vitruvius Scoticus 1812*



*William Adam, Plan of the Vestibule floor, and Plan of the Second Story or principal floor, Mavisbank House, from Vitruvius Scoticus 1812*

*B01 Mavisbank House, east front and part of north pavilion seen from the north*



Terraces, steps and gate-piers: garden walks on earth terraces leading to walled garden and 'Roman fort' to south and west respectively; sandstone steps to south walk; circular section gatepiers (caps missing) opposite north-west gateway to walled garden.



*B01 Mavisbank House, north pavilion*

Mavisbank is considered to be one of Scotland's most important country houses, the well-documented collaboration between William Adam and the lawyer-scholar, Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, resulted in a highly original design on a new site. Sir John's father had planned a house here, and a drawing of 1698 shows a plain square box with coupled chimneystacks perched on top of a tall piended roof. This became the basis, enriched and Palladianised, of the present house. John Baxter Senior was the mason contractor, and William Sylverstynne the stone carver. The house was recast circa 1840 with a symmetrical arrangement of large well-designed additions (possibly Thomas Hamilton) flanking the rear elevation to provide a drawing room and ball room (demolished 1954). It appears that the parterre within the principal courtyard was excavated at this time, and the cills of basement windows lowered with the forestair. Further extensions were added to the front of the pavilions in the 1880s when converted to a mental hospital and known as New Saughton Hall, but these were also demolished in 1954. Until recent consolidation work, the *corps de logis* retained many timber sash and case windows, in a 12-pane pattern to the principal floors, and 16 and 4-pane patterns to the basement, although it is likely that the majority of the multi-pane windows are from the 1840 re-casting. A photograph of circa 1956 shows a blind window at 1st floor displaying what appears to be the original 24 pane

*B01 Mavisbank House, west front seen from the lower part of Roman hill*



arrangement with thicker glazing bars. Since the fire of 1973, the house has lost some urns from the principal balustrade and pediment, and the ornate 19th century cast-iron balustrade to the principal forestair. It has also lost its roofs, essential to understanding the French and Dutch influence of the design. Of grey slate, they comprised a distinctive and unusual domical piended platform roof to the main block, piended and bell-cast roofs to pavilions with a monopitch to the service wing. A-group with doocot, gazebo, walled gardens, game larder & ice-house, dairy and East lodge (Kevock Road) – see separate entries.

As a feature in the landscape the house occupies a focal position that is evident today, as is typical for a country house, that becomes even more significant with understanding of the early to mid 18th century layout of the grounds, positioned as it is with Roman hill at its rear and with vistas extending from the main front and its external space. The integration of house and landscape layout is recognised as a particular strength of the landscape design here, as explained under following features and Section 3 analysis.

The plinths of the outer pilasters on the garden front carry letter-cut inscriptions. These add to our understanding of Clerk's intentions for the place, its character and his philosophy so are included here. The inscriptions have been edited and translated by Professor Alastair Small, Professor of Classics in the University of Edinburgh.

The south-east plinth inscription ...

Hanc in gremio resonantis silvae  
aquis hortis avium garritu  
caeterisque ruris honoribus  
undique residentem villam  
non magnificam non superbam  
at qualem vides  
commodam mundam genialem  
naturae parem socians artem  
sibi suisque  
O vitam placide  
et tranquille agendam  
designavit instruxitque  
D(ominus)  
I(ohannes) C(lerk)  
aerarii tribunus  
MDCCXXIV

Translation: "Sir John Clerk, Baron of the Exchequer, associating with himself and his family art which is the equal of nature, designed and built this villa, in the bosom of the resounding wood, resplendent everywhere with waters, gardens, the chattering of birds, and other charms [literally: honours] of the countryside, not magnificent or proud but such as you see it: comfortable, neat, genial. Oh life to be lived placidly and tranquilly! 1724."

The north-west plinth inscription ...

Parva Domus Nemorosa Quies Sis Tu Quoque Nostris  
Hospitium Laribus Subsidiumque Diu.  
Postes Flora Tuos Ornet, Pomonaque Mensas.  
Conferat Et Varias Fertilis Hortus Opes.  
Te Volucres Pictae Cingentes Voce Canora  
Relia Sola Canant Quae Sibi Tendit Amor.  
Floriferi Colles Dulces Mihi Saepe Recessus  
Dent, Atque Hospitibus Gaudia Plena Meis.  
Concedatque Deus, Nunquam Vel Sero Senescas  
Seroque Terrenas Experiare Vices.  
Integra Reddantur Quae Plurima Saecula Rodant,  
Detur Et Ut Senior, Pulchrior Eniteas.



B01 South-east plinth  
inscription



B01 North-west plinth  
inscription

Translation: "Little house, wooded retreat, may you be also a lasting home and support for our household gods. May Flora decorate your doorposts, and Pomona [the goddess of fruits] your tables, and may the fertile garden contribute its varied wealth. May the colourful [literally "painted" birds] that surround you sing with tuneful voice only the roundelays which love suggests to them. May the flowery hills often give sweet retreats to me and full joys to my guests. And may God concede that you grow old either never or late, and that you experience earthly changes late. And may what the numerous ages erode be restored intact, and may it be granted that the older you are, the more beautiful you may shine."

See P05 for forecourt, parterre etc.

### **B01a Former wings**

Extensions for a drawing room and ballroom were made to the rear in the 1840s.

Further major extensions to the house and pavilions were made during its use as a private lunatic asylum in the 1880s when it was known as New Saughton Hall. Both phases were demolished in 1954.



*B01a House with former wings c1910*

### **B01b Outbuildings / former outbuildings**

Two lean-to utilitarian buildings at house basement level against the retaining wall to the south side of the house forecourt; one of brick construction with cement render and corrugated iron roof, ruinous; the other only surviving with lower courses of masonry. An arched doorway (bricked-up) to the house basement in the higher retaining wall to the south-west. Further building remains at the upper level south of the main house.

Consolidation work to the south-east retaining wall below south pavilion carried out by HES in Jan–May 2015.

Other remains of small structures lie in the lower part of the wooded slope south-east of the house, as shown on the topographic survey.

### **B01c Palisade fence**

Galvanised steel palisade security fence 3.0m high enclosing the house and pavilion ruins; gates at centre of main front.

### **B02 Game larder & ice-house**

Listed Cat. B (LB44164); Cat A-group with house and other estate buildings

Square plan, later 19th century. Single storey, square plan game larder in droved cream sandstone ashlar; chamfered angles swept to square at eaves; hood moulded openings; cast iron under floor ventilator grilles; adjustable timber louvres as window openings on three sides and in upper part of door on north-west. Grey slate roof with overhanging eaves now removed.



*B02 Entrance to ice-house with game larder above*

*B01b Outbuildings / former outbuildings to south of forecourt*





*B02 Roofless game larder*

The opening to the ice-house which is under the game larder is in the earth bank on its south-east side in stone masonry with brick arch or tunnel vault to passage leading to a deep brick-lined chamber with a shallow domed roof (also brick) with central circular opening (to game larder floor). Note that the structure called *Ice house* formerly in HES listing (was LB44165, now removed from list) is a different structure and obviously not an ice-house – see B08 Vaulted store.



*B02 Shallow brick dome to ice-house chamber below floor to game larder*

First shown on 1854 6" OS map, apparently rectangular in plan, and on the 1854 6" OS map (very small) and 1892-3 25" OS map, clearly square.

**B03 Former summer-house**

A former building known only from maps and estate plan, lying in the woods 110m south of the house on a minor knoll on the side of the more prominent L04 ridge landform and on the east side of the old drive. It lies between Roman hill and the game-larder, and due north of the stables courtyard, and may be sited for a view of the hill although positioning of trees on the 19thC OS maps suggest a more open view southward.

The structure is annotated *Summer House* on the 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* (although the precise position of the building is unclear), and shown on the 1852 6" and 1892-3 25" OS maps without annotation, clearly on the west flank of the ridge as small diameter circle with a zigzag path leading to it from the game-larder, and similarly on 1905-6 and 1912-3 maps. The AA Gazetteer 2019 mapping shows and describes a position on the more prominent ridge top approx 20m to the north-east, as does the Debois 2004 survey, which does not equate with the OS maps location.



*B04 Walled garden, north quadrant centre left being part of the original circle of walls; east quadrant (distant right) with windows to former cricket pavilion (B09)*

*B04 Walled garden, north-west gate*



#### **B04 Walled garden, walls and gates**

Listed Cat. A (LB44166); Cat A-group with house and other estate buildings

Large horseshoe-plan walled garden with smaller triangular-plan walled garden adjoining to the south-west; gates to north-west, north-east and south-east with road access from former dairy to south-west; lean-to potting sheds on south boundary of main garden, now converted to house and garage. Ashlar sandstone with brick inner facing; flat ashlar cope, but of different ages with the north quarter the only survivor of the original circular wall.

North-west gateway to south drive: steps up to square-plan channelled sandstone ashlar gatepiers; moulded cornice supported by highly carved foliate scrolled consoles; decorative iron gates; flanking wrought-iron arrow-headed railings.

North-east gateway to Garden park: square-plan channelled ashlar sandstone with moulded ashlar cornice and square cap. Arrow-headed wrought-iron gates.

South-east gateway: droved sandstone; square-plan, chamfered with flat ashlar copes; wrought-iron gates (not in use).

The smaller triangular garden to the south-west includes the Gazebo (B06).

First shown as horse-shoe shape on 1854 6" OS map, but clearly shown as a perfect circle on Roy's map c1752 quartered by cross paths aligned on the gates, with paths hedged or tree-lined and a central pond, and with a smaller rectangular compartment to the south-west. The south-east half of the circular garden appears to have been rebuilt in response to the realignment of the river, construction of a weir and mill race and building of Polton paper mill on the opposite bank in early- to mid-18thC, all evident by 1854, which also saw the later building of the NBR Polton branch railway. The layout of the central SW-NE path and the north-west half of the garden was unchanged, although the west section of wall appears to have been rebuilt to align with the South drive.

Evidence from the Clerk archive records early use as a tree nursery – see more under P05.

#### **B05 Garden buildings, incl former glasshouses, The Gardens, The Bothy cottage etc**

Former potting shed: single storey, 4-bay potting shed to south of garden, converted to cottage. Sandstone rubble with painted entrance elevation and corrugated-iron roof. Modern addition to rear. Lean-to painted sandstone wood shed opposite with 3 boarded doors and flat, ashlar coped roof. Lean-to painted sandstone garage conversion to east with 2 sliding boarded garage doors with flanking windows and corrugated iron roof.

Other buildings not described in HES listing and not accessible for survey.

Various lean-to buildings and glass-houses shown in the various editions of OS maps in 19th century and later.

### **B06 Garden gazebo**

Listed Cat. A (LB7387); Cat A-group with house and other estate buildings

Small square-plan gazebo in cream sandstone ashlar (rubble to sides and rear) with polished dressings; pilasters to angles with entablature to north face; eaves course and cornice above. Moulded shouldered and architraved doorway to north elevation; consoled arch with keystone and date of 1731 above. Roof missing.

Not evident on Roy's map c1752 but must have aligned with central axis running through main circular garden and rectangular compartment. Shown (not named) on 1854 6" OS and all subsequent maps.

### **B07 Dairy, including south lodge and gate-piers**

Listed Cat. C (LB44163); Cat A-group with house and other estate buildings

Mavisbank house dairy (comprising South lodge, the Coach house and barn) including gatepiers, gates and walled yard

Single storey with attic and 2-storey, gabled dairy complex c1840 incorporating coach house, cow shed and stable ranges around a square yard, left open to south-west angle, with milking range to west (only rear wall remains). Stugged and snecked grey sandstone with droved tails to openings. Base course; raised cills to windows; overhanging eaves; spike finials.

Originally a dairy complex with some stabling and storage, it has now been converted to three dwellings, each occupying an angle and part of a range. It is probable that the present structure was built in the mid 19th century on the site of a small 18th century farm. However, the present structure seems to be uniformly of the later date, and there seems to be no evidence left of an earlier build.

Gatepiers and gates: set to north-east angle; square-plan droved ashlar sandstone with cornice and square cap; arrow-headed wrought-iron gates.

Walled yard to north: squared sandstone rubble wall with curved rubble cope terminated to east and west by cylindrical droved ashlar piers and conical caps, enclosing a semi-circular, cobbled yard.



*B06 Garden gazebo*



*B07 Dairy, including south lodge and gate-piers*



*B08 Vaulted store, setting with landform over on north service drive*



*B08 Vaulted store*

### **B08 Vaulted store**

Mid to later 19thC. Large barrel vaulted structure set into bank to north-east of north pavilion of house. Dressed sandstone facings in line with drive edge retaining wall; double brick vault, formerly plaster lined. Formerly listed as an ice-house (removed 2019), although its actual use has not been discovered. The actual ice house is beneath the game store (B02). AA gazetteer 2019 gives more detail (feature 2105)

Shown on 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* and 1892-3 25" OS map, not named.

### **B09 Former cricket pavilion**

Evidence of the former cricket pavilion abutting the south-east side of the walled garden wall including brickwork let into the garden wall, sockets for roof joists and openings in the garden wall for windows lighting the back of the building. A large concrete plinth lies to the east and aligned with it. AA gazetteer 2019 gives more detail (feature 2312; plinth 2314).

Appears on the 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*, where it is relatively small in size and named *Cricket House*, and on the 1894 and 1914 OS maps; each of the latter appear to illustrate smaller structures at the north end of the pavilion proper. The 1914 map shows a flagstaff to the south.

### **B10 Cistern, shaft etc**

Circular brick/cement-built 'cistern' head (over vertical shaft to water culvert?) in north of Garden park; relates to other cisterns or wells (B11, B13). AA gazetteer 2019 gives more detail of this (feature 2318) and related features (2109, 2319), and their possible function.

*B09 Former cricket pavilion, outer east quadrant of garden wall*



Appears on the 1908 and 1914 OS maps but not in 1894. Lies approximately on the line of the 2320 'pipe track' on the 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*. Part of a system that also includes 2109 and 2319

### B11 Cistern, shaft etc

Circular brick/cement-built 'cistern' head (over vertical shaft to water culvert?), located close to the south boundary in south corner of Cumming park.

Appears on the 1908 and 1914 OS maps but not in 1894. Part of a system that also includes 2109 and 2318 (AA 2019).

### B12 Cistern and chamber etc

A group of features including vertical stone shaft, a well house (or conduit house or ice house) and a circular brick-built capping to a vertical shaft apparently to do with drainage of mine workings in the area

AA gazetteer 2019 gives more detail on this group of features – 2107, 2108, 2109 (and 2039 exposure of piping to the west).

Marked as *Wells* on the 1892-3 OS and *Cisterns* on the 1908 and 1914 maps – presumably this refers to both 2108 and 2109. On the 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* it is marked as *well*.

### B13 Former building

Fairly well defined level platform beside the lochan about mid way along that is built out and scarped down the slope on the other three sides – see AA gazetteer feature 2066.

Possibly the small building that appears on the 1912-13 OS maps, although shown further to the south-west.

### B14 Shaft, mining remains

Within the woodland to the east of the north drive, a modern fenced enclosure is shown on topographic survey and included in 2004 AA gazetteer; nothing now visible in this location. Capped by a contractor in behalf of the Coal board in June 2013. Cast iron grill found further down the glen, possible ventilating or capping the shaft. Included in AA 2019 gazetteer feature 2081.

Marked *Shaft* on the 1854 6" OS map, as *day level old pit* on 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*, and as *Old Shaft* on the 1892-3 and 1912-3 25" OS maps.

### B15 Doocot

Listed Cat. A (LB7386)

A garden building in the form of a circular tower positioned on the edge of the valley on the central axis aligned on Roman hill, the house and lochan, and evidently terminating the central vista that included the formal canal in the 18th century. Built in sandstone rubble with a low ground floor entrance facing the principal axis of Mavisbank house, with a large first floor window above. A continuous string course runs at the top of first floor level, above which are two gables for a double-pitched roof; roof entirely missing. The gables are well preserved and at the apex of the south gable is a circular oculus window formed of six stones.

Internally the building appears to be partly rubble filled, accounting for the low head height of the doorway. The interior is almost devoid of features and there is no evidence for its use of original floors, fittings etc. There are no remains of stone nesting boxes, so if used as a doocot, the original nesting boxes must have been wooden. The lack of evidence for an internal floor suggests this use.

On either side of the doocot tower are short stumpy flanking walls also built of sandstone rubblework. These are 2.5m long by 0.6m wide, surviving height about 1.5m although there is some slight patching on the wall face above to



1786 Barony of Loanhead survey plan (RHP22602-03), detail showing Dovecot



B15 Doocot, south side



B15 Doocot, east side

suggest they were somewhat higher earlier on. The flanking walls are tied into the sides of the tower sufficiently to demonstrate that they are of the same period. "Both flanking walls appear to have been purposely dismantled and the wall faces faced up and made good, for what reason is unclear. It is possible the flanking walls had shaped tops so as to form a particular form of eye-catcher as seen from the mansion presumably silhouetted against the sky or possibly planted behind so as to emphasise its profile." (AA 2019)

AA gazetteer 2019 gives a very detailed description, feature 2113.

A small dot may represent the tower on Roy's map c1752, but it lies to the west on the north allée axis. Shown as *Dovecot* as a small circle with wing walls on the 1786 Barony of Loanhead survey plan (RHP22602-03) covering Penicuik estate land outwith the Mavisbank policies. Not shown on the 1852-3 6" OS map; shown as *Dove Cot* on 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*; appears as *Dovecot* on 1892-3 and 1912-3 25" OS maps.

### **B16 East lodge** (now called the Old Lodge, No.12 Kevock Road)

Listed Cat. C (LB44156); Cat A-group with house and other estate buildings



*B16 East lodge, now Old Lodge, 12 Kevock Road*

The lodge at the end of the east drive lies to the north of the line of the drive due to a former sharp right-angled bend in the drive line before meeting Kevock road. The reason for locating the lodge to the north is unclear, perhaps to avoid the sharp bend in Kevock road itself, perhaps to site it on stable ground back from the valley edge, or perhaps to avoid conflict with the lodge of Mount Esk on the opposite side of the road. No. 14 Kevock Road now occupies the ground between the lodge and the road corner where the current path exits the site.

The lodge itself is a simple single-storey square pavilion with a notably low pitched, slated pyramidal roof with deeply overhanging eaves. From Kevock road all that can be seen of the original building below the pyramidal roof is part of the principal south frontage; this is of well-cut and tightly jointed pale cream-grey ashlar. The only feature within this frontage is a 3-light mullioned window, with distinctive horizontally set panes. The original structure appears to be early 19th century in character.

The gatepiers and walls similarly include original and later components. AA gazetteer 2019 gives more detail under features 2170-2074.

The lodge structure has been extended to the east and west; these extensions are on the line of the original eaves and are rendered and ruled-out to imitate the older stonework (later-19th century?). The windows of the extensions match the original.

Shown on all OS 6" and 25" maps from 1852-3 until 1912-3 in its original square-plan form with a chamfered corner on the south.

### **B17 North lodge**

Listed Cat. B (LB47740); Cat A-group with house and other estate buildings. Listed as 79 High Street and 81 High Street (former Mavisbank jointure house)



*B17 North lodge*

At the north end of north drive on the A768 Linden Place on the west side of the entrance is a cube pavilion which had clearly been the, or one of the, original gate lodge houses at the principal north entrance to the Mavisbank estate. A two-storied, single bay structure, of early 18th century date, under what may have originally been a pyramidal roof. It is rubble-built of sandstone; dressings are of polished sandstone, the latter robustly detailed, and each elevation symmetrically arranged.

The cottage fronting onto High Street on the west side of the cube lodge is a two-storied structure with central tympany gable, rendered in white-painted harl. However, it is clearly related to the adjacent lodge and contains a number of clearly visible features of significance.

AA gazetteer 2019 gives more detail of the two buildings and related walls, gatepiers and railings under features 2150-2056, 2161-2164. Discussion there



*1786 Barony of Loanhead survey plan (RHP22602-03), detail showing north entrance to Mavisbank*

includes the possibility of a second cube gate-lodge on the opposite side of the north drive entrance, replaced by the Linden Lodge gate-lodge.

The Listing describes the 2-storey single bay rubble sandstone house (ie. the lodge) and 2-storey 2-bay terraced house as ...

Two of the oldest inhabited dwellings in Loanhead, it was built as a jointure house for Mavisbank. It was a property to be enjoyed by a widow after the death of her husband. Its first resident was the dowager Lady Clerk, Janet Inglis of Crammond, 1755. She disliked its proximity to the rest of the town and its lack of privacy. She found the doorway badly designed, as she had to lift the hoops of her skirt sideways to enter and exit, thus 'exposing' herself to townsfolk. It has been suggested Mrs Arbuthnot of Mavisbank used it as an infant school in the 19th century, before any school had been purpose built.

The early arrangement at the north entrance is best seen on the 1786 Barony of Loanhead survey plan (RHP22602-03); later layout on all OS 6" and 25" maps from 1852-3 until 1912-3.

### **B18 Linden lodge gate-lodge**

Listed Cat. B (LB47741); Cat A-group with house and other estate buildings

The lodge house on the east side of the north drive is a small rectangular building with a very broad bow front, fronting onto the street to the north. This bow front has two windows and a central (secondary) chimney. Sandstone rubble construction with dressings detailed with droved tooling. The structure has a low-pitched roof, hipped to south and of hipped-apsidal form to the north.



*B18 Linden Lodge gate-lodge and B18a Linden Lodge gateway*

*B19 South perimeter wall;  
section of drystone wall and  
estate wire fence on south-  
east flank of Roman hill south-  
west of house*



The entrance to the lodge house lies immediately behind a flanking wall and its pedestrian entrance and is presently masked by a later wooden porch.

The relationship of this gate-lodge and gates etc with Linden lodge villa (No. Linden Place – 2165) requires to be investigated historically. The existing gate-lodge and gates appear to have served both Linden lodge (villa) and Mavisbank house – the Linden lodge drive branches off the Mavisbank House north drive immediately behind the gate-lodge and has clearly done so according to OS maps since the 1st edition of 1853. At this stage Linden lodge was relatively newly built. Linden lodge may have been built by the Mercer family of Mavisbank as a dower house. Lady Hay, a connection with the family, occupied Linden lodge from the 1840s.

AA gazetteer 2019 gives more detail under features 2157-2159.

### **B18a Linden lodge gateway**

The lodge gateway has a pair of square gateposts with large single simple low pyramidal overhanging coping stones. Short squared sandstone rubblework flanking walls on either side with plain coping stones and a plain pedestrian entrance on the Linden lodge side. Dressings generally are of droved tooling; gate piers wholly of drove tooled stones with the exception of the capstones, which are polished. Pedestrian entrance door not original; modern vertical bar iron gates.

### **B19 South perimeter wall**

Rubble stone retaining wall including rubble cope with remains of iron fence runs from line of old south drive upslope to curve around above the terracing at the base of Roman hill, with iron fence posts and struts and some lengths of line wire in place. Row of mature beech on north side along south-east section, with cultivars of holly.

Shown on the 1852-3 6" OS map and 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* terminating at the north at the wing on the north-west side of the north pavilion; line shown extended north-eastwards on 1892-3 and 1912-3 25" OS maps, perhaps associated with the building of the Vaulted store (B08).



*B20 Service drive wall*

### **B20 Service drive wall**

Retaining wall in dressed sandstone with dressed slightly overhanging copes, stepping up at north end then running parallel with north-west side of house. Other sections of wall remain to the north on the opposite side of the drive to the Vaulted store and further lengths may have been removed to re-use the stones and copes. Consolidation work carried out Jan–Dec 2013 (one coping stone was dated 2013 to indicate the 'new' end we formed to this wall).

Shown on 25" OS maps from 1892-3.



*B21 South drive wall, gate to old shrubbery path, with watertank sign bottom left*

### **B21 South drive wall**

Retaining wall in dressed sandstone running the length of the west side of the South drive from the stables to the bend towards the house forecourt: covered by vegetation (rhododendron, moss etc). Includes gateway with stone pillars opposite the walled garden north-west gateway, with *WATER TANK* inscription on adjoining wall face to south. Further gateways from drive onto hill opposite south end of the walled garden and north of the stables.

Assumed to date from construction of south drive in early 19th century; line represented on all 6" and 25" OS maps.

### **B22 South valleyside wood wall**

Low retaining wall or half-dyke in dressed rubble near the lower margin of trees or within woodland, clearly exposed at east end where the contours retreat towards the north boundary, less visible due to accumulation of humus, soil slippage etc or missing in sections further south and south-west.

At the north-east end it runs close to the line of the north vista and may relate to this feature.

Line shown on 1854 OS 6" map extending north-westwards from close to the north drive, but without this extension on later 6" and 25" OS maps. The 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* shows the wall line clearly, with hachers indicating banks alternately on the upper or lower side, with only part of the wall present near the north drive. The relationship of the wall to the paths through the wood may be significant in relation to its purpose, ie. whether intended to provide a terraced viewing route (see C16).

### **B23 North drive walls**

Section of retaining wall along south-west side of North drive supporting bottom of slope; low rubble wall in its present form due to loss of stone and build-up of debris. To the north-west below Linden lodge, more substantial sections of wall support the bank beside the drive.



*B22 South valleyside wood wall*

B24 Landform at the location  
of former farm



B24 Former farm shown as  
Mavisbank House on 1697  
Map of Mavisbank park

#### B24 Former farm

The farm that existed before Clerk commenced his house and landscape improvements is shown on the 1697 *Map of Mavisbank park* as a single building – probably a nominal indication of a larger complex of buildings. Uneven ground at the location indicates surviving buried remains worthy of investigation. AA Gazetteer feature 2050 Site of farm complex refers.

#### B25 River boundary walls

Old boundary wall in dressed random stone along part of south boundary, height varies with drop on south (river) side, retaining in parts, with half-round copes where these survive. AA gazetteer 2019 gives more detail and dates wall to late 18th century or to early 19th century changes to river line and south boundary.

#### B26 Internal field fences

Various modern agricultural stock fences sub-divide the landscape, separating wooded banks and three fields, generally in good condition. While necessary for grazing management, their necessity in the future may be questioned, depending on the adopted grassland management regime and woodland management priorities, presenting unnecessary barriers and gates or stiles across paths and desire lines. Not highlighted on Plan 5 but lines present on topographic survey.

#### B27 Boundary fences

Modern agricultural stock fences runs along each boundary; good, fair or poor condition in different sections; doubles with drystone River boundary wall along part of south boundary.

#### B28 Riverside path retaining wall and riverbank \*

A high retaining wall in squared rubble or roughly dressed stone of c2.0m height separates private ground of The Gardens residential properties from the riverside path that is the main means of visitor access to Mavisbank policies. The wall, the path, riverbank and land north of the path are owned by the south drive residents. The wall appears to have sections of different dates, probably originating from the time of the Polton paper mill construction and alteration of the walled garden walls. It is leaning and cracked in places, with tree root penetration, vegetation growth and water seepage, and with a number of drainage outlets through the wall onto the path. The opposite side of the narrow footpath stands c0.6-1.8m above the river and is formed by the riverbank that has some sections of stone facing but is mainly a vertical or steep earth bank with roots of alders and other trees holding it together. Maintenance and repair of the retaining wall and riverbank will be needed to preserve access along this route, and is likely to require to be upgraded to ensure accessibility to all users, with costs borne by the project or under Council paths budget. Major costs could be involved.

(\* outwith HES ownership)



B28 Riverside path retaining  
wall and riverbank



*C01 South drive, at junction with C12 Cricket pitch path on north of walled garden*

**2.5.4 Circulation features**

(Plan 6)

**C01 South drive**

The main approach from south beside Polton bridge with south lodge and gates positioned 55m along the route at the south-east corner of dairy complex (B07), a distance of about 420m from lodge to the junction with north drive, although use restricted to residents of dairy complex and walled garden dwellings. Drive continues between east side of dairy and west side of walled gardens (annex and main garden), with retaining wall on west side at foot of the South woods bank, climbing for most its length. After opening out at the north of the walled garden to give a view over Garden park, the drive climbs further to Canal park (P06) then takes a right-angled turn to the left and the house forecourt area. Drybound surface in a good to fair condition; repairs to retaining structure and surface in northerly part in early 2019.



*C01 South drive, southern part of drive with gate*

The first map showing this route is 1828 Sharp Greenwood and Fowler. Then shown on 1854 OS 6" map when the public road and bridge at Polton was directly south of the Dairy and drive gateway. The 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* and the OS resurvey in 1892-3 at 6" and 25" show the bridge about 50m to the south-west and south of the confluence of the Bilston burn and the North Esk, its present location. From its routing both on its original line and later alignment, the south drive would have been primarily a service drive, serving the utilitarian buildings and spaces and approaching the house without views of the building in its setting.

HES access rights were passed on via deeds from the Mavisbank Company liquidator through Dr Harrowes, Willis Stephenson and Jean Martin as part of her disposal of the policies to Historic Scotland/HES.

"HES continues to hold the view that Scottish Ministers have an unrestricted right of access to the Policies for vehicles and pedestrians over the South Drive 'for all usual purposes' as set out in the Disposition from Mavisbank Limited to Helen Clement in 1955 and this continues to remain extant and applicable today. The term 'usual purposes' is not defined any further. This is reflected in Mr & Mrs Bell's title to their property on the South Drive, known as The Gardens." This statement is taken from *Report confirming the Vehicular and Pedestrian Access Rights to HES Mavisbank Policies, taking into account the Scottish Outdoor Access Code* by Joy Fotheringham (HES Estate Factor) to Martin Fairley in June 2018, where further implications of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code are considered.

**C02 Former South drive**

The original route of the south drive is shown on Roy's Military Survey (Lowlands) c1752 curving up to the west of the two walled gardens from a road between *Loanhead* and *Papermill* to reach the house forecourt on the south of the south





*C02 Former South drive*

pavilion. Some later county maps show a route but with insufficient detail to determine the line. All OS maps from 1850s onwards show the new drive route as described under C01. The old route can be followed for much of its length on the ground, although blocked by the later Dairy etc and locally impeded by rhododendron growth, having been retained as a path as shown on 19thC OS mapping.

Garden cottage and lower south drive was sold by the Mavisbank Ltd liquidator to Helen Clements (or Collitt (The Gardens). A right of access by a track from Mavisbank to the Dairy area (not south drive) was the only one included in the transfer of the parts of Mavisbank house to the three people in the USA.

### **C03 North drive**

The main approach from Loanhead High Street to Mavisbank house, a distance of about 530m, which has been partially realigned and modified to serve also Linden lodge since first built. Now in private ownership for most of its length and not in public use. Lodges and the gateway at the High Street end include components likely to date from the 2nd Baronet's time, including the 'cube pavilion' west-side lodge (B17) and parts of the gateway flanking walls. Outside HES ownership the drive survives as a grassy or drybound in a depression with treed or open banks, descending to the North drive woodland. Here within the site the drive runs between a sparsely treed steep bank and a bank at the top of the side valley with a row of immature horse chestnut, some older horse chestnut and a few veteran limes (see P12a) at the south end, before opening out to Canal park.



*C03 North drive, outwith HES ownership*

A north drive is shown on most maps and plans from Roy c1752 onwards, although on Roy at too small a scale to show its precise line. The 1852 6" OS shows the present line, with an incomplete tree row on the north side; the 1892-3 25" OS shows fewer trees on the north side and some possible amendment to the drive edges.

The North drive and land to the west of the drive and house was sold by the Mavisbank Ltd liquidator to J&J McCall (Loanhead Farm) in May 1955. "The North Drive is in private ownership and Scottish Ministers have no right of access over it." (*Access Rights* report, Fotheringham 2016). However, it provides the most direct route to the core of the policies from Lasswade centre and negotiation with the present owners for access for visitors on foot should be pursued. Sightlines and width restrictions at the North lodge gateway would appear to limit the potential for other forms of use.

#### **C04 Former North drive**

It is thought that the original route of the North drive or 'old road' (as referred to by Debois) followed the dry bed of a stream diverted to feed the canal running for the most part along the surviving route but, within the HES site area, along the valley bottom to the north-east of the present line. This is assumed to have been the road or track leading to the old farm at Mavisbank that survived through much of the 2nd Baronet's time. This line can be clearly followed on the ground with substantial banks particularly on its south-west side. See more under AA Gazetteer 2020 including original Debois identification.

Debois also suggest that Clerk developed the present North drive later in the landscape development, originally along a different line to the present line in its central part, as evidenced to a degree by the mature trees at its south-east end. The line Debois proposed from field archaeology does not seem to relate with the other sections of the drive. Debois also suggested that Clerk intended to have an approach along the North avenue although the field archaeology evidence seems scant and is not supported by the AA gazetteer.

#### **C04a Possible intended north approach**

Debois also present evidence that the north allée was intended as an approach based on a 'soil-mark' visible in a 1988 aerial photograph outside the site (in the field we call 'the bowl' L14) and on ground observation here and within the valleyside woods to the south. A clear line in this vicinity is evident on the 2018 LiDAR survey, although its origin could be agricultural, and it is separate from the distinct north allée line also present. Debois states (11.3) that "the North Avenue provides our best single piece of evidence for supposing that Sir John Clerk changed his early layout ... the aerial photography shows that it was intended to be an approach, the field archaeology shows that it is unlikely that it was ever completed".



*C03 North drive, north section with gates*



*C04 Former North drive*



C05 East drive, slumped section near east end

C05 East drive to north of lochan



### C05 East drive

The east drive runs from Kevock road to the house forecourt, a distance of about 1km (1005m), continuously along the side or base of the north valley side in a fairly straight line determined by the landform, without any curves to dramatise the approach. A grassy or drybound surface, with some waterlogged patches, for much of its length but impassible due to landslips in its eastern third, where alternative rough worn paths have been established over steeper and uneven ground to the north. Originally the 19thC line had a dog-leg to the east lodge at Kevock road (see B16). Now the route of the drive continues in a direct line via a field gate to the road between 14 and 16 Kevock road.

The date of the drive is most likely linked to the date of the Kevock or east lodge, anything from 1790 to 1820. In 1993 the owners of the *Old Lodge*, 12 Kevock road (formerly the East lodge) advised that the building dated from 1810 as does the reference in *Buildings of Scotland, Midlothian not Edinburgh*. This suggests that Robert Clerk was responsible for this addition. Historic Scotland's listing note suggests it is contemporary with the extensions at the back of Mavisbank house possibly even by the same architect, Graeme Mercer.

The east drive is first shown on 1828 Sharp Greenwood & Fowler map, and appears to be part of early 19thC improvements, then appears on all 19thC OS maps and the 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*.

East lodge and the east drive entrance was sold by the Mavisbank Ltd liquidator to Barbara Aitchison (or Pillman) in September 1954. "HES continues to hold the view that there is a pedestrian right of access from Kevock Road (beyond the boundary of the garden grounds of 14 and 16 Kevock Road) to the field gate entering the Policies (some of it being the original East Drive) but no vehicular access is permitted. Vehicular access cannot be facilitated here due to the topography of the land." (*Access Rights* report, Fotheringham 2016).

### C05a Former East drive

The drive line has not altered apart from at the east lodge where the dog-leg northwards to the lodge as been replaced by the direct connection to Kevock road. As discussed under B16, the reason for this is unclear but may have been routed in this way to avoid conflict with Mount Esk entrance and lodge on the opposite side of the road.

### C05b East drive access

The East drive within HES ownership is reached by a short length (37m) of grassy track from Kevock road to a field gate, between 14 and 16 Kevock Road, that provides pedestrian access.



C05 East drive, section of old surface



C05b East drive, east access and gate off Kevock Road

“HES continues to hold the view that there is a pedestrian right of access from Kevock Road (beyond the boundary of the garden grounds of 14 and 16 Kevock Road) to the field gate entering the Policies (some of it being the original East Drive) but no vehicular access is permitted. Vehicular access cannot be facilitated here due to the topography of the land.” (*Access Rights* report, Fotheringham 2016).

### **C06 Former house drives**

There have been a number of different arrangements of drive at the front of the house over the decades. The present arrangement of the final approach to the house being an extension of the line of the north drive is shown on the 1854 OS 6” map and all later editions, with another section of drive across the house front linking the north and south drives and a narrower service route on the south side of the house serving the south pavilion at the lower level.

Roy’s map c1752 shows the north drive arriving in front of the house at the north corner of a forecourt or grass plat. The 1763 John Laurie map shows the north drive more clearly, reaching the house at the north pavilion, not altogether different from the OS maps. Similarly, the later 1821 Sharp Greenwood and Fowler map. All these suggest little variation in the final approach to the house from the north over time.

An undated and incomplete plan for the courtyard in front of the house between the two pavilions (SRO RHP 3863, see P05, pp82-3) shows a *parterre a l’anglais* with grass in main compartments, a small border of flowers and gravel or sanded walks, bounded (presumably) by a low wall to the north-east. How the drive arrived at the gateway in the wall, ie. at what angle of approach, is not evident from the available maps and plans.

Also not shown on any maps and plans is the coach turning circle shown in the Strathtyrum painting (see p32). The painting is attributed to J C Ibbetson 1880 on the frame but the style and primitive perspective suggest he was not the artist and the date does not fit his lifespan (1759-1817). The landscape features depicted suggest a date early within his active period .

### **C07 Service drive**

A drive that forks to the left in the final approach to the house and runs along the base of the hillslope past the Vaulted store to the rear of the house, retained by low walls on the north-west side, with remnants of a wall on the opposite side. Shown first on the 1854 OS 6” map when it terminated in a secondary courtyard on the north side of the north pavilion. By 1905-06 OS maps show a further fork to the north of the house linking with paths on the Roman hill side. This survives as a serviceable route.

### **C08 South wood paths, former paths**

Paths and steps on the hillslope between the house and walled garden have been a feature of the layout since its inception, although they have changed with the extensions to the house, changes to the south drive and the addition of the dairy and garden buildings. The 19th century layout can be traced with surviving path edging, stone steps and path routes although through dense rhododendron cover in places. The main path lines are:

- Path from corner of south drive along south-east side of house and along ridge to the game store.
- Zig-zag path (one zig, one zag) with steps from previous on south side of house to walled garden, emerging at gate opposite north-west gate to the walled garden (upper part in photograph above).
- Sinuous path from south corner of house following the general line of previous but at a lower level to reach the game larder and continuing to join the following.



*C08 South wood paths,  
 former paths stone steps*

*C08 South wood paths,  
former paths with edging and  
steps (to left); part of zig-zag  
path*



- Perimeter path following west boundary mainly along line of old drive, with branches to south drive near its south end, just north of Dairy.

All these paths are shown on most edition of the OS maps.

The first map to show paths in this area is Roy c1752 that clearly indicates a scissor pattern of paths centred between the house and walled garden. No other maps are in sufficient detail to show features in this area.

### **C09 Roman hill paths**

The extent to which there have been paths on Roman hill is unclear, certainly in the early years. The terracing on the lower slopes facing the house suggest paths here, although no features of Roman hill are shown on Roy's map and other early maps lack detail. The 1852 6" and 1892 25" OS maps show a path from the north (C10) forking with one branch crossing the terraces and another climbing the hill and circling around the east side then descending towards Bilston Braes. These routes can be discerned by careful observation on the ground although out of general use.

### **C10 The Clumps paths**

A clear path runs north to south through the landform of the Clumps area (so called in Debois survey) on the north-west of the house and Roman hill. Shown on the 1852 6" and 1892 25" OS maps, but not on the 1905-06 edition, and again by 1912-13. The area is outwith HES ownership, linking with the north drive to the north, but could form part of site circulation given public access rights.



*C10 Main Clumps path*

### **C11 Walled garden paths**

Although ellipsoid and originally circular, the walled garden has the typical path layout of a rectangular walled garden of a path offset from the boundary walls and cross paths. Roy's map shows the original circular plan of the garden with cross paths, oriented NW to SE, and NE to SW. The former is aligned at the north-west with the south-east elevation of the house and its dining room, as shown by Roy and OS maps. There is no clear evidence of what, if anything, the latter path may have been aligned with through the north-east gate. Both Roy and OS mapping show a central circular path around a feature, identified as a pond with a fountain on the OS maps. The basics of this layout remain in what is now a private garden, although with no perimeter path and no central pond. The axial SW-NE path formerly continued through the rectangular enclosure to the gazebo as shown on Roy's map, but was replaced with a perimeter path when this garden area was reduced to a triangle.



*C13 Former principal axis allée route looking towards the lochan*

### **C12 Cricket pitch path**

A modern path from a wooden gate on the riverside path (C18) to the South drive at the walled garden north-west gate, around walled garden, constructed by the Mavisbank Trust in 2014 together with signage and an interpretation panel. Path does not appear on any maps or plans.

### **C13 Former principal axis allée route**

The physical evidence on the ground of a broad (15m wide) level route between the house forecourt and canal / lochan is the strongest evidence for a circulation route here – see AA gazetteer 2019 feature 2024, supported by the *allées* through trees shown on Roy and some other maps (1735 Adair, 1766 Laurie). Likely to have been a walking route, or possibly riding, although there is no evidence for a circuit of riding paths. No paths are shown on any maps, although strollers on the south bank of the canal in the Strathtyrum painting and paths around the edge of the lochan in 19thC OS maps suggest the 15m wide sward was used as a connecting path.

### **C14 Lochan paths**

As noted above, all OS maps from the 1854 6" 1st edition map onwards show a perimeter path around the entire lochan, with only one link to the east drive from the north-east end. This arrangement is more or less what remains in the form of grass or worn paths.

### **C15 Paths south, existing and former**

This feature covers the river terrace escarpment between the cricket field and central parkland and its continuation north-eastwards along the south side of the lochan to the east drive. Various paths are shown on the 1854 6" map, later editions and 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*, with a main line running along the top of the bank of the upper park before descending and continuing at the toe of the bank above Cummings park, then cutting up the bank to the East drive. Although now unused these lines can be discerned in parts. Another path is shown from the lochan along the route of the former *allée* to join with the previous line. A short path is also shown cutting down the bank from the corner of south drive to the cricket field.

The only well-defined route today is where the landform channels walkers from the central parkland to Cummings park; not shown on any maps.

### **C16 Paths north, existing and former**

This feature covers the valley side between the north drive and the east end of the lochan where today a good worn path runs along the top edge of the valley

and wood, linked to local paths to the north (C20), and linking to the east drive at the east end. Another less distinct path runs near the lower side of the drystone half-dyke (B22). Further east, a well-worn path runs up the steep ridge (L13) to link with another local paths at the north (C19).

Historically, as shown on the 19thC OS maps and 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*, a path ran near the edge of the woodland that was contained by a drystone half-dyke (B22), linked to the north drive at the west end and to the east drive at the east end. A branch path runs up the side of the valley above the old north drive.

### **C17 Doocot path**



*C17 Doocot path*

A modern worn path avoiding the landslips along the east drive, that climbs from the drive to run mid-slope through sections of uneven slip landform and below the doocot before rising further to run along the north boundary valley lip to the east drive access at Kevock road; not shown on any maps or plans. There was also a path continuing up to the perimeter of the site that ran on the outside of the boundary fence in the field boundary, heading east to the Doocot but the end of this path was lost due to the landslip of 2012 and its use was reduced as a result.

### **C18 Kevock Park path**

A modern worn path that branches off from the East drive, avoiding the landslips, to descend the valley slope to the North Esk Way path at the gate where it enters the policies; not shown on any maps or plans; allows circular walks within the policies

### **C19 North Esk Way / Core Path 7**



*C19 North Esk Way / Core Path 7, Glenkevock entry gate*

This path provides the only undisputed pedestrian access to Mavisbank policies from the direction of Lasswade in the north-east and from Polton and Springfield mill in the south-west. From Polton bridge the route initially follows the south drive before diverting to the narrow riverside path between the walls of the walled garden and the bank of the North Esk. After the gate to the cricket pitch path (C12), the path moves away from the river before entering Cummings park and running along its south edge. In Kevock park the route leaves the policies, following the line of the former Glenkevock mill lade, before a walled length of footpath climbs up to Kevock road. Thereafter the North Esk Way continues on the opposite side of the road alongside the walls of Laurel bank and other properties to Lasswade. The whole route here is a Core Path (route 7); in fair to good condition, some drainage improvements needed near Glenkevock. Mavisbank Trust carried out work to install new gates and upgrade lengths of the path, including the section within the Mavisbank boundary, as well as drainage improvements/unblocking culverts.



*C19 North Esk Way / Core Path 7, gate on left, Garden park straight on*

The condition of the riverside revetment wall, the path and the riverside walled garden walls is a concern and a condition survey, and a plan for their maintenance and repair is needed; all lie outwith HES ownership

A key aim of the Esk Valley Trust is the development and promotion of a long distance path following the two arms of the river Esk from their sources to sea. Just under 75% of the proposed North Esk Way follows existing paths and tracks which are being signed and waymarked, as within the Mavisbank section. Dependant on funding and land-owner agreement, further sections could be easily established.

### **C20 Local paths north**

Although the North drive is not available to access Mavisbank policies from the direction of Loanhead a number of worn paths are in regular use by local people to get into the site, in addition to the Core Path 7 routes. From the south end of Braeside road, a well-worn path leads to an old gate opening in the north boundary fence, with another path joining it from an opening in the Linden Lodge wall. Further east beyond the amphitheatre landform, a path from Lasswade Road follows the field boundary to a gap in the fence-line at the steep ridge (L13) where a worn path descends to East drive near the lochan.

### **Lasswade Road A768**

Main road running east to west between Lasswade and Loanhead 150-200m north of the policies north boundary, with no direct access. The steepness of the North Esk valley means there are no good views to the Mavisbank landscape from the road, with the doocot of the valley edge the only feature visible.

### **Braeside Road**

Residential road on the edge of Loanhead, a side-road on the A768, with a well-worn path from its south end giving access to the policies.

### **Kevock Road**

Mainly residential road serving properties of various sizes including mansions in their own grounds, a few in institutional use, leading down into the valley and Kevock Riding Centre and Kevock Garden Plants. Access track to east drive between 14 and 16 Kevock Road, before the hill drops down into the valley.

### **Polton Road / Polton Bank**

Minor road winding down into the valley from Loanhead in the west and Polton in the east, with steep gradients and narrow blind bends limiting use, providing access to Springfield Mill carpark and the walking route to Mavisbank policies.



*C20 Local paths north; worn path from Braeside road*



*W01 River North Esk adjoining  
Mavisbank policies near  
Polton*



### **2.5.5 Water and drainage features**

(Plan 7)

#### **W01 River North Esk**

The river North Esk runs close to much of the southern boundary of the policies and is an important feature of the designed landscape, even though just outside the boundary of the policies and not directly visible from the house or other significant points in the landscape due to topography and vegetation.

The river Esk has two main tributaries; the North Esk and South Esk. The North Esk rises near East Cairn hill, in the Pentlands, and passes through the North Esk reservoir and the village of Carlops. The South Esk has its source in the Moorfoot hills near Bowbeat wind farm and passes through the Gladhouse and Rosebery reservoirs as it travels towards the sea. The rivers converge at the *Meeting of the Waters* in Dalkeith Park and the Esk then travels a further 7.8 km to the sea at Musselburgh. The river has a catchment area of 330 sq.km covering predominantly farmland and semi-natural woodland. Paths run along the banks of the rivers for most of their route from source to sea (see C19).

#### **W02 Lochan**

A long narrow pond or lochan on the central axis that runs from Roman hill and through the house, approx 190m long and up to 38m wide covering an area approx 0.5ha (5125 sq.m); silted and overgrown with reeds and rushes for the north-east third, and to a lesser extent at the south-west end, north side. An island on the near the north bank is heavily overgrown with rhododendron to the extent that it appears part of the north bank.

*W02 Lochan, from south bank  
looking north-east*



The lochan appears first clearly in this form in the 1854 6" 1st edition OS map, complete with a small island near the north bank. Roy shows a shorter rectangular canal (see W03) and later small scale maps show either a long oval (1786 Laurie) or a rectangle of similar size (1816 Knox, 1821 Thomson, 1828 Sharp Greenwood & Fowler, 1834 Johnson/Gellatly) although it would be wrong to use these as firm evidence for the shape of the waterbody at those dates due to their small scale and stylised representation of features. The lochan continued to be shown with the same outline in later OS maps, with a small bridge to the little island shown on the 1905-06 and 1912-13 25" map editions.

### **W03 Former canal**

An ornamental canal or long rectangular pond is shown at small scale on Roy's map c1752, scaling at approx 150m long (shorter than present lochan) positioned across the width of the central axial *allée*. The other principal evidence for the canal is the Strathtyrum painting of c1780 showing its narrow width and rectilinear end facing towards the house (see p32).

AA Gazetteer 2019 records evidence of a section of surviving canal bank on the south-east side of the lochan as well as landform probably resulting from depositing material excavated from the enlargement of the waterbody on the south-east slope.

### **W04 Former round pond and fountain in walled garden**

A circular feature is shown in the centre of the circular walled garden on Roy's map c1752. The next map with sufficient detail to show it is the 1854 OS 6" map where a circular pond with a central circular island is clearly shown, although by that time the garden enclosure had been reduced on the south to make the present horse-shoe shape. The 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* shows the same information, as does the 1892-3 25" OS with more detail including a fountain and a small bridge to the island on its south-east side. The pond is not indicated on the 1912-13 25" OS and is no longer present; an empty gravel circle now marks the centre of the garden.

Debois 1922 suggests that the well described by Allan Ramsay in his poem *Verses Addressed To The Mavis Well Which Flows In the Gardens Of Mavis Bank* is the fountain at the centre of the circular pond (Apdx A, W.1750).

### **W05 Seasonal pond**

The topographic survey includes a seasonal pond in the north of the cricket field that was also recorded in the 2014 Ecological report, but is now absent as a result of unblocking culvert to the east. The 2019 Ecological report accords some value to the pond (see 2.6.4.9 etc), although it is not a historic or designed feature and impedes use of the field. See also W08.3.

### **W06 Former north burn**

Two historic maps show a burn in the valley beside the north drive as would be expected, although the line varies, probably as the result of inaccuracies in mapping. The 1697 John Clerk *Map of Mavisbank park* shows a watercourse in the valley beside the north drive, then running south of the location of the later canal and south to the river. Due to the sketchy nature of this plan and its distorted proportions the burn line cannot be transposed with any degree of accuracy and is not shown on our Plan 7. The 1854 6" OS shows a short length of burn in the valley beside the north drive which terminates at the main valley, presumably piped to feed the canal / lochan with a residual drain along the old route. Various reports and plans refer to a clay pipe following a similar route to the 1697 map (see W08).

### **W07 Wetland areas and related drainage features**

Plan 7 shows wetland or poorly drained areas based on the areas shown on the 2010 topographic survey. HES plans also record areas of poor drainage eg.

EDS4.1.174, Aug 2015, included in Plan 7 where different from the topographic survey areas. The Millard Consulting *Drainage Investigation* May 2014, undertaken on behalf of the Mavisbank Trust, considered all the problematic areas with drainage issues from a number of causes. These 20 locations are indicated on Plan 7 by the reference numbers from the report, to avoid overlaying too many toned areas. Some of these have been subsequently investigated and rectified by HES or Mavisbank Trust, as noted under W08.

While some areas may have been always poorly drained, it is more likely that all the open ground in the policies was improved by drainage, locally accompanied by regrading the land, either in the initial 18thC phase or during later landscape alterations and mining/industrial uses, and the drainage has subsequently been neglected or damaged. Poor drainage appears to result from a number of factors.

- Blocked pipe drainage and ditches, including drains along base of slopes
- Landslips, disrupting drains and holding back water in hollows
- Physical damage to drainage cundys, pipes etc causing wet areas, apparent springs etc
- Underground blockages or movement in mine drainage
- Compaction and poaching by horses and pedestrians or other causes

Briefly, the locations are as follows.

1. Waterlogged area at north end of north drive within the HES site.
2. Waterlogged area at junction of north drive and east drive resulting from spring or land drain in ground to west (outside HES ownership) and extending into central parkland to east.
3. Ponding in wet weather to west of lochan; may be related to item 2.
4. One of a number of locations where ground becomes saturated at the base of steeper slopes. Here related to crack along top of south drive embankment; landslip allayed by preventing water from north drive running down south drive. Further works by HES to stabilise in 2019.
5. Another wet situation at base of slope on north side of east drive, north of lochan.
6. Outfall weir of lochan and formerly of canal in very poor condition functionally and structurally with water seeping through masonry of different periods, saturating ground leading to potential instability and not maintaining the water in the lochan at the correct designed level.
7. Depression south of the lochan containing a number of drainage features considered in some detail in Millard 2014 report and beyond the scope for detailed consideration here. Features include a stone shaft, a pipe or culvert,



*W07.7 Depression south of the lochan containing a number of drainage features*

the 450mm dia clay pipe, and water from the north burn, lochan outflow and possibly mine day levels. A *Ram Well* is shown here on the 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*, with a *Tank* further east. Features also described in AA gazetteer 2019. HES have undertaken various investigations of flow including dye test, but further investigation is necessary in order to deal with flow from lochan, connections for additional drainage etc.

8. Channel or ditch running east from south end of day level, included below as W08.3.
9. Location of one of several cisterns assumed (by Millard) to have been used to collect clean water for papermaking and would have been connected to the water pipe W08.5 crossing the cricket pitch area and pipe bridge across the Esk to Polton paper mill. At this location there is also a set of sluice valves set below ground under stone slabs.
10. Waterlogged area in 2014 with water welling up in wet weather, also the location of day level related drain (W08.2a) and downstream end of a culvert. The stone culvert has been confirmed here, unblocked and piped under the path, resulting in improved drainage; undertaken by Mavisbank Trust in 2014 based on investigations and recommendations of HES.
11. Another cistern.
12. Large metal trough, apparently connected to water pipe supply to the paper mill.
13. Waterlogged area at base of valley side slope on north side of the lochan recorded with different extents between topographic survey, Millard plan and HES plans, affecting east drive use a path and vegetation.
14. Waterlogged location east of item 7 that in addition to being at the base of a slope is on the line of the clay pipe and culvert, so waterlogging could be due to blockages in these features.
15. Poorly drained area at the foot of a slope, seen in very wet weather, exacerbated by horses hooves in 2014.
16. Low lying area in a hollow taking run-off from higher ground, exacerbated by horses hooves in 2014.
- 17, 18, 19, 20. Locations of particularly poor drainage within an extensive area of wet ground at the east of the policies identified in the topographic survey that has been disrupted by mass ground movement or landslips. The landslips are both a consequence of high groundwater at the base of unstable sloping ground and a cause of localised areas of poor drainage and impounded water or marsh.

In addition to the effects of poor drainage on use of the site, the ecological value of these areas needs to be considered, as discussed in section 2.6.

### **W08 Drainage features: piped drains, ditches etc**

Plan 7 shows a number of drainage features that have been identified and discussed in various documents, survey plans and reports on Mavisbank policies, and are relevant to the land drainage problems of the site. It is probable that more land drains than these main lines are present, unidentified or disrupted by landslips.

#### **W08.1 Clay pipe**

Clay pipe 450mm (or 600mm) diameter leading from location of mine shaft beside north drive and line of former burn, south of lochan and to the river, passing through the depression south of the lochan which is the location of various shafts, chambers and cisterns (as item 7 above) and thence on an assumed route to the river, recorded by HES as "line of pipe as radar survey depicted 31.08.2009". May convey the culverted watercourse or drainage from the old mine shaft.



W07.9 Cistern

### **W08.2 Day level**

A coal mining day level, or tunnel formed to drain the mine workings, running from the old shaft beside north drive to river terrace face at a depth of approx 30m, where it previously emerged and water seepage still occurs.

1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* shows *Mouth of Day Level* at the south end of this line and a *Day level* line at the east end of the ditch W08.3 running to the river.

### **W08.3 Disused ditch**

Open and partially silted ditch running from the location of the mouth of the day level eastward, previously identified by HES as “open channel from mouth of day level” (HS plan EDS 4.1.174/19). Millard 2014 report records remains of a brick chamber to west of centre and a chamber connecting to a culvert at the east end. Also, a large brick chamber at the west end with an inlet at a low level apparently taking water from the day level with a higher outlet discharging into the ditch. The ditch also functions to drain the foot of the slope. May replace old watercourse running west to east said to be shown on 1697 John Clerk *Map of Mavisbank park*. A short line annotated *Day level* on 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* appears to connect the east end of the ditch to the river, assumed to be a piped drain as no surface feature is visible.

The lower part of the ditch has been breached as a result of silting and erosion causing water from the day level to emerge on the north part of the cricket pitch area forming seasonal pond W05, which now seems to have disappeared following unblocking of culvert to the east.

### **W08.4 Rebuilt culvert outfall**

Stone culvert outfall unblocked and taken under path following HES investigations and Millard 2014 report on behalf of Mavisbank Trust. Previous dye testing confirmed flow from north drive shaft area via depression (location 7 above) to the outfall.

### **W08.5 Disused water pipe**

Line of water supply pipeline taking groundwater from three or more cisterns to Polton paper mill via a former pipe bridge over the Esk. The line is marked on the 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank* and a foot-bridge (& pipe-bridge?) is shown on OS maps in 1892 in a position equivalent to the end of the line. The line on the 1877 map may have above and below ground components. Associated with it are the brick-lined cisterns, marked on OS maps and surviving on site, used to collect and treat groundwater which would be pumped to the works. Evidence remaining above ground includes some metal stand pipes adjacent to some cisterns and the remains of the bridge abutment with the broken stump of the pipe visible. Below ground is a valve chamber at location 9 with stone cover with holes to access the valve spindles.

### **W08.6 New field drains**

Area of new field drainage to alleviate drainage problems on south boundary near site entry point for main Esk including replacement 450mm dia main outlet pipe and 100mm uPVC corrugated branch and laterals, undertaken by HS in 2004, shown on plan 3/143/13.

### **W08.7 East land drains**

Piped land drains and ditches and associated areas of landslips, ponding or poor drainage at the north-east extremity of the site that were investigated by HES in 2014-15 and are recorded on plan EDS 4.1.174/24C. The drawing includes new drain proposals for alleviating problems that require Schedule Monument Consent (site since removed as SM).

Minor drainage works next to the boundary of 16 Kevock Road to deal with blocked drain and form new soakaway done by HES April 2015 and Feb 2016.

### **W09 Water channel, South drive**

Shallow ditch with stone revetment on north side running along north side of south drive, draining the foot of the wilderness bank.



*W09 Water channel, South drive*

### **2.5.6 Landform features**

(Plan 8)

This section includes prominent natural and man-made or man-modified landforms that play a significant role in the design of the landscape, excluding the large scale natural main valley sides and ancillary banks to buildings, drives etc. Landforms in the east of the site are difficult to identify due to disruption by landslips, although previously identified features in this area are included, ie. the so-called *amphitheatre* (Debois 1992). For vestigial landform features, including Debois features that cannot now be traced, refer to the Archaeological Gazetteer.

### **L01 Roman hill**

A natural man-modified hill that may have been the site of an early settlement of some kind, although the terraced landforms below the flat summit are likely to be 18th or 19thC.

Clerk stated that he chose the site of Mavisbank 'for the sake to the round hill above it' (Spink 1969) which he described as a 'Roman Station' or fort. The fort was a focal feature in Clerk's landscape determining the position and orientation of the house, the most extensive view were to be had from it and the central *allée*, possibly the north *allée* and the terrace walk were aligned on it. Debois gives examples of other landscape gardens where ancient earthworks feature at Wilton, Amesbury court and Blaise castle. The slope leading to the fort on the house side has been extensively terraced, according to Debois 'in a manner reminiscent of Claremont amphitheatre or the diamond at Amesbury'. (Apdx D 5.1-2)

The terrace banks of the hill are more extensive and much more clearly defined (noting that terracing likely dates from different periods) on the sides visible from the house, suggesting that the upper levels of the fort were 'improved' by Clerk.

The AA Gazetteer 2019 (feature 2001) says ... 'Terracing and banks facing the house, no clear banks on the west side. No evidence of entrances of internal structures. There are no ditches associated with the banks, or defences on the north or west side which are both vulnerable. It looks more like C18th or C19th enhancement of a natural feature to look like a hill fort. The straight "scarp" referred to [by Debois as evidence of an old archaeological dig] looks like a path. It is possible that it was some form of settlement that was then modified to form a landscape feature ... There are no defensive ditches or entrances associated



*L01 Roman hill, seen from the north*



*L02 Roman hill terraces*

with the banks, which are more like terraces. The position is also very exposed and overlooked on the north side where there are no defences.'

### **L02 Roman hill terraces**

An area of terrace slopes and flatter terraces or paths added to the topographic survey in 2014 following clearance of rhododendron undergrowth that prevented access at the time of the original topographic survey in 2004. The arrangement of the terrace slopes appears to be planned for symmetrically arranged paths to zigzag up the lower hill slope.

Debois 1992 record reads 'This terracing connected the house visually with the Roman Fort and provided walks between them. There were similar features at Claremont and at Wilton, both gardens visited by Clerk (W.1969.7 and W.1980.20). No-one has recorded a path leading onwards and upwards to Roman hill summit although Debois notes a path indirectly from the east and south (their F5).

### **L03 The Clumps landforms**

An area of complex natural landforms within a general east-facing slope with some distinct modifications associated with routes or other features which have been previously recorded by Debois and in the AA Gazetteer 2019. The most prominent are two features shown by hachers on the 19thC OS maps. The first on the 1892-3 25" OS, next to west boundary and at the highest point of the Clumps and the whole site, described in AA Gazetteer as "Strange enhanced natural feature. There is a clearly cut ditch on the west side which holds water. Ditch on east side less distinct. Path 2013 passes along the north side, where



*L03 The Clumps landforms;  
enhanced natural landform  
and ditch, planted with trees,  
at highpoint to north of house*



*L05 Wilderness ridge*

the ditches clearly stop at the field boundary” (feature 2015). Debois describes it as an ornamental moat and compares it to “similar moats in English landscapes – for example around the folly at Wimpole” and suggests it may have the site of a seat or urn. The landform is planted prominently with three early 19thC oaks. To the west of this is a large natural steep sided hill with a summit close in height to the moated feature shown on the 1852 6” OS, planted with mature beech, one fallen. Path C10 runs through the valley on its west side. The role of these landforms in the early landscape design is difficult to determine, although latterly they appear to have become part of an area of characterful parkland.

The area runs contiguously with Roman hill with the highest west part standing higher than Roman hill.

#### **L04 Forecourt terrace etc**

Parallel low banks across the forecourt of the house that are evidence of a former planted terrace shown on the 1892-3 25” OS, now indistinct.

#### **L05 Wilderness ridge and summer-house bank**

A distinct steep sided 100m long ridge running north-south in the woods south of the house, with the old drive (C02) along its west side, with a surviving path along the ridge-line leading down to the Game larder. Debois 1992 and AA Gazetteer 2019 give the ridge top as the site of the summer-house, although the 19thC OS maps show this on the west flank of the ridge approx 20m to the west-south-west (see B03).

#### **L06 River terrace bank**

A major feature of the Mavisbank landscape that divides the flattish central parkland between the house and lochan from the riverside floodplain of Garden park, which with its trees contain the views from the house and forms the lower parkland space. As noted under P20, the woodland planting here was a pre-existing feature when Clerk began to plan his landscape garden

#### **L07 South lochan gully**

A gap between the natural banks L06 and L08 that is likely to be also largely natural and the probable route of the original pre-Clerk-and-lochan burn from the north drive valley to the river, or the route of the old road according to Debois, and also the burn culvert, a mining day level and other features, subject to a significant degree of modification. The south *allée* also seems to have exploited the gap.



L07 South lochan gully



### **L08 South lochan bank**

A continuation of the L06 natural terrace above the floodplain although here more remote from the river and floodwater, but apparently a long established wooded feature as suggested by the 1697 *Map of Mavisbank park*. It appears to have been modified by deposit of excavations from the canal and later lochan on the upper slope. To the east the slope is modified by the embanking of the central *allée* (see L14)

### **L09 Inter parks bank**

A natural terrace associated with the river that divides Garden park to the west from Cumming park to the east with a level change of 3-4m. Debois suggest a viewpoint from the angle at the north-west end.

### **L10 Lochan banks**

The canal and later lochan appear to have been formed in a relatively level or gently sloping area, although its position above a steep slope means it is unlikely to have been based on a natural water body. Excavation to form the depth of canal will have been necessary with spoil probably deposited on the adjoining L08 bank, later added to when the canal was enlarged to form the lochan. The water level is now low compared with the intended level shown by the old weir, exposing the banks and silted-up areas at the margins.

### **L11 East drive banks**

Fill banks on the south side of the east drive with cut banks on the north. In the east part of the site, the drive and banking have been disrupted by land slippage.

### **L12 Old drive banks**

Evidence of the original drive or road that served the farm or early landscape in the valley within the woods (P12) to the east of the present drive line.

### **L13 The Knowe**

A prominent promontory or spur within the otherwise fairly regularly sloping valley side, the top of which seems to be the natural place for a viewpoint, eye-catcher or clump of trees, so prominent that it seems unlikely that it would have been ignored in the design of the landscape. A worn path climbs the ridge of the landform and mature oak and beech planting (or stumps) are associated with it (see P14 and AA feature 2112).

Debois comments on it as 'A natural bluff marking the eastern extent of the canal ... the line of the Central Avenue cuts through the southern [lower] end of this bluff' but otherwise the survey accords it no importance. All previous analysis has aligned the northern *allée* to the west side of this bluff rather than alignment on it.



L13 The Knowe from top of ridge with house centre background

The AA Gazetteer supports the idea of a significant function in the landscape design (feature 2112) ...

*Rising up the hill the valley meets the main glen at a little spur (2092) and maybe this spur that was the focal point of the northern vista. The top of the spur is curious for a tight group of very pronounced depressions running from the very top of the spur about 1/3rd of the way down. These appear to be the root bolls of substantial trees and although no trees now survive it is possible that this had been planted as a tump, a little clump of trees, as a focal point to the end of the vista. Certainly, the upper land beyond levels off and was not visible from the house so this was the last point of land actually visible from the house and the ha-ha wall seems to neatly respect this arrangement (although the ha-ha wall is known to be considerably later) ... [more about trees present] ... The location of the tump provides the best elevated vantage point of the principle elevation of the mansion and so may have been a viewing point looking back along the vista towards the mansion house as well as in the other direction.*

The Knowe can be clearly seen from the top and house side of Roman hill, although trees block views today at lower levels (except close views).

**L14 Field, the bowl**

The field to the north-west of the Knowe is a continuation outwith the site of the spur's landform from its west face into a distinct bowl or amphitheatre form. This is a very attractive natural geomorphological feature whose steepish sides create a natural limit to the eastern expansion of Loanhead. The effect of the bowl is a



L14 Field, the bowl

dip in the otherwise sharp valley edge, seen from viewpoints such as the house forecourt and east drive, that emphasises the prominence of the knowe. The dip also provides a potential evenly graded but fairly steep route from Lasswade Road A768 to the valley floor.

#### **L15 Central allée**

Cut and fill banks either side of the former central *allée* that show up on the topographic survey and on the ground between the east end of the lochan and the east drive. Also clear on the 2018 LiDAR survey.

#### **L16 The 'amphitheatre' and doocot slope**

An extensive and poorly defined area of man-modified natural landform and landslips, identified but not mapped on Plan 8.

Debois has the following entry under F.77 ...

*This series of eroded and damaged terraces and banks runs from the Dovecot and is cut by the East Approach. It is clearly not entirely natural or accidental and we believe that it was an amphitheatre (in the early eighteenth century this meant a series of paths to get from one level to another). An amphitheatre would make sense as a setting for the Dovecot and would have been the way to get up to the Dovecot from the floor of the park.*

The AA Gazetteer takes an opposite view ...

*This has the appearance of natural terracing, it covers a large area and the terraces are very wide with sloping or curved tops (feature 2077)*

An initial slippage occurred post Summer 2012, with further slippage prior to Christmas 2012. Civil engineering works to stabilise the slope as the foundation for the doocot were undertaken by HES in February 2018 to deal with active landslip – a steep, friable upper headscarp or landslip – including the use of *Platypus* earth anchors and *Geobrugg Greenax* high-tensile mesh netting and erosion control matting as shown on drawing 114458/9102 and an as-built information package. The slope vegetation is now kept strimmed so that the condition of the ground can be monitored. Report EDS/4/1/174 by Frantzeska Nanopoulou dated 5 February 2019 gives an update on movement and a summary of the works.

There is a continuing risk of global instability in the wider slope, a hazard that cannot be reduced by design, as communicated by Fairhursts to HES in report 114458/GL/G/R02. The works therefore were only to improve local stability of the top headscarp.



L16 Dooocot slope



*Landscape view seen from close to the doocot*

**2.5.7 Landscape and planted features and woodland**

(Plan 9)

Planted features are distinct individual features or by areas of trees that follow closely the compartments in the 2011 Woodland Management Plan, although with further sub-divisions to incorporate more detail, as shown on Plan 9. In each area, its trees are considered as recorded in the 2018 Tree Survey, with additional information from the 2019 Ecological Survey.

The best guide to the trees planted at Mavisbank in the 18thC is the list of trees at the time of Sir John Clerk’s death in 1755. This makes clear that ash, elm and beech were the most planted and that oak was already growing at Mavisbank in considerable numbers and also planted in significant numbers, as was birch. The *feers* (firs) listed (probably Scots pine), however, outnumbered all the rest, although none survive and were probably planted as nurse trees.

Elm has been noted by others as perhaps Clerk’s favourite tree, but few have survived. Debois’ ring-counts of stumps gave a planting date of c1730. In his 1751 *Memorandum*, Clerk recommends planting lime in avenues. Limes may have been planted in the central avenue where there is one notable survivor (Lime 1558).

*The Number of the Timber At Maves:Bank 1755 [GD18/1285]*

*The number of the Several kinds of timber that is Growing within the in Closers at Mavespark 1755*

<i>of old Ocks</i>	1453
<i>of Planted ocks</i>	978
<i>of Ash</i>	2000
<i>of Feer</i>	4600
<i>of Elem</i>	2533
<i>of Engles Elems</i>	122
<i>of Elder</i>	1271
<i>of Bitch</i>	1166
<i>of Berk</i>	870
<i>of Lime</i>	425
<i>of Plentree</i>	170
<i>of gintree</i>	70
<i>of Popler</i>	50
<i>of Walnut</i>	15
<i>of Larcks</i>	35
<i>of Chestnet</i>	24
<i>of Abelsauch 2</i>	0
<i>of all</i>	15412

*and of feers planted in the Coued bank 2000  
with ock ash Elem Bitch and Berks in Preperichon and on the South Eist  
sid of the Kenal a learg qanttie of Elders from the old stocks of abut sex  
years old mexed with ash and Elem which I Could not get numbered  
John Marshall*

Sir John Clerk's *Memorandum* (GD18/1284) of 1751 contains hints and advice on gardening and tree planting including the following.

- "Aloes, Birks, Ashes etc." are sometimes allowed to grow into trees in a hedge.
- "Holies" should be planted "every 3 feet distance & in time the fence will be both beautiful & strong". Hollies survive in some old field boundaries.
- "cut down ... Trees before they be 60 years old" – a recommendation for coppicing; if done trees "will sprout with great vigour if fenced".
- "Lime trees ... They make a beautiful figure in an avenue ..."
- "?Walnut Tree ... We in Scotland ought to have great plantations of them in our grounds".
- "Firrs" The best way of improving barren heath ground is by planting firrs; "they grow anywhere if fenced".
- "8 or 9 feet" This is Clerk's recommended planting distance, even for "firrs & Aloes".
- "Trees in avenue" Clerk recommends dung for trees in avenues, near houses, and in fences. He also strongly recommends that turf around trees should be cleared away, and even suggests sowing potatoes or turnips amongst young trees. (Debois 1992, Apdx. A)

A tree survey was included by Debois in 1992 and covered stumps then present. Their findings on trees are referred to under our gazetteer items below. In term of species a summary of their finding are as follows, with further detail under individual planted features.

**Ash** Present in considerable numbers in 1755; no old trees survive.

**Beech** From the Clerk period survive in several locations: on Roman hill, in the Clumps area, the avenue running parallel to or near the line of the central avenue further east.

**Conifers** No old conifers survive, although stumps of larch and Scots pine were recorded on the west side of Roman hill and around the summer-house. The considerable number (4600 + 2000) of *feers* (or firrs, most likely meaning Scots pine) and their almost complete absence as old trees, suggests that they are likely to have been used as nurse trees.

**Elder** Was planted in significant numbers (1271) 'especially on the south-east side of the canal', according to Debois. Elder is fast growing and very short lived, so none will have survived from Clerk's planting. It is also a shrub rather than *timber* or a proper tree (as are all the others in the list) and regenerates so freely from seed that it is unlikely to have been planted (as Debois obliquely suggest through the lack of records of it having been planted elsewhere). We suggest that by *Elder* John Marshall means alder, which is entirely feasible given the erratic spelling of other species and its otherwise absence from the list. Another mention of 'a learg qanttie of Elders from the old stocks of abut sex years old' also does not sound like elder, but alder being coppiced, referred to as mixed with ash and elm. Alder is a good pioneer species suitable for wetter areas, and relatively short lived, so none are likely to survive from the Clerk planting.

**Elm** A large number of elm (2533) was planted, this being Wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*), with a small number of *Engles Elems* (English elm, *Ulmus procera*), from which none remain as large trees due to Dutch elm disease. Clerk thought very highly of elm noting in his 1751 *Memorandum* that 'The Elm Tree & especially the English Elm is of all others the best tree, longest green in summer & fit for many

uses'. Debois ring-counted elm stumps along the riverside row and possibly within south avenue from the Clerk period. Debois found evidence also for elm in the mixed species valleyside woods, later 18thC planting and 19thC planting including the sides of the East drive, here used with oak.

**Hazel** Debois recorded hazel present on steep banks, where some remains, and surmised it survived within ancient woodland in the Clerk period on banks too steep to plough. As a shrubby species, it was not in the 1755 tree planting list.

**Holly** Occurs in association with paths, avenues and old boundaries, with main concentrations in areas where formal elements predominated east of the house. Debois noted it as rarely found north and west of the house, although there are significant rows along the B19 wall/haha line. Not included in 1755 tree list, as probably mainly used in hedges. Clerk's 1751 *Memorandum* refers to *holies* planted 'every 3 feet distance & in time the fence will be both beautiful & strong'.

**Horse chestnut** Not included in the 1755 list, where *Chestnet* refers to Sweet Chestnut, on the evidence of surviving veteran trees. Trees survive from 19thC planting and further planting in the 20thC, notably along the north drive (P12a).

**Larch** The 1755 list records a small number of larch (35), although no old trees survive. Debois found stumps on the west side of Roman hill.

**Laurel** (*Prunus laurocerasus*) Present in areas around the house and the shrubberies south of the house, probably planted in the 19thC. Spink 1969 shows that Clerk planted laurel at Penicuik, so it is likely that it would have been planted at Mavisbank, possibly in ornamental areas around the house and as an understorey in the wilderness.

**Lime** The 1755 list includes a significant number of limes (425) of which a few remain, one apparently on the line of the central avenue east of the canal, and three beside the north approach (P12a).

**Oak** The 1755 list records that oak was a dominant component of the old woods at Mavisbank before Clerk's planting, as shown on the 1697 plan, as well as a significant part of the early 18thC planting. Debois shows instances of coppiced veteran oak and notes that Clerk advocated this practice as a way of making 'plantations perpetual'. Late 18thC antipathy to pollards and coppiced trees in the landscape may have removed other early trees as well as continuing losses shown by stumps in the 20th century. The greatest concentration of remaining oaks is around the lochan (see P09, P10, P11) with further evidence of oak in the avenue to the east. The oak with beech formed the principal planting of the hills to the north and west of the house. Later planting includes areas to the south and east of the canal and, with beech, along the East drive.

**Sweet chestnut** Only 24 trees were listed in 1755, although some of the largest and oldest trees surviving at Mavisbank are sweet chestnuts – three of the 18 trees assessed as from the Clerk period – all on the river terrace bank (P20).

**Sycamore** The 1755 list includes 570 Planes or sycamores

**Willow** The list includes 20 Abelsauch, 'sauch' or 'saugh' being willow or goat willow, but we have not deduced to which species of willow the 'Abel' prefix may refer.

#### **P01 Roman hill** (WMP part Compartment 2, Mound)

The principal planting on Roman hill (the upper part within the HES area) are four mature trees – an oak and three large beech of upto 5.0m girth and a planting date estimated at 1730-60, likely to be from Clerk's time. Debois 1992 notes the greatest surviving concentration of beech on the west slope of the hill and considered that 'from the evidence of stumps, they were planted with Larch and possibly Scots Pine'.

MBEC 2019 describes the vegetation as 'Scattered mature broadleaved trees, mostly pedunculate oak and beech with neutral semi-improved grassland ... also some gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) and broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) scrub on the south [face]'. The lower south slopes are partially fringed by tree regeneration forming dense clumps in places, although these slopes lie outwith the HES ownership

The hill appears as a small clearing with a circular feature at its centre on Roy's map, with a large area of woodland to the west, while the 1st edition 6" OS shows scattered planting, more identifiable as parkland trees on the 1892-3 25" OS map and in a greater number than now remain (15-20).

The type of planting in Clerk's time is a matter of conjecture. Spink (1969) notes that "In 1739 Clerk's antiquarian friend Roger Gale remarked that Sir John had enclosed this 'ancient trench & agger' and 'made a winding ascent up to it, with hedges planted from the bottom to the top'. While it is possible that it was densely planted as Roy suggests, it would seem more likely that a scattering or more formal arrangement of trees would reveal the hill's form better in long views and permit views from it. In garden terms, with its paths, hedges and clumps of beech trees on its west flank is linked stylistically with the Clumps to the north.

### **P02 Roman hill terraces** (WMP part Compartment 2, Mound)



*P02 Roman hill terraces*

The terraced area on the lower part of the hill is well defined, separated from the main hill by a ha-ha or boundary wall that survives in large part (B19). Some mature sycamore lie beside the ha-ha on the south, although only one can be dated to the early-18th century, plus hollies in variety, likely to be later-19thC. A mixed group of 1880-1920s trees (horse chestnut, larch, Scots pine, sycamore) lies on the west side. The Roger Gale quote about hedges above is likely to refer to this area as much as the upper hill, although no hedging species like box have been detected. The area was cleared of dense rhododendron undergrowth about ten years ago and has since been surveyed and added to the topographic survey.

### **P03 Clumps parkland**



*P03 Clumps parkland, fallen  
Monkey puzzle*

This area is outwith HES ownership but close to the house and Roman hill on their north and west and clearly an integral part of the designed landscape. *The Clumps* name was assigned to it in the 1992 Debois study on account of the tree grouping. It is distinguished by distinctive hillocky landform, rising from the house level to the top of the valley and scattered veteran or mature trees within grassland, overlooking the house and the top of Roman hill from the highest points. Trees include beech, oak and horse chestnut of the oldest age classes on the site, including a majority from early-18thC and some from late-18th to early-19thC, based on Debois tree survey data (not included in the 2018 tree survey). Trees are concentrated on the mid slope but also relate to landforms – L12a topped with oaks and L12b topped with beech and the valley-form that path C10 follows. A large fallen Monkey puzzle (*Araucaria araucana*) lies on the south slope of L12b; this and the Douglas firs to the east are clearly Victorian planting.

*P03 Clumps parkland, planted  
mature beech with birch  
regeneration*





P04 Service drive woods

Debois 1992 notes that beech was extensively planted in this area, together with oak, with elm 'concentrated of the edges of woods. 'The Oak and Beech were closely planted, and were concentrated on the higher slopes and tops of the hills ... the planting style appears to have been "clumps" of Oak and Beech, the positions of the clumps dictated by the topography'.

**P04 Service drive woods** (WMP Compartment 4, North House Woods)

This small wood on the north slope below P03 is composed of a scattered mature and over mature woodland layer set within a matrix of semi-mature mostly naturally regenerated trees with groups of dense scrubby undergrowth limiting access. The more mature trees are all of relatively recent date, with only two horse chestnuts on any age (late-18th /early-19thC). The rest of the trees being late-19th/early-20thC or younger including a group of gean and some larch. Rhododendron dominates along the drive itself on the south side. MBEC 2019 describes the area (TN30) as 'Predominantly broad-leaved plantation woodland with sycamore, larch (*Larix* sp.), Scots, horse chestnut, beech and silver birch ... also a veteran sweet chestnut and a mature horse chestnut in this area ... *Rhododendron ponticum* is present in dense thickets encroaching large parts of the shrub layer in this area. There is very sparse ground flora due to shading from the dense rhododendron growth but species present include broad buckler-fern, bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and wood speedwell (*Veronica montana*).

**P05 Forecourt, formal garden, parterre**

(WMP part Compartment 3, House and lawn)

The forecourt area appears to have undergone more changes in its life than any other space in the site, with evidence of past layout in surviving landform, built remains and from documentary records. The planting however is all of relatively recent date (late-18th /early-19thC or younger) mainly lying on the east side of the space, an undistinguished group containing three Lawson cypresses, and single Morinda spruce, Corsican pine and Norway spruce. Younger trees unrecorded in the tree survey include sycamore, willow sp., holly and silver birch. Tall ruderal vegetation occupies much of the area, impeding views toward the central parkland and lochan and includes common ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) and creeping thistle with some shrubs including raspberry (*Rubus vitis-idaea*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) and butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*). The ground flora includes bluebell, common ragwort, garden daffodil (*Narcissus* sp.), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) and wild angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*) (MBEC 2019). A stand of glandular globe thistle (*Echinops sphaerocephalus*), a garden escape, and a large *Buddleja davidii* bush also occur.

Roy's map c1752 simply shows a broad space the width of the house and pavilions opening to the diverging allées.



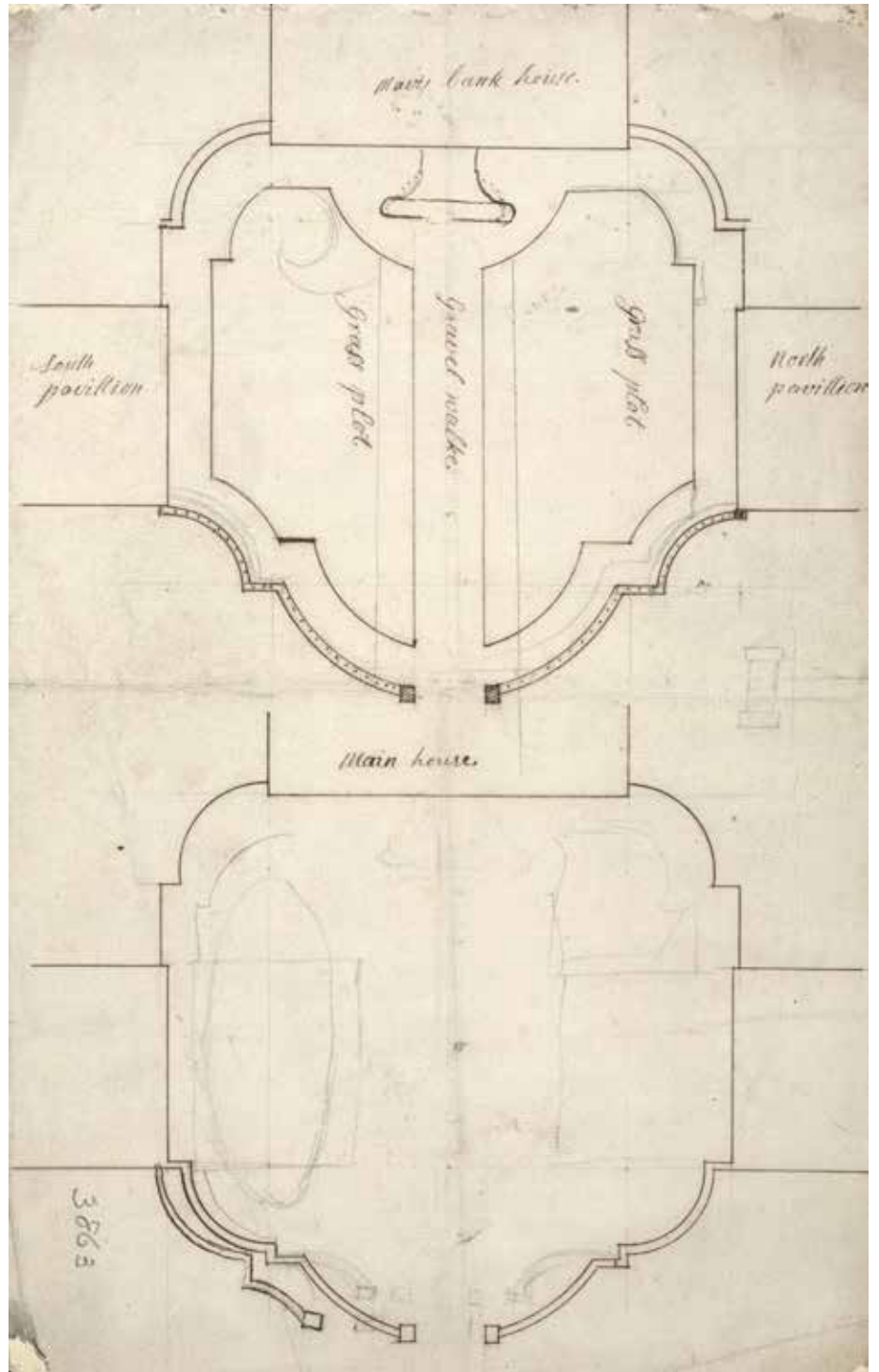
P05 Forecourt area, 2018



Undated courtyard plan (SRO RHP3863, with permission of Sir Robert Clerk)



Sketch dated 1749 (SRO RHP3864, with permission of Sir Robert Clerk) showing courtyard layout and gate and railings design



Tait (1980) refers to a *cour d'honneur* (principal arrival courtyard) between the two Adam pavilions “... treated as a parterre whose diminutive grandeur Clerk explained away in the same memorandum with the disingenuous excuse that ‘the smallness of this obliged me afterwards to make two wings’” (p21)

An undated plan for the courtyard (RHP3863 above) shows a *parterre à l'anglais* with grass in the two main compartments and gravel or sanded walks. *The Oxford Companion to Gardens* (1986) entry for Mavisbank states “Designs for a parterre, unusually in front of the house, were prepared by William Boucher” (entry by Dr William A Brogden; statement derived from his work *Ichnographia Rustica*, Stephen Switzer and the designed landscape, 2017) although this attribution is not corroborated in other sources.

Tait (1980) states that “Both parterre and pavilions were an afterthought about which Clerk had misgivings that can only have been partially smoothed away by Adam’s assurance that the pavilions ‘can be scituated nowhere but some part of the prospect of the field must be lost, and I look upon the whole bottom to be a Rurall Garden, and the distant view with watter the best”.

A small sketch dated 1749 (RHP3864, p83) shows the space enclosed by the two pavilions as a gravel circle with railings echoing the line of the arcades on the garden side, differing from the two patterns shown on RHP3863. This plan suggests a ramp or similar leading down from the courtyard entrance.

The Strathtyrum painting (c1780-1800) of the house with canal (see p32) shows two drives leading to turning circle between the two pavilions, with no planting in the space, an arrangement not shown anywhere else.

The 1852 OS 6” map shows a new arrangement of drives each side of the outer space in front of the house, with a third drive leading to a small courtyard in the north wing; a small group of plants is shown on the south side of the space.

Debois (1995) lists parallel tracks or banks in front of the house, which the AA Gazetteer (2019) could no longer identify. The line appears to concur with the bank planted with conifers shown in the 1892-3 OS 25” map. Only a bank is shown on the 1896 OS 6” map, and similarly the 1905-6 25” map, by which time a new central approach to the house had cut the bank at its north-west end. Debois discusses the large level platform between the house and canal as a preliminary for a garden in the Dutch style of William and Mary that Clerk would have seen in fashionable English gardens during his tours, concluding that if they existed here they had been removed by the mid 18thC, leaving only the grass parterre between wings of the house (as RHP3864).

#### **P06 South drive woodland / shrubbery / wilderness**

(WMP Compartment 1, Game larder woods)

An area of broadleaved plantation woodland overlaying complex topography within the overall south-east facing slope, lying between the old drive on the west and present south drive on the east. A zig-zag path between the house and walled garden descends the fairly even gradient south-east slope in the north part. Further south the landform is more terraced and forms a well-defined ridge at the upper level, at the south of which where it broadens out lies the game-larder. The top of the ridge seems a natural place for a garden building and has been taken as the site of a summer house, although the map evidence shows it on a lower platform within a minor terrace on the west side of the ridge (as shown on Plan 4).

An area of mixed policy woodland with a mature but broken canopy composed primarily of broadleaved trees. A dense understory has largely regenerated, consisting mainly of semi-mature sycamore with large, dense patches of



*P06 South drive woodland / shrubbery / wilderness, at foot of ridge*

rhododendron dominating the shrub layer. There is limited young regeneration, mainly consisting of beech and sycamore. Areas of semi-mature birch and sycamore arose from natural regeneration some time ago.

The dominant mature tree species is beech, approximately 70% of mature trees in this area, and part of old policy planting along with occasional specimens of sweet chestnut and yew (*Taxus baccata*) with holly in the understorey. Only two trees are dated to the Clerk period in the tree survey, a beech and a sweet chestnut, with a second sweet chestnut in the 1800-50 category, and about ten more in the 1850-80 category. All these lie on the upper slope or back slope near the old drive. Other tree species are younger, semi-mature and the result of natural regeneration, lying on the mid and lower slope and include sycamore, silver birch and ash. In places the shrub layer is dominated by dense rhododendron stands. MBEC 2019 TN33 notes 'The ground flora includes the invasive few-flowered leek (*Allium paradoxum*) and some patches of ramsons, along with great wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*) and scattered occasional broad buckler-fern and male-fern.'

Debois 1992 suggests that the 2000 *feers* planted on the *Coved bank* in the 1755 plant list may refer to woodland planting this bank as part of a wilderness. The large yews that Debois recorded in this area, may be survivors of what they refer to as 'this predominantly evergreen planting'. Tait 1979 initiated the idea that this bank was originally planted by Clerk as a wilderness, although Debois does not consider this style of planting on a bank consistent with William and Mary style planting, which is more likely on the flat between house and canal (Apdx D 4.3)

As Debois 1992 notes 19thC 'trees, shrubs, steps and buildings are evidence of considerable renovation of this area at the end of the last century. Cedars and Rhododendrons amongst others were planted at this time, while the 'Game Larder', and the Stables date from earlier in the nineteenth century. More recently rubbish [from demolition of wings of house] has been tipped down the bank, obscuring much of the field archaeology'. (Debois Apdx D 4.6).

### **P07 Walled garden / P07a Former walled gardens**

The present walled garden is the garden of the private house (Garden house) based on the garden bothy on the south-east side of the garden walls. Within the walls (B04) the four 'quarters' are mainly laid to grass, with *Polygonum* sp. along the north-west path sides and a border of mixed planting (small conifers, berberis, hydrangea, hostas) around the central circle, and further shrub borders at the southern edges of the garden.

The garden's transition from an entire circle to a horseshoe shape is given under B04. Early after completion by Clerk it appears to have been used as a tree nursery. There are accounts of fruit trees bought for Mavisbank and Clerk talks elsewhere about views to his orchards from the house. Another record



P07 Walled garden



*P08 Central parkland, veteran trees*

refers to beeches transported from Mavisbank to be planted at Penicuik. All this suggesting that the walled garden was used as a tree nursery and fruit orchard as much as a kitchen garden. Roy shows it c1752 with hedged or tree-lined quarters and a tree centrally in each quarter. The 1852 OS 6" map shows much detail with small trees or hedges along the cross and perimeter paths and planting beds or lines of bushes aligned parallel with the N-S axis or diagonally. Later OS maps show much less detail but confirm the central feature as a pond with island, which seems to have gone by 1912-3. Recent OS maps show nursery use, as do aerial photographs from the late-1980s and 1990s. The 1987 Inventory says that "the only original planting appears to be two yew hedges in the centre and two yew trees at the north-east end of what would have been the central footpath. Some old fruit trees remain, trained to the inner brick skin of the walls". The owners from 1982 are recorded as Harley Weston and Civic Trees Ltd, who ran the tree nursery

#### **P08 Central parkland** (WMP part Compartment 5, Front Park)

The ground between the house forecourt and lochan has the character of traditional parkland, albeit rather sparsely stocked with trees, only six standing within P08. The ground has a very gentle even gradient down towards the lochan, rising to the north and the steeper slopes of the Valleyside woods (P13), and with a pronounced gully to the south of the lochan. The main habitat is semi-improved neutral grassland, with dense / continuous scrub, tall ruderal and scattered scrub in some marginal areas. Although mature, none of the trees within the principal space or its continuation along the north side to the lochan (P11) have been dated to the Clerk period in the tree survey, lying rather in the 1800-50 period and nearly all are oaks.

The parkland is of interest as parkland – grassland with individual trees or tree groups, aka wood pasture – in its own right, but also as a successor to the avenues of trees thought to have been present in the Clerk period in which there could be survivors of his early 18thC formal planting.

The 1st or 2nd edition large scale (25") OS maps generally record exact positions of parkland trees. There were no 25" maps in Midlothian until the revised survey published in 1894 which shows 18 trees in total in the P08 area (including the surviving six), most of which seem to be present on the less clear 1852 6" map, all as shown on Plan 10. However, none of these mapped or surviving tree positions can be aligned with certainty to the likely alignment of any avenues. Previous surveys and assessments of historical information have found some correspondence between surviving trees, landform features and former avenue lines, as discussed further under P09.



*P08 Central parkland, veteran trees and stump*

Debois introduces the possibility of a William & Mary style layout between house and garden consisting of low a parterre by the house, a wilderness of small trees and shrubs, and a grove of forest trees, possibly clipped or pollarded (Debois Apdx D 3.2), before dismissing it ... 'If such a garden was laid out it soon went, for nothing appears on the mid-18th century [Strathtyrum] painting [or Roy map]. In the south of the area, Debois found evidence for a terrace walk above the steep river terrace bank, similar in design intent as a viewing terrace to the Broad walk at Penicuik

### **P09 Former allées**

The main evidence for avenue of trees radiating out from in front of the house or a *patte d'oie* of tree-lined *allées* and vistas is Roy's Military Survey map c1752 that clearly shows three *allées* cutting through the wooded central-west part of the landscape and extending as avenues in the more open east part. This is supported by the earlier Adair map of 1735 which clearly although sketchily shows three radiating avenues. The 1766 Laurie map shows a broad central vista through woodland with a long oval lochan, but no side avenues. No other maps or plans show these lines, including Laurie's 1763 more detailed map of the Lothians, or any hint of trees surviving from such avenues. Debois found no evidence of trees (from stump holes) on the line of the central avenue west of the canal (contrary to interpretation of evidence in 2005 and other studies) and cited the "undated c1750 painting" (Strathtyrum picture) as supporting this, while suggesting that formal gardens between canal and house may have been bordered by a wall or hedge in its earlier 18thC form. The same painting shows part of an avenue on the south side of the canal, apparently aligned with the south pavilion, for which Debois gives some supporting evidence in the form of beech tree stumps. The painting shows parallel but gappy lines of trees on the north of the canal. These trees were probably lost when the canal was widened on the north to form the lochan. Debois presents various site evidence for a shorter avenue aligned between north pavilion and a small natural bluff (their F95) and a longer avenue to its north aligned between Roman hill and a point outside the landscape boundary to the north-east.

Debois 1992 identified beech stumps that 'were probably once part of the avenue ... running parallel to the Canal', but we cannot agree that the three positions definitively correspond to this feature. Other oak and beech stumps on or near the line of the avenue further east, but in such small numbers as to be, in themselves, insufficient evidence for the avenues and their species composition, although Debois conjectured that the avenue was of both species. Elsewhere, under Oak, Debois records 'a double line of oak stumps (324) that are likely to be remnants of Clerk's planting ... the avenue appears to have been 18 feet wide and perhaps defined with a double line of Oaks'. Oaks with beech formed the principal species on the hills north and west of the house, based on surviving trees and Debois records of stumps, with more oak stumps on the natural bluff L13. Debois also identified a probable later phase of oak planting with trees dated to when Clerk started to informalise the landscape, in areas east and south of the canal. Later oaks are associated with the east drive and north boundary.

Tait (1980) says that "These avenues were probably formed by the English elms and limes that Clerk bought from William Miller at Edinburgh for the planting season of November to February 1726" (p23).

### **P10 Lochan** (WMP Compartment 13, Lochan)

The former canal or lochan was first formed as a long rectangle in the 1720s and reformed in a naturalistic shape in the later 18th-early or 19th century, with a small island close to the north bank. In its canal phase it would have been intended as a clear sheet of water, as shown in the Strathtyrum painting (p32). In its later informal state, the island would have had some planting, but is now overgrown with rhododendron, hiding its separation from the bank.



*P10 Lochan, with veteran lime on bank right*

The water level of the lochan is low compared with the intended level shown by the outfall sluice and is gradually silting up, with areas of marginal aquatics at the south-west end and swamp vegetation at the north-east end. The ecological survey (MBEC 2019) records extensive areas of common bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) along the south-west edge and at the north end where the open water grades into swamp. The common bulrush dominated areas are indicated as swamp on Plan 11.2. Other species present included brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*), ivy-leaved duckweed (*Lemna trisulca*), New Zealand pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*), water forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*) and yellow water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*). The New Zealand pigmyweed, an invasive non-native species, is forming a dense mat across the margins of the pond, particularly on the southern side, and needs to be eradicated (see sections 2.6.4.10 and 4.18).

**P11 North lochan parkland** (WMP part Compartment 5, Front Park)

This area is a continuation of the P08 parkland on flat or gently rising ground, mostly semi-improved neutral grassland or marshy grassland, with unevenly scattered mature trees close to the east drive or lochan edge and some scrub woodland on the north adjoining P12. All eight mature trees are oaks except one sweet chestnut, are estimated to have been planted 1800-50 and are generally of poor form and declining vigour. The former north *allée* is thought to a run across the area, while both tree rows of the central avenue seem to have run south of this area. The main habitat is semi-improved neutral grassland, with dense / continuous scrub, tall ruderal and scattered scrub.

The 1892-3 OS 25" map shows an additional eighteen parkland trees in the area, including two conifers, but not all the existing trees are indicated.



*P11 North lochan parkland, veteran oak*



*P11 North lochan parkland, veteran oaks and birch regeneration*

### **P12 North drive woods** (WMP part Compartment 6, North Drive Woods)

Varied and fragmented woodland on SSW slopes and in the dell of the former burn including remnants of historic broadleaved plantation, younger naturally seeded broadleaved woodland and areas of dense scrub, particularly on the south edge. About seven mature trees (beech, oak, sycamore) remain, all in the 1850-80 category and on the higher parts of the slopes. Other trees including hawthorn are associated with the banks of the old drive line in the valley bottom.

The 1697 *Map of Mavis-bank park* shows this area and the rest of the valleyside as wooded and the evidence of the 1755 tree list and other sources shows oak dominated ancient woodland and later oak and beech plantation. The 1852 OS 6" and 1892-3 OS 25" maps show the area as mixed broadleaved and conifer woodland.

#### **P12a North drive avenue**



*P12a North drive avenue (left)*

A tree row that is a distinct feature on the south edge of P12, along the north-east side of the north drive, comprising approximately 20 horse chestnut of estimated planting date 1880-1920, a single oak (estimated planting date 1850-80) and, near the house end, three older limes, estimated planting date 1730-60 and possibly from Clerk period (as suggested by Debois 1992 and likely to have been part of an earlier lime avenue beside the Clerk period drive), and one 1850-80 horse chestnut at the very end. More horse chestnuts are found along the drive outwith the HES site to the north.

The 1852 OS 6" map shows a partial tree row here while the 1892-3 OS 25" map shows the area without trees (due to works to the drive alignment?), suggesting that the younger chestnuts were planted after that date.

### **P13 Valleyside woods south** (WMP part Compartment 6, North Drive Wood)

This woodland covers the main valleyside parallel with the lochan on uneven SSE facing slopes including remnants of historic broadleaved plantation, younger naturally seeded broadleaved woodland and areas of dense continuous mainly hawthorn scrub. There is a limited amount of deadwood present, including fallen and standing elms (of small stature). Approx six mature beech and oak are among the younger growth, one beech being in the 1730-60 category, the rest 1800-50 or 1850-80.

The 1697 *Map of Mavis-bank park* shows this area and the rest of the valleyside as wooded and, as noted under P12, the evidence of the 1755 tree list and other sources shows oak dominated ancient woodland and later oak and beech plantation.

The 1852 OS 6" and 1892-3 OS 25" maps show the area as mixed broadleaved and conifer woodland and indicates that the half-dyke wall (B22) formed the south edge of the plantation; no conifers remain suggesting that they were a nurse crop that was removed. On these maps, the wall returns to meet the north boundary at the north-east end of the plantation, with parkland trees between it and the L10 landform, showing that this area that remains open has been so historically.



*P13 Valleyside woods south,  
east part seen from central  
parkland*



*P13 Valleyside woods south, seen from north*

**P14 Axis woods north** (WMP part Compartment 7, Axis Woods)

Valleyside woods continuing P13 north-east of L13 on steeper SSE facing slopes above the east drive and comprising similar woodland types, ie. a few remnants of historic broadleaved plantation, younger naturally seeded broadleaved woodland and areas of dense continuous mainly hawthorn scrub. The area includes the knowe (L13) on the west with more open, parkland-type cover, including a prominent 1800-50 oak. The area appears to have only four other old trees, beech and oak in the 1800-50 and 1850-80 categories. Some fallen veteran and semi-mature trees. Debois recorded oak stumps here and considered that this bank was thickly planted with oak. They also found evidence for later planting of beech and oak along the line of the east drive as well as along the north boundary.

The 1852 OS 6" and 1892-3 OS 25" maps again show mixed broadleaved and conifer woodland.

**P15 Axis woods south** (WMP part Compartment 7, Axis Woods)

An area of variable broadleaved woodland lying below east drive and east of the lochan on shallower SSE facing slopes and including a shallow depression east of the lochan where the natural topography has been disrupted during the lochan's formation, and the former route of the central *allée*. Wet ground and flushes occur in numerous locations. The area includes remnants of historic planting, mixed largely broadleaved woodland of self-sown origin, and dense continuous scrub. Old trees number only ten, including a group of four 1850-80 oaks near the end of the lochan and further oaks and a Scots pine in the east part beyond the spruce plantation. Nearby is a huge lime with full grown crown and some descending rooted limbs (others have been severed), in the 1730-



*P15 Axis woods south with P16 Spruce plantation centre left*





*P15 Axis wood south, veteran rowan*

60 age category and possibly once positioned on the south side of the central *allée*. Another interesting tree is a shattered veteran rowan (1850-80 category) that is bent double but still full of life, its original crown touching the ground – an outstanding example of the adaptability of tree life. Some fallen veteran and semi-mature trees.

The 1852 OS 6" and 1892-3 OS 25" maps again show mixed woodland, with conifers unevenly distributed among the broadleaved plantation.

#### **P16 Spruce plantation** (WMP part Compartment 7, Axis Woods)

A small visually prominent stand of Sitka spruce on the south side of the east drive, approx 40-50 years old. The only area of conifer plantation in the policies and a discordant element of the site's vegetation. The ecology survey recommends felling and replacement with native trees, which would also be justified on landscape improvement grounds.

#### **P17 Dovecot woods** (WMP Compartment 8, Dovecot Woods)

The eastern-most section of the valleyside woods lying below the doocot and above the curving landform referred to as the amphitheatre in previous studies. The area is mainly characterised by the extent of land slippage that has reformed the generally south-facing steep slopes into complex and uneven topography, destroyed the line of the east drive, caused wet hollows and flushes, and affected the vegetation. Woodland cover is varied but fragmented. A scattering of relic veteran trees on the upper slopes are surrounded by areas of semi-mature self-sown woodland and young to mature scrub. The WMP recorded fallen veteran and semi-mature trees, numerous small standing dead elm, and a large standing dead sycamore in 2011. The Phase 1 habitat survey (MBEC 2019) classifies the area as 'dense / continuous scrub'.

There are no old trees in the oldest categories and only ten in total, including five sycamore, two beech, two ash and one horse chestnut, mostly in the 1880-1920 category and some quite stunted trees.

The line of the central *allée* terminates here at the doocot although there is no surviving evidence for it on the ground in terms of landform or old trees. The 19thC OS maps again show a coniferous element to the woodland.



*P17 Dovecot woods*

### **P18 Kevock park**

(WMP Compartment 9, Amphitheatre, and part Compartment 10, Upper Field)

Largely open pasture on a gentle slope with a south to south-west aspect with scattered scrub and pioneer woodland, with areas of impeded drainage which have developed wet grassland and swamp vegetation. Historically the area has been un-wooded, with only a fringe of individual trees on the southern boundary. Although generally open, the following woodland types are present: broadleaf woodland, including a stand of alder on the south boundary; dense continuous scrub, primarily hawthorn in two discrete locations on knowes; and scattered scrub, includes scattered clumps of hawthorn on the knowes, willows and infrequently alder, on wet ground.

The lower slopes and flatter ground at floodplain level is improved pasture with some scattered hawthorn.

Rush infestation of the pasture is occurring in low lying ground due to failure of drains.

The 19thC OS maps show no trees in the area, apart from a row along the south boundary adjacent to the Glenkevock mill lade.

### **P19 Cumming park** (WMP part Compartment 10, Upper Field)

A tract of improved pasture on the river flood plain and lower valley slopes; woodland is largely confined to scattered hawthorn on the higher ground. Largely improved grass, with patches of rushes and ruderal vegetation.

The 19thC OS maps show a few parkland trees in the area, one centrally and a scattered group to the west, plus a south boundary riverside broadleaved tree row. The 1852 map shows one continuous area of open land with parkland character, but no 'parkland' stipple (as policy areas to the north have), while the 1892-2 map has the area divided into three fields. The WMP recorded one standing and one fallen veteran tree in 2011. No older trees are included in the 2018 tree survey.

### **P20 River terrace woods, P20a Terrace walk**

(WMP Compartment 11, South Bank)

A narrow belt of woodland on the steep bank between the central parkland and garden park / cricket field that is a natural terrace on the edge of the river flood plain, described as a 'structurally fragmented strip of policy woodland' in the WMP. The compartment contains a handful of very large veteran trees (beech and sweet chestnut), within a matrix of semi-mature and young trees and shrubs. In fair to poor condition, with most veteran trees senescing and in poor condition. Semi-mature and young trees have suffered from soil slippage, wet ground conditions and former grazing, with a few fallen stems. The top boundary is now fenced, preventing through access.

The area contains five trees in the 1730-60 category and likely to be from the Clerk period – three sweet chestnut, two beech – of only 18 total assessed in this category over the whole site, together with one each of younger / smaller sweet chestnut, horse chestnut and oak.

The belt has an important structural effect in the designed landscape containing the primary view from the house to the west and separating areas of different landscape character to the north and south. It is a persistent component of the landscape, appearing on the earliest plan, the 1697 *Map of Mavisbank park*.

Roy's map does not distinguish it as a distinct feature from the mass of woodland planting and later maps are too small in scale to show it. By the 1852 OS 6" map, the bank seems to be sparsely planted and devoid of trees in the south-west half (although the veteran trees here must have been present) and mixed broadleaves and conifers in the north-east half. These OS maps show a path skirting or through the area, which may have potential for reinstatement. The

*P20 River terrace woods, P21  
Terrace walk: veteran sweet  
chestnuts and younger trees,  
seen from the walk*



drainage features in the area, including the W08.2 Day level and W08.3 Disused ditch are relevant to the condition of the wood and wet areas within in (see section 2.6.6).

Debois presents background and conjectural interpretation of a faint bank along the top of the slope as a terrace walk similar in design intention to the large scale high terrace walk at Penicuik.

#### **P21 Garden park, Cricket ground** (WMP Compartment 12, Cricket Field)

An area of low lying open grassland or parkland on the floodplain of the North Esk that became a cricket field in the later 19thC as shown on the 1892-3 OS map, complete with pavilion attached to the garden wall on the west (see B09). The earlier 1852 6" map had shown six trees scattered across the centre of the area, indicating more of a parkland character. Named *Garden Park* on the 1877 *Plan of Mavisbank*, where the *Cricket House* is also noted. Classed as semi-improved neutral grassland in the Ecological Survey 2019, with areas of marshy grassland or damp ground (at former area of standing water).

The area has a recent history of poor drainage (see W05 & W08.2-W08.4), including a seasonal pond before the outfall to the north-east was unblocked, and periodic flooding is likely being part of the river flood plain; crossfall of a little over 1.0m at its widest part, approx 120m.

### **2.5.8 Planned and other significant views**

(Plan 4)

**Axial views along allées** – The former axial views from the house front along the three *allées*, and from Roman hill, have been discussed under P09 and elsewhere, and are important historically but are not a feature of the landscape today due to tree cover and loss of former trees.

**Roman hill view** – a panoramic viewpoint with unimpeded 360 degree views up and down and across the valley and a clear view north-eastwards over the house and designed landscape. Trees including the P16 Sitka plantation block the historic view to the doocot but the knowe (L13) is clearly visible.

**View from house front** – the view from the front of the house today is impeded by vegetation in the forecourt area and is contained by the north valleyside and



*View from house forecourt,  
 Spring 2019*

river terrace trees with the lochan at the centre. The doocot cannot be seen from here.

**View from forecourt at drive** – similar but broader view across central parkland in the foreground.

**View from the lochan** – the reverse view of the previous, from the lochan bank to the house with Roman hill behind; close to the viewpoint of the late-18thC Strathtyrum painting from the canal; vegetation (trees and rhododendrons on island, reeds and bulrushes) prevents a distant view along the length of the lochan to the house.

**View from the Knowe** – the best elevated view of the core of the designed landscape including the lochan and the house in its setting; close to (or on) the line of the north *allée* and its axial view.

**View from the doocot** – a fine view over a major easterly part of the designed landscape although not including the house and Roman hill which are now blocked by tree growth.

**Other possible planned viewpoints** – include summer-house location and neighbouring hilltop, promontory on river terrace and terrace walk, return on Cumming Park bank.

**External views** – the valley setting of Mavisbank prevents long views of the policies in their setting, particularly from northerly points. Fine views over the North Esk valley with Mavisbank and its woodlands are obtained from the upper part of Polton Bank (road) near the valley edge. The viewpoint for the Ibbetson Strathtyrum painting (p33) may have been Polton House lower down the valley side.



*View from doocot, Summer  
 2019*

View from Polton Bank,  
Autumn 2018



## 2.6 Nature conservation and biodiversity

(Plans 11.1, 11.2 & 11.3)

The following section comprises Section 3 Results of MBEC Ecological Survey Report (June 2019). Some location and compartment names have been changed to make them consistent with other parts of the CMP.

Recommendations from MBEC's report are incorporated in section 5 of the CMP.

### 2.6.1 Desk study

#### 2.6.1.1 Designated sites

There are no statutory sites designated for nature conservation within the Mavisbank policies area. However, the site itself is designated by Midlothian Council as a Local Biodiversity Site (see Plan 11.1).

The Mavisbank Midlothian Local Biodiversity Site (LBS) has been designated due to the importance of the habitats it supports, which include: semi-improved neutral grassland; mature broadleaved woodland / wood pasture; dense / continuous scrub and unimproved neutral grassland.

The closest statutory designated site is the Bilston Burn Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is situated to the south-west of the site, about 100m away at the closest point. This is shown on Plan 11.1 in relation to other designated sites and ancient woodland areas.

The Bilston Burn SSSI is 17.1ha in area is designated for its biological and geological importance. This is ancient upland mixed ash woodland with ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), oak (*Quercus* sp.) and elm (*Ulmus* sp.) and ground flora characteristic of ancient woodland. Whilst the Bilston Burn SSSI citation does not state the type of ancient woodland, the information provided on Plan 11.1 indicates that Bilston Burn woodland is ancient woodland of semi-natural origin.

Springfield Mill and Maiden Castle LBS is located to the south of the site, in the North Esk valley, just upstream from Mavisbank. This LBS has been designated for its broadleaved woodland, dense / continuous scrub, semi-improved acid grassland, unimproved neutral grassland and ephemeral / short vegetation.

#### 2.6.1.2 Ancient Woodland Inventory

The Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) includes areas of woodland within the Mavisbank site (see Plan 11.1). There is a relatively small area listed as being of semi-natural origin, located on a sloping bank c.100m to the north of the house, along the original access route to the house from Loanhead. Additionally, most of the mature broadleaved woodland within the site is also on the AWI, listed as being 'long-established (of plantation origin)'.

The context of the ancient woodland within the site is important: together with Bilston Burn SSSI, there is good connectivity southwards to the Roslin Glen

semi-natural ancient woodland, which is recognised in its national biological importance through the Roslin Glen SSSI designation.

### 2.6.1.3 Records of protected and notable species

A list of the non-confidential protected and notable species records provided by The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC) in September 2018 are given in Appendix 1 of MBEC's report.

The notable plant species records for the site include: bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), hoary plantain (*Plantago media*) and black poplar (*Populus nigra*).

In addition, there are also records of great horsetail (*Equisetum telmateia*), which is relatively uncommon in Scotland, and lesser pond-sedge (*Carex acutiformis*), also a uncommon species in Scotland with a very localised distribution in the Lothians.

External to the site, there were records of two protected mammal species within 500m of the site boundary. These were otter, and three locations where bats have been recorded. There were no details as to whether these were sightings or roosts.

There are also records of common toad (*Bufo bufo*), common frog (*Rana temporaria*) and Palmate newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*) for the area.

The list of bird species from the latest Bird Atlas of South-East Scotland is provided in Appendix 1. Of particular note is the potential presence of breeding barn owl (*Tyto alba*) in the general area and common kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) on the North Esk. Both species is listed on Annex I of the EC Birds Directive and Schedule 1 to the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. There are potential breeding sites and good foraging habitat for barn owl within and adjacent to the Mavisbank site.

## 2.6.2 Site overview

The site is located on the south-facing side and within the flood plain of a narrow valley formed by the river North Esk. The northern boundary largely traces the break in slope between the incised river valley and the flatter, urban and agricultural land to the north. The southern boundary follows the north bank of the North Esk.

From north to south within the site there is a sequence of mature broadleaved woodland, primarily on the valley and terrace slopes, with open grassland and scrub on the old river terrace. There are springs at several locations along the slopes, resulting in localised marshy conditions, increasingly so towards the eastern end of the site.

On the terrace, between the house and along the former east drive, there is an area of open parkland, characterised by veteran planted oak (*Quercus* spp.) trees, an artificial waterbody or lochan, semi-natural woodland and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) dominated scrub. On the slope below the terrace there is more mature woodland, which includes several large veteran sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and beech (*Fagus sylvatica*).

On the lower lying ground of the current river floodplain, there is mostly semi-improved neutral grassland and marshy grassland dominated by sedges and rushes (particularly towards the eastern end the site). There is then, just outside of the site boundary, a thin strip of mature broad-leaved woodland along the riparian zone adjacent to the river.

At the western end of the site the Roman fort or hill is located on a spur like promontory just uphill and to the south-west of Mavisbank House.

### 2.6.3 Survey constraints

The protected species surveys completed, whilst preliminary and restricted to the landownership boundary, are considered to be sufficient to inform the development of the CMP. More detailed baseline surveys are recommended to help ensure that the risks to any protected species which may be present are fully considered in the implementation of the proposed management measures. Also that the CMP can take into consideration the protection and environmental / habitat requirements of any other notable species of conservation concern that may be present within and adjacent to the site.

The Phase 1 habitat and protected species surveys were carried out within the accepted optimal times of year. However, due to the timing of the commission (ie. late summer 2018) it was not possible to survey the woodland ground flora in any detail. Therefore, a botanical survey focusing on woodland ground flora was carried out in May 2019, when the majority of plant species were in flower.

There was full access to the site apart from the house, which has a palisade security fence around its perimeter, primarily as a safety measure due to the poor condition of the building and the risk of falling masonry. Therefore a detailed assessment of bat roost potential (including an interior and exterior search for evidence of roosting bats) was not undertaken for this structure. However, the results of a previous inspection of Mavisbank House by MBEC in May 2014 is provided as Appendix 4 to MBEC's report.

The area was thoroughly searched for evidence of badger and badger setts in September 2018, although a thick cover of late summer vegetation, and in some places dense rhododendron bushes, limited visibility and access. Follow-up visits to the site were made in February 2019, after the previous seasons vegetation had died back, to check locations that were not readily accessible or heavily obscured by vegetation during September 2018.

Similarly, the ground-based assessment of the suitability of trees to support roosting bats was initially completed in September 2018. However, as most trees were still in full leaf at that time, this may have obscured visibility of some potential roost features. Therefore, a further targeted survey was completed in February 2019 when the broadleaved trees were without foliage.

### 2.6.4 Phase 1 habitats

A Phase 1 Habitat survey was completed in January 2014. The mapped results of that survey were reviewed and updated during a walkover of the site by two ecologists in September 2018. The updated Phase 1 Habitat map is provided as Plan 11.2.

The following section provides a summary of the main habitat types within the survey area. Target notes are shown by red encircled numbers on Plan 11.2 and their details are provided in Appendix 2 of MBEC's report and are referred to in the text below.

Table 1 provides a summary of the dominant Phase 1 habitat types within each of the management compartments (as contained in Woodland Management Plan 2011, ie. as CMP Planted features but with fewer sub-divisions), along with a brief description of the character of each compartment. Full botanical species lists for each of the compartments is provided in Appendix 2 of MBEC's report.

Table 1: Summary of the key habitat types within each management compartment (over page)

No.	Compartment Name	Dominant habitat type	Other habitats present	Description
1	South drive woods	Broad-leaved plantation woodland	Dense scrub and introduced shrub.	Dense woodland on steeply-sloping ground. Varied canopy structure with natural regeneration & scrub encroaching at margins.
2	Roman hill	Semi-improved neutral grassland	Scattered broad-leaved trees; dense / continuous scrub.	Previously horse-grazed grassland on uneven ground with mature trees and scrub around the edges and occasional fallen deadwood
3	House and forecourt	Semi-improved neutral grassland	Scattered trees, Tall ruderal vegetation; dense / continuous scrub; introduced shrub; building.	Enclosed area of Mavisbank House and former lawned area; former extended garden area with scrub encroachment and several ornamental plant species
4	Service drive woods	Broad-leaved plantation woodland	No other habitats	Steeply-sloping woodland area with varied structure including natural regeneration, and rhododendron growth
5	Front Park	Semi-improved neutral grassland	Scattered broad-leaved trees; marshy grassland; introduced shrub; dense/ continuous scrub.	Extensive area of grassland with occasional veteran trees and patches of scrub at the eastern end, and small area of marshy grassland
6	North drive woods / Valleyside wood south	Broad-leaved semi-natural woodland	Dense / continuous scrub; tall ruderal; scattered scrub.	Varied woodland area with ground flora dominated by bluebell and ransoms. Including several veteran trees and natural regen.
7	Axis woods north / Axis wood south	Broad-leaved semi-natural woodland	Coniferous plantation woodland; semi-improved neutral grassland, marshy grassland; scattered broadleaved trees.	A mixture of habitats comprising two semi-natural woodland areas separated by linear semi-improved neutral grassland area; also small area of swamp and a small coniferous plantation
8	Doocot woods	Dense / continuous scrub	Broadleaved semi-natural woodland; semi-improved neutral grassland; tall ruderal vegetation, scattered broad-leaved trees; scattered scrub.	A steeply-sloping scrub area with an area of tall ruderal vegetation at the base of an area of bank erosion. Marshy grassland along the eastern edge, and areas of grassland and marshy grassland at the base of the slope
9	Kevock park (north)	Marshy grassland	Semi-improved neutral grassland; scattered broad-leaved trees.	Extensive area of waterlogged marshy grassland with patches of woodland and scrub at eastern & southern edges
10	Cumming park & south of Kevock park	Semi-improved neutral grassland	Marshy grassland; scattered broad-leaved trees.	Large area of parkland with patches of marshy grassland and a small number of veteran trees
11	River terrace woods	Broad-leaved semi-natural woodland	No other habitats	Damp woodland on a slope between two parkland areas
12	Garden park or Cricket field	Semi-improved neutral grassland	Scattered broadleaved trees; tall ruderal.	Extensive area of parkland with a thin strip of tall ruderal vegetation on western edge.
13	Lochan	Open Water	Swamp, marginal vegetation	Artificial open water area with associated swamp and marginal vegetation areas.

Table 1: Summary of the key habitat types within each management compartment



#### **2.6.4.1 Semi-natural broadleaved woodland** (Compartments 6, 7, 9, 11)

Semi-natural broadleaved woodland is the dominant woodland type within the survey area, comprising almost 22% of all Phase 1 habitat types recorded within the site. This woodland type is present along the north-western edge and through the middle of the site running north to south. There were also two very small areas of semi-natural woodland at the far eastern end of the site, composed of formerly coppiced alder (*Alnus glutinosa*).

These areas had a varied age structure and species composition but typically included silver birch (*Betula pendula*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), beech, holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), pedunculate and sessile oak (*Quercus robur* and *Q. petraea*) and occasional planted beech and sweet chestnut and signs of natural regeneration. Some of the sweet chestnut trees were of significant age, being well over 250 years old.

Other less frequent tree species within this habitat type included sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), ash, common lime (*Tilia x vulgaris*), bird cherry (*Prunus padus*) and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Towards the far north-west there was a high proportion of fallen dead wood, identified mostly as wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*). Hawthorn scrub dominated the lower sections of the north-western area of semi-natural broadleaved woodland.

Within these woodland areas there were a number of species in the herb layer indicative of ancient woodland, with all four compartments including at least three of the following species: bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), opposite-leaved golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*), primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) and ramsons (*Allium ursinum*). Other species typically present included broad buckler-fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*), hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and ivy (*Hedera helix*).

#### **2.6.4.2 Broad-leaved plantation woodland** (Compartments 1, 4)

An area of plantation broadleaved woodland was present towards the south-west of the survey area, surrounding Mavisbank House, comprising almost 5% of the Phase 1 habitat types within the site (target note 33). The greater part of the planted broadleaved woodland was semi-mature but with a clear mixed age structure. The woodland was dominated by planted beech and horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), with sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), silver birch, ash and sweet chestnut. Yew (*Taxus baccata*) is also present at a very low density. There were also specimens of Norway spruce (*Picea abies*), Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*).

Ramsons was extensive within the ground flora, interspersed with occasional fern species, principally broad buckler-fern and male-fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*) (target note 33). Ground flora in this part of the site was dominated by bluebell in some areas. Other species in the herb layer included cleavers (*Galium aparine*), few-flowered garlic (*Allium paradoxum*), hart's-tongue (*Phyllitis scolopendrium*) and primrose.

#### **2.6.4.3 Coniferous plantation woodland** (Compartment 7)

A small plantation of Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) was situated on the northern edge of the semi-natural broadleaved woodland within Compartment 7. This was an even-aged stand of pole-stage trees (target note 10). This area had a sparse ground flora, which included common nettle (*Urtica dioica*).

#### **2.6.4.4 Scattered trees** (Compartments 2, 5, 10, 12)

North-east of Mavisbank House, towards the lochan, there were a number of scattered mature and veteran trees forming a wood pasture, or parkland, within an extensive area of semi-improved neutral grassland (Compartment 5).

Pedunculate oak and beech were the main tree species found within this area (target note 32). Other species present within the site included common lime, Douglas fir, horse chestnut, sweet chestnut, ash, sycamore and bird cherry.

**2.6.4.5 Dense / continuous scrub** (Compartments 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12)

There were several areas of dense / continuous scrub within the survey area, comprising about 10% of Phase 1 habitats within the site.

In the far south-west, on the slopes of the Roman fort area, there were dense areas of broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) with occasional scattered silver birch and beech saplings. Hawthorn scrub, with occasional goat willow (*Salix caprea*), was also present along the southern and western edges of the semi-natural woodland at the north-western edge of the site, within Compartment 5.

There was a small area of dense hawthorn-dominated scrub in the south-western corner of the site, south-west of the Walled Garden. In front of Mavisbank House, hawthorn scrub was dominant.

Towards the north-east of the site, the valley sides became steadily wetter downslope towards the River North Esk. Along the upper slopes, in Compartment 8, an area of dense scrub graded into an area of scattered small hawthorn trees, growing no more than 2m high).

**2.6.4.6 Introduced shrub** (Compartments 2, 3, 5)

Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) was the most abundant introduced shrub within the site, comprising 2% of the site area. Since the 2014 survey was completed there have been significant efforts to remove and control rhododendron within the site through cutting and stump herbicide injection, particularly to the west of Mavisbank House (below the Roman Fort). However, there remain significant areas dominated by rhododendron to the immediate north, east and south of Mavisbank House. Other areas of dense rhododendron cover occurred north-west of the lochan, within an area of dense hawthorn scrub, and a small stand directly adjacent to the western side of the lochan. These were densely covered with woody mature rhododendron plants with little to no ground flora.

**2.6.4.7 Semi-improved neutral grassland** (Comps 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12)

Semi-improved neutral grassland was the most common Phase 1 habitat type within the site, accounting for almost 38% of the total area. At the time of the 2014 survey much of the grassland within the site was grazed by horses. During the September 2018 site visit there was no evidence of recent grazing; however, a large proportion of the semi-improved neutral grassland within the site had been recently mown and grass and herb species identification was not possible. At the time of the 2019 surveys there was no evidence of recent grazing and it



*Common spotted-orchid*  
(*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*)



*Harebells* (*Campanula rotundifolia*) and *hawkbit* (*Leontodon* sp.)

Marsh / marshy grassland in  
east of site seen from Polton  
Bank



was possible to survey the sward. The most recent grazing appeared to have been at the Roman Fort, where old horse dung was present, but it was clear that the ground had not been grazed for some time.

Much of the grassland in the extensive parkland areas (Compartments 5, 10 and 12) was found to be composed of bent grasses (*Agrostis* spp., in particular common bent *A. capillaris*), meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*) and Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Less frequently recorded species included red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), and crested dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), field wood-rush (*Luzula campestris*), tufted hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) and very occasional hairy sedge (*Carex hirta*). Towards the River North Esk in Compartment 12, meadow grass species (particularly smooth meadow-grass, *Poa pratensis*) and perennial rye-grass were found to increase in frequency. Broad-leaved species frequent within these areas included broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), lesser stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*) and ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*).

Around the Roman Fort area (Compartment 1), the neutral grassland composition was similar to the parkland areas but there were also stands of tufted grasses including cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), with additional species including sweet vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), cleavers, creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and common ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*).

#### 2.6.4.8 Marsh / marshy grassland (Compartments 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)

The north-eastern end of the site was dominated by marshy grassland. This Phase 1 habitat type comprised approximately 17% of the survey area. The marshy grassland appeared to be associated with several springs emerging from the north and north-east slopes near the doocot.

The dominant rush species in the extensive marshy grassland area were soft-rush (*Juncus effusus*) and sharp-flowered rush (*Juncus acutiflorus*). However, lesser pond-sedge (*Carex acutiformis*) dominated a very waterlogged area towards the base of the slope, as well as occurring on the wetter parts of the slope to the east. This is a dense, clumpy sedge which prevents other species from colonising.

Amid the rush species, meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), water mint (*Mentha aquatica*) and water horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*) grew within 3m of the drainage lines.



Water horsetail (*Equisetum  
fluviatile*)



*Meadowsweet (Filipendula ulmaria)*

Other species found occasionally included cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratense*), marsh willowherb (*Epilobium palustre*) and winter-cress (*Barbarea vulgaris*) (target note 9). On the eastern slope, a single skunk-cabbage (*Lysichiton* sp.) was also present, having spread from an adjacent garden.

Towards the bottom of the slope towards the south-eastern area of the site, the ground became increasingly waterlogged. Here the vegetation was dominated by stands of soft-rush and cuckooflower.

**2.6.4.9 Standing water, inundated vegetation and swamp** (Comps 7 & 13)

The main body of standing water within the survey area is the lochan located c.200m north-east of the house. It is approximately 140m long and up to 20m wide. It is a water feature created in the 1720s and remodelled in the 1810s. It was gradually silting up, with extensive areas of common bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) along the south-western edge and at the northern end where the open water habitat grades into swamp. The common bulrush dominated areas are indicated as swamp on Figure 11.2. Other species present included brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*), ivy-leaved duckweed (*Lemna trisulca*), New Zealand pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*, an invasive non-native species), water forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*) and yellow water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*). The New Zealand pigmyweed was forming a dense mat across the margins of the pond, particularly on the southern side.

At the time of the Millard 2014 survey on behalf of the Mavisbank Trust there was a small pond in a shallow depression in the field to the north-east of the walled garden. During the September 2018 and May 2019 surveys there was



*Ragged robin (Lychnis flos-cuculi)*



*Lochan vegetation*

no evidence of the pond in this area, with a small area of marshy grassland and damp ground present. It is possible that this is a seasonal feature that only appears during the winter when the water table is higher. It may also be partly fed by springs that issue from the old river terrace located just to the north of this location.

#### **2.6.4.10 Key non-native invasive plants**

In addition to the areas of rhododendron mentioned above, there were also several locations where dense stands of Indian balsam were noted during the September 2018 site visit. In most of these locations there was evidence of recent herbicidal treatment (September 2018) which had caused extensive die back of the summer growth although there remained several live flowering stems. New growth was evident in three of the management compartments (1, 6 and 11) in May 2019.

There was a small stand of Japanese knotweed located at the north-eastern end of the site recorded during the 2014 surveys. This stand also appeared to have been subject to recent herbicidal treatment, with only a few live stems present among the dead canes. Japanese knotweed was not recorded during the 2019 survey.

New Zealand pigmyweed, found within the lochan, is a non-native invasive species that can form dense mats in waterbodies and shade out other vegetation, and also cause oxygen depletion which can have a detrimental effect on aquatic fauna. A dense mat had become established across part of the pond.

A single skunk-cabbage plant (*Lysichiton americanus*) was found close to the eastern edge of the site (compartment 8), having spread from an adjacent private garden. This is an invasive non-native species that spreads and grows rapidly, out-shading other vegetation.

Extensive stands of few-flowered garlic are also present in several locations within the site.

### **2.6.5 Protected species**

#### **2.6.5.1 Bats**

##### **Site habitat quality**

The site, as a whole, provides excellent habitat quality for a range of bat species due to the quality, extent and diversity of habitats present. The combination of open grassland, parkland, scrub and mature, structurally diverse, broadleaved woodland offers ideal foraging habitat for woodland and woodland edge specialists as well as bat species adapted to more open environments. The open water of the lochan is a source of drinking water and provides a concentration of insect prey. The river and riparian woodland forms a landscape feature that is likely to be used by bats as a commuting corridor as well as a foraging habitat. There are also abundant roosting opportunities associated with woodland (including the veteran trees and large standing deadwood) and buildings in the nearby surrounding area.

##### **Roosting opportunities - trees**

During the 2014 survey, c. 50 trees were identified with features that had some potential to support roosting bats. The September 2018 and February 2019 site visits confirmed that the vast majority of these trees retained potentially suitable features or were likely to for those features at height that may have been obscured by foliage (which would have been absent during the January 2014 survey). Some of the trees, previously identified with potentially suitable roost features, had fallen down, presumably during winter storms, since the 2014 survey.

The updated table of target notes relating to potential roost features associated with the trees is provided as Appendix 3 to this report. Their locations are shown on Plan 11.3 as blue 'half-moon' symbols. The current estimate is a total of 67 trees with features that are rated at a moderate to high potential to be used by roosting bats.

No signs confirming use of any of these trees by bats were found during the 2014 or 2018 surveys. However, for many of the trees most of the potentially suitable features were well above head height and could not be inspected in detail from the ground at the time of the survey.

### **Roosting opportunities – buildings**

Mavisbank House was not inspected for bat roost potential as part of the 2018-19 protected species survey. The building is unsafe to approach in its current dilapidated condition. However, during the 2014 survey, the main house and wings were inspected in some detail using a mobile elevated platform (see Table A3.2 in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 of MBEC's report). Overall they were assessed to have a high potential to support roosting bats and one common pipistrelle bat was found roosting in a gap in the masonry on the exterior of the south-west elevation of the house. There was considered to be a low likelihood of these structures, in their current condition (eg. lacking any roof), being suitable for as breeding roost sites (ie. used in the summer months by, predominantly, adult females rearing their young to independence). It was considered more likely that voids within the walls could provide suitable transitional, mating and winter roosts, possibly for relatively small numbers of pipistrelle bats.

On the path that leads to Mavisbank house on the north side there is a brick arched structure open to the path (the vaulted store, Plan 11.3). This may have some bat roost potential, possibly as a winter roost, due to a void between the outer and inner brick walls lining this structure.

The former game larder (Plan 11.3) is located in mature broadleaved woodland approximately 130m south of Mavisbank House. It is a single storey structure occupying a c.5x5m square footprint. The roof has completely collapsed and only the walls remain, although they are in good condition, complete with coping stones protecting them at the wall head. There is an ashlar masonry outer wall and rubble stone inner wall. Louvered wood vents are still in place at openings on four sides of building. Potentially suitable gaps leading to voids between the outer and inner stonework were noted at several of the 'windows', also between upper wall ashlar blocks. Inside the structure there are numerous gaps between the coping stones and the upper walls. No evidence of the presence of bats was noted (e.g. droppings, staining) but inside of the structure was not accessed due to safety warnings. This structure has the potential to be used by low numbers of bats, possibly during winter, but is unsuitable as a summer nursery roost.

The doocot (Plan 11.3) was not assessed for bat roost potential in 2014 because the land immediately to the south of the doocot was affected by a landslip during the winter of 2012-13 and was considered too dangerous to approach closely. By the time of the 2018 site visit the bank below the doocot had been reinforced and stabilised. The structure was checked from ground level internally and externally. There is no roof but the walls are thick and could be used periodically by small number of bats as a non-breeding roost site.

### **Bat activity survey**

A dusk bat activity transect was carried out on 21 September 2018. The survey was completed between 1900 and 2030 hrs. The weather conditions were ideal, being dry and mild (10°C) with a light south-westerly wind (Beaufort Scale 1-2).

The walked route started at the southern end of the site (on the footpath along the northern bank of the North Esk) and then around the Walled Garden, along the access track to the area in front of the Mavisbank House, north-east along

the path that follows the site boundary towards the doocot, south from there towards the river, along the river for a few hundred metres and then north into the site and to the lochan before heading south back towards the river and the southern site entrance.

A total of 74 bat passes were recorded during the survey. Of these, 68 were identified as soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), 2 as common pipistrelle (*P. pipistrellus*) and 4 as Myotis bat passes, most likely Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*). There was a clear concentration of foraging and commuting pipistrelle activity associated with the North Esk. Within the site there was activity recorded on the woodland / parkland edge near to the main house, at the doocot and at the lochan. The Myotis passes were by foraging or commuting bats recorded along the North Esk.

#### **2.6.5.2 Otter**

An otter survey of the section of the North Esk adjacent to the site was completed in 2014 and 2018. No evidence of the presence of otter was found during the survey. The path is regularly used by pedestrians, often with dogs off the lead, suggesting that any potential suitable resting-sites along the northern bank may be too regularly disturbed to be used by otter.

The banks are composed of sandy material, with very small 'beaches' and exposed tree roots. The bank was only about 1-2m away from the footpath in some areas, with a few sections where the separation was up to about 20 m but these are topographically flat areas, with little potential for otter shelters.

#### **2.6.5.3 Great crested newt**

The lochan was assessed as having good suitability for GCN in 2014. The overall condition and suitability of the pond for GCN is considered to be unchanged. It appears to have reasonably good water quality, not overly shaded, with little indication of waterfowl impact, and a good proportion of macrophyte plants providing egg laying sites for GCNs. There is also good / very good terrestrial habitat (including overwintering habitat) within easy reach of this water body. A set of water samples, taken from the pond in May 2019, were subject to eDNA analysis. The analysis found no GCN DNA presence in the samples (the eDNA analysis report is provided as Appendix 5 to MBEC's report).

#### **2.6.5.4 Red squirrel**

No squirrel dreys or feeding remains were found or sightings made during the survey. The site and surrounding area is possibly outside of the current range of the red squirrel in south-eastern Scotland, and is definitely well within the range of the grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*). This greatly reduces the likelihood of the presence of red squirrel at this site. The mix of tree species present will also tend to favour the grey squirrel.

#### **2.6.5.5 Water vole**

No evidence of water vole was found in 2014 and there are no records indicating that a population of this species is present in the area. There is some potentially suitable marshy grassland and aquatic habitat present within the site.

#### **2.6.5.6 Badger**

The site provides excellent habitat for badgers to excavate setts, to forage, and to raise young. There is a long history of use of the site by at least one badger social group. The full results of the badger survey and records relating to badger setts from the desk study are provided in a separate Confidential Annex to MBEC's report.

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### 3 Analysis and significance

#### 3.1 General analysis and the designed landscape in its cultural context

The Inventory and previous studies have placed the greatest significance on the early 18th century landscape created by Sir John Clerk, 2nd baronet of Penicuik with emphasis on its features including ‘ferme ornee with a pate d’oie or ‘goosefoot’ of allees and vistas, former wilderness, a canal, a ‘Roman Station’ and walled gardens with gazebo, the landscape forming part of an innovative experiment to bring the villa suburbana ideal of Ancient Rome to the lowlands of Scotland’ (HES Inventory; all spellings here as in source; correct spellings of French terms elsewhere).

We do not intend to re-visit all evidence put forward by Tait, Debois, the Inventory, MTLA and others and do not question the significance of the early Mavisbank landscape in the history of landscape gardens, particularly when considered together with the focal feature of the landscape, Mavisbank house, and its widely acknowledged eminent status in architectural history and design in Scotland. Much of the evidence in these sources has been referred to in the *Understanding Mavisbank* section (s2). However, when assessing the potential of site’s future and developing realistic plans we consider a more balanced appraisal is now needed that more accurately reflects all the aspects that give Mavisbank value in the present landscape, that can be developed in a financially feasible plan whose long-term management can be afforded and that offers optimum public benefits.

First though we do question the idea of Mavisbank in the early 18th century as a *ferme ornée*. In our view there is little evidence for the landscape in this style in Clerk’s writings, descriptions in other accounts or in maps of the period, particularly as depicted in Roy’s Military Survey c1752 and John Laurie’s *A plan of Edinburgh and places adjacent* 1766.

The first to apply the term to Mavisbank appears to be Alan Tait in 1980 ...

*Perhaps the ferme ornée, despite all its artificiality and preciousness, was alone in accomplishing some kind of intimate harmony between house and garden.*

The Debois survey mentions the term in passing with reference to two fields within the wooded east part of the site. But later accounts (MTLA, Inventory) apply the term to the whole landscape without explaining its meaning and the components of the style.

*Ferme ornée* as an idea was first specifically described by Stephen Switzer in *The Nobleman, Gentleman, and Gardener’s Recreation* of 1715: ‘By mixing the useful and profitable Parts of Gard’ning with the Pleasurable in the interior Parts of my Designs and Paddocks, obscure enclosures, etc. in the outward, My Designs are thereby vastly enlarged and both Profit and Pleasure may be agreeably mix’d together.’ Much later Switzer used the term *ferme ornée* as such in the 1742 edition of *Ichnographia Rustica*:

*This taste ... has for some time has been the Practice of the best Genius’s of France, under the Title of la Ferme Ornée. And that Britain is now likely to excel in it, let all those who have seen the Farms and Parks of Abbs-Court, Riskins, Dawley-Park, now a doing.*

In the same publication Switzer has a *Plan of a Forest or Rural Garden* which with its strong axiality, and with wooded compartments criss-crossed by straight avenues and serpentine paths, conceivably has a semblance to Clerk’s Mavisbank.

Certainly Clerk was creating his landscape at the time when gardens were being extended outside containing walls and more naturalistic elements responding to appreciation of nature were gaining hold, as expressed in the formal landscapes



of Bridgeman in which transitional and progressive elements, such as ha-has, rides and walks to exploit key vantage points were evident – landscapes which Clerk will have seen on his tours. The increasing significance given to literary, historical and mythological meaning in landscape were part of this development of ideas, together with the expression of the virtues of country life in a ‘Farm-like way of Gardening’ advocated by Switzer. Such ideas and components are evident at Mavisbank and in *The Country Seat* and elsewhere in Clerk’s writing.

But the *ferme ornée* concept was fairly distinctive ... ‘The essence of the *ferme ornée* was the ornamentation of hedgerows with a wide range of shrubs and climbers and the addition of herbaceous flower-beds or borders in front. Spence’s sketch of the ‘Order of Planting after Mr Southcote’s Manner’ shows a 1.5m wide shrub border in front of the old hedge containing 25 species of trees and shrubs, with in front of it a border of half that depth containing 29 varieties of herbaceous plants and bulbs with an edging of pinks.’ (Robert Holden in *The Oxford Companion to Gardens*, OUP 1986). This was very similar to Philip Miller’s description of wilderness planting in his *Gardeners Dictionary* (1731). As Holden continues, ‘... the *ferme ornée* can be described as linear wilderness planting.’



1759 Woburn Farm, view



1764 The Leasowes plan,  
Dodsley



1760s The Leasowes, view

*The term remained current for over a hundred years; however, it is through the descriptions of Woburn Farm [by Philip Southcote for Duchess of Cleveland c1733] and The Leasowes [by William Shenstone between 1745 and 1763] in Thomas Whately’s Observations on Modern Gardening (1770) that the idea, if not the practice, gained most currency. (idib.)*

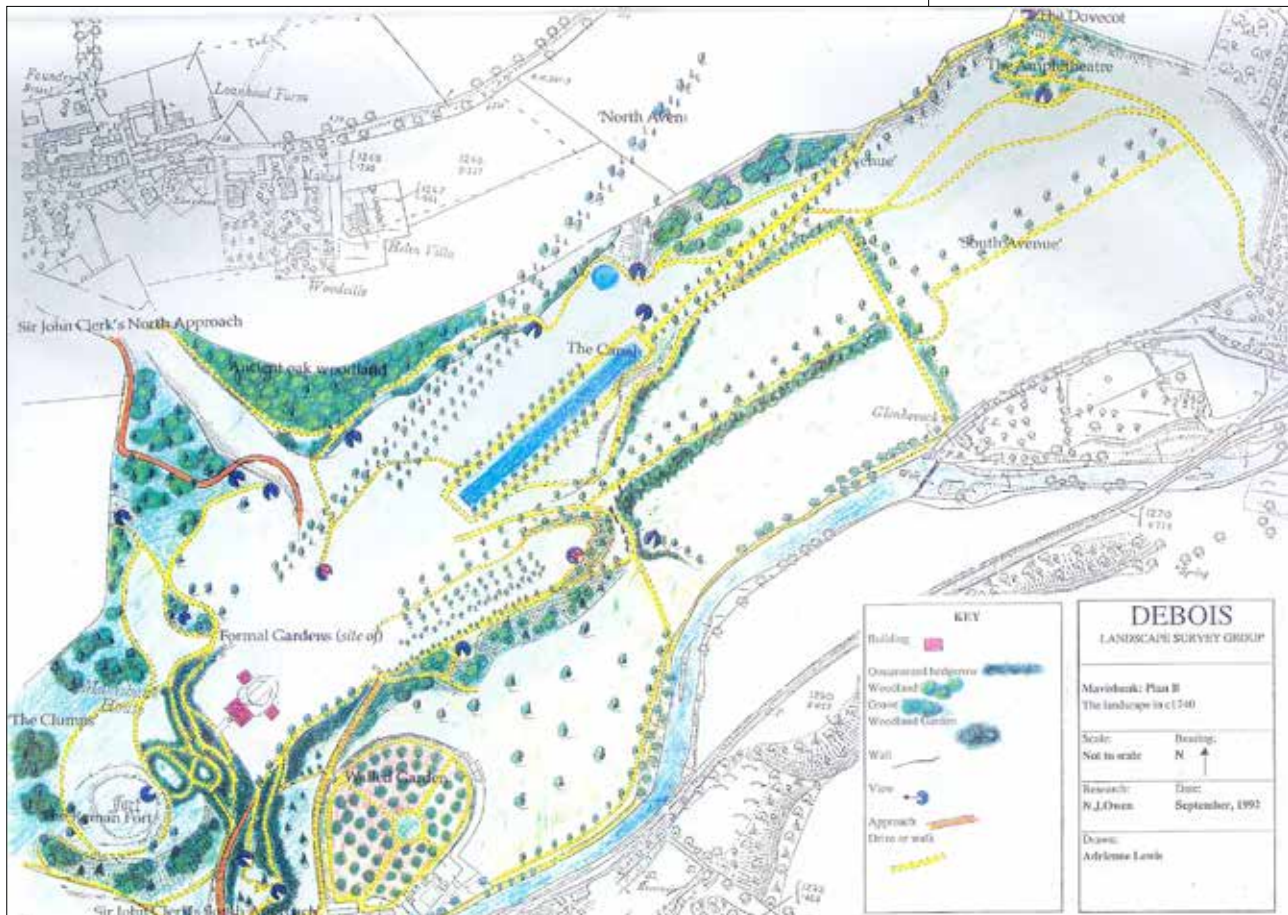
Mavisbank sources provide evidence of nothing like this treatment of hedgerows in a farm landscape. The Roy map shows a largely wooded landscape with three avenue or *allées* radiating out from the east of the house, possibly with walks through ornamental woodland or *wilderness* between the *allées* with very little anywhere in the way of fields, just two small roundish enclosures in the east and a small rectangle north-west of the house, each evolved into pairs of very small squarish fields on Laurie’s map, all set within the woodland.

Mavisbank can be viewed in two ways. Firstly, as the remains of an outstanding composition of buildings and designed landscape in which both elements were, in their time, of the highest order of refinement. Secondly, as a natural landscape with layers of evidence of man-made change over several centuries that is continuing to evolve. Depending on your viewpoint both ways have validity, and it is perhaps right to consider both together. By either measure – primarily as a cultural landscape or as a natural man-modified landscape, albeit with periods of major cultural significance – the survival of the site in a virtually entire state within a highly urbanised and industrialised part of the Lothians, is remarkable. These strands will be central to our analysis of the significance of Mavisbank and priorities for conservation, management and future use.

While it is a multi-phase designed landscape, it is its creation by Sir John Clerk, the 2nd baronet of Penicuik, in collaboration with William Adam in the early 18th century that gives it particular significance. In large part this is on account of the renown of Adam and the position of Clerk as a major figure in Scottish cultural history.

In this context it is worth noting the statement of significance for the house in *Mavisbank House and Policies Conservation Plan* (S&BA 2005) ...

*Mavisbank is the key work of Architecture of its period - the second quarter of the C18 - in Scotland. More than Hopetoun, Duff House or Chatelherault, for example, Mavisbank encapsulates the intellectual spirit of early Georgian Scotland in architecture and landscape. Its creators, Sir John Clerk, the 2nd Baronet of Penicuik, and William Adam, whom Clerk described as the ‘universal Architect of his Country’, were the two most important figures in the field. Mavisbank is closely related to two other contemporary projects: Clerk’s poem ‘The Country Seat’*



and Adam's book 'Vitruvius Scoticus'. Its engraved design has pride of place in Adam's volume, while in the final stanza of Clerk's poem, the writer dedicates himself to building 'on Esca's flowry Bank ... where the harmonious Thrush repeats his Love'.

The Architecture of Mavisbank, exterior and interior, including its planning - 'parade planning in a box' - and its landscape were intimately related, so that the views of the house from the policies and the views of the landscape from the windows were carefully composed and formed part of a single concept. Clerk's ideas were firmly rooted in classicism, on the one hand, and antiquarianism on the other. His approach to architectural and musical composition - he was a student of Corelli and Scotland's leading composer of music - was based on mathematical systems of proportion and the connections between his architecture and his music were strong. At Mavisbank, landscape, architecture, music, poetry, sculpture and painting were inseparably linked.

If not a *ferme ornée*, other aspects of the previously defined period landscape - *patte d'oie* of *allées* and *vistas*, possible wilderness planting, formal canal, the *Roman Station*, and the *villa suburbana* concept remain proven and relevant.

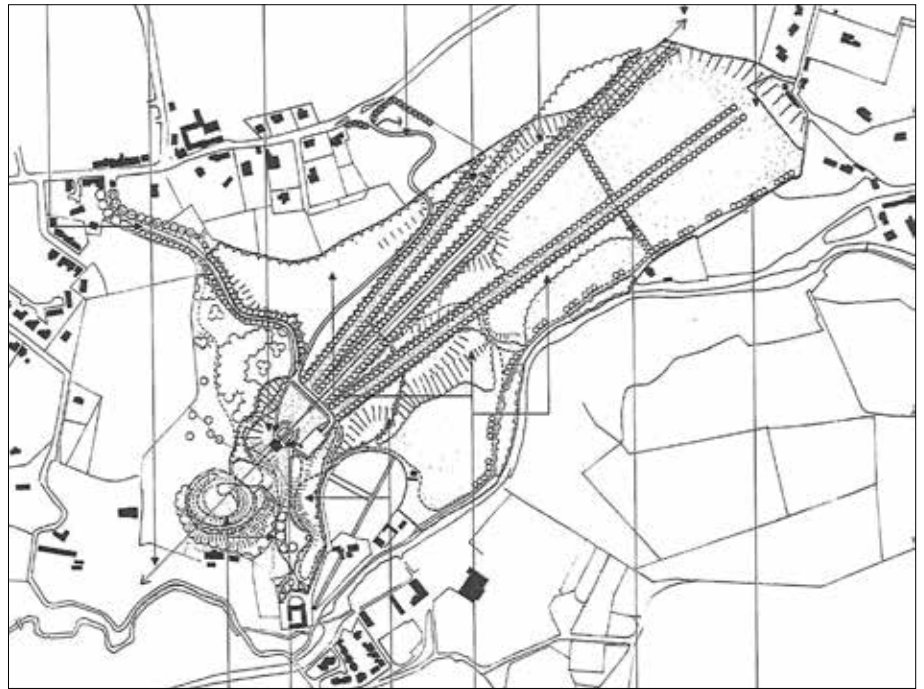
The evidence for this period landscape has been summarised in previous studies, most comprehensively by Debois who based the features they identified on site, on primary and secondary research sources and on circumstantial consideration of sites visited by the 2nd Baronet, as shown in their Figure B, *The Landscape in c1740*. MTLA's *Conservation Proposals* plan (their Figure 15) of 2005 shows in outline a plan for recreation of a semblance the Clerk period landscape, apparently a combination Roy's map layout with a pragmatic approach to defining woodland. LUC's plan of 2010 over simplified the evidence of Roy's map to interpret what Clerk's landscape may have been like at the end of his life, although not a proposals plan.

1992 Debois Landscape Survey Group, Mavisbank Plan B, The Landscape in c1740



2012 Land Use Consultants, Mavisbank Policies Landscape Management Plan, Historical Analysis 1755

*2005 MTLA, Mavisbank  
 Conservation Plan, Fig15  
 Conservation Proposals  
 (extract)*



But this was a transient phase, even evolving, it has been suggested, during Clerk's lifetime. It is the later phase of the landscape from the late-18th or first half of 19th century that is most in evidence today – drives, paths, plantations, parkland, lochan and most garden buildings are all in this later form. This is the site that we have to manage and make best use of for the future. While reversal by restoration to the earlier period is possible, continued evolution to make best use of the historic and natural assets could be considered more justified in conservation terms and is far more practicable.

There are at least three good reasons at this time for not considering to restore the policies to their early 18th century form which, it is recognised, would best complement the original house

1. We have limited evidence for the early 18th century layout, certainly not sufficient to enable a competent restoration or reconstruction. Much of the evidence we do have is circumstantial (from Clerk's travels and writing) or fragmentary and lacking in any physical detail.

*1992 Debois Landscape  
 Survey Group, Mavisbank  
 Plan C, The 19th century  
 landscape*



2. What survives at Mavisbank is the designed landscape in its 19th century form that has been present for considerably longer than the transitory early-18thC landscape, and even this has been altered by natural processes, which has considerable cultural and natural values in its own right. The 19thC landscape would be largely destroyed in restoring the earlier landscape, together with the natural character that developed.
3. The very high cost of restoring the early landscape, compared to working with the landscape we have and the natural processes at work.

These factors lead us to conclude that a period restoration is not the right way forward, certainly not right for the present time. Instead we believe that the future of the Mavisbank designed landscape lies in its multi-period history and surviving features and in the natural assets of the site, and in working with the present landscape while conserving all evidence for its development.

Major challenges now are ...

- how to balance cultural and natural values in future management and use
- the advanced ruinous state of the house and feasibility of any practical use
- the uses for the landscape and its relationship to the future use of the house, whether restored or otherwise
- which period, if any, is proper and practical as the basis for restoration or management of the landscape
- unanswered questions about the landscapes that have been lost, particularly the early-18thC layout, that could be resolved by archaeological investigation that is long overdue
- access limitations for visitors, construction and management
- physical problems of drainage and landslips and expense of treatment
- appropriate new uses in the landscape to make a viable visitor attraction
- developing a project that meets the conservation needs of the site and is attractive to funding agencies and also affordable in terms of the costs of long-term maintenance.

In recent history the Mavisbank landscape has suffered from coal mining related subsidence and has been badly affected by drainage problems as a result of the site's complex natural and man-made hydrology systems, (eg. culverts, mine drains and water supply infrastructure). These have caused waterlogging and subsidence. Woodland areas have been unmanaged resulting in self-seeded growth, some of which has damaged structures, blocked important view lines, obstructed access routes or over-shaded ground flora. The grazing tenure within the parklands has caused local damage to the grasslands, access routes, historic trees and lochan margins. Buildings and structures in the landscape have also deteriorated from weathering, vegetation growth and vandalism, although Mavisbank house is now partially protected within a secure cordon of fencing.

The above problems have received some attention in recent years, but this plan now needs to tackle the landscape's deterioration in a more proactive and prioritised manner that can be taken forward independently or as part of wider re-use plans for the house and landscape. This CMP, therefore, aims to provide comprehensive guide that identifies essential high priority remedial work and maintenance needed to conserve key features of the landscape together with works necessary to make the landscape an accessible and attractive visitor destination.

### 3.2 The concept and assessment of significance

This section assesses the heritage significance of Mavisbank and its major features. Within the section, the background of statutory and other protection is summarised then key significance factors of the site are described. The significance of the place is examined in terms of all the aspects that give it value.

Heritage significance typically resides in several categories or subject areas within a site, for example in its archaeological, architectural, scenic and landscape values, historic and social values, as well as associated values including archives, artistic representations and local personalities. Ecological, geological and other scientific values are equally important as cultural heritage values. The place as a source of enjoyment, employment, fulfilment and social interaction may also come into consideration in the assessment of significance. Significance can vary in importance and, however apparently objective the analysis, any such assessment is influenced by the current values and perspective of its time: undoubtedly the cultural significance of any aspect will vary over time.

Within this assessment no distinction is made between these types of value, particularly important at Mavisbank because of the range of interest from the architectural to natural heritage value of the riverside and woodlands. The value of the Conservation Plan approach is being able to compare and weigh-up different conservation and development priorities in an all-inclusive way and, as a result, to prepare policies and proposals in a balanced and coordinated way.

For each category or criteria, significance is ranking using a combination of range levels and quality levels as follows:

#### RANGE GRADING

International (world / Europe)  
National (Scotland)  
Regional  
Local  
Site

#### QUALITY GRADING

Outstanding / Exceptional  
High  
Some / Moderate  
Low / Negligible  
(Intrusion)

A lower designation of significance does not imply that a feature is in any way expendable.

### 3.3 Existing designations as background to significance

Statutory designations provide an important reference point because a site can only be granted protection if it meets certain criteria, ie. it achieves a set level of significance. Although a site may have several different designations, eg. covering both the cultural and natural landscape, the management requirements of each designation will be different. The assessment of significance undertaken within the context of a Conservation Management Plan has the advantage of using all relevant criteria across many disciplines, so that types and levels of significance can be compared and balanced management priorities subsequently developed.

Existing statutory and policy designations at Mavisbank are many and broad, as follows.

- Listed Category A – Mavisbank house, (formerly New Saughtonhall), including service wing, terraces, retaining walls and steps (LB7404)  
Mavisbank house, walled gardens, including gates and gatepiers (LB44166)

Mavisbank house, gazebo (LB7387)

Mavisbank house, doocot (LB7386)

Linden Place, formerly Mavisbank gate lodge (LB47741)

- Listed Category C – Mavisbank house, game larder and ice house (LB44164)  
 Mavisbank house, dairy (comprising south lodge, the Coach house and the Barn), including gatepiers, gates and walled yard (LB44163)
- Scheduled Monument – designation removed in 2016
- Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland – evaluated as Outstanding in four categories (see below).

These designations are reflected in a number of Local Plan policies, including the following.

- Nationally Important Gardens and Designed Landscapes (ENV20)
- Mavisbank Conservation Area (see Plan 2) – so trees are in effect covered by a Tree Preservation Order
- North Esk Valley Special Landscape Area (ENV6)
- Protection of River Valleys (ENV8)
- Regionally and Locally Important Nature Conservation Sites (ENV14).

Also of note – Mavisbank is one of only 18 Scottish gardens with an individual entry in *The Oxford Companion to Gardens* (1986).

### **3.4 Statement of significance**

#### **3.4.1 Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland evaluation**

##### **Importance of Site**

A site included in the Inventory is assessed for its condition and integrity and for its level of importance. The criteria used are set out in Annex 5 of the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (December 2011). The principles are represented by the following value-based criteria and have been assigned a value for each on a scale ranging from outstanding value to no value. All sites included in the Inventory are considered to be of national importance.

While the Inventory evaluation applies to the wider 52ha designated area rather than 27.69ha core of Scottish Ministers / HES owned area of this study, all of the values can be considered to relate equally to features of the core area.

Our notes qualifying the Historic Environment Scotland text are given in italics.

##### **Work of Art Value, Outstanding**

Through creating Mavisbank, an innovative designed landscape for its time, Sir John Clerk was influential in introducing ideas to Scotland that were sweeping through his contemporary's gardens in England, a style advocated by professionals such as Stephen Switzer and Charles Bridgeman, the *ferme ornee*. He gave expression to his antiquarian interests, through incorporating a pre-existing archaeological feature modified to a 'Roman Fort', part of an experiment to bring the villa suburbana ideal of Ancient Rome to the lowlands of Scotland. The landscape at Mavisbank marks the transition from ideas of formality to the beginning of the picturesque movement in Scotland. Despite its current condition, it has outstanding value as a Work of Art.

*As usual with the Inventory, this evaluation does not actually explain why the landscape has or had aesthetic values, instead giving 'art historical' background. Like most designed landscapes, its aesthetic value comes from the relationship*

*of the built, planted and other features to the natural and pre-existing topography, natural and man-made, notably the enclosed valley form, the Roman Fort hill, other landforms, the river etc. The interplay of the architecture of the house and its pavilions with the landscape, through the enclosing arms of the wings and the radiating avenues of trees terminated by eye-catchers, is a major part of this relationship. Nothing remains of the ferme ornée (if indeed it existed, for it is questionable where this interpretation of the landscape comes from) or the formal landscape of which it was part. So it is difficult to justify an outstanding evaluation of the present landscape as a Work of Art, although some value survives in the house to landscape relationship and surviving valley planted landscape.*

### **Historical Value, Outstanding**

The exceptional survival of documentary evidence is significant, notably Sir John Clerk's memoirs and his influential essay, 'The Country Seat' on how to build the perfect country retreat – a unique insight into the philosophy of the design – also celebrated by William Adam in 'Vitruvius Scoticus'. The quality of harmony achieved by Clerk between the house and designed landscape endows Mavisbank with great importance in the history of Scottish landscape design. Survival of remnants of the early 18th century ferme ornee layout and succeeding layers provide physical evidence of its development. The association with Sir John Clerk, a major figure in Scottish cultural history who was instrumental in laying the foundations of the Scottish Enlightenment, and William Adam, described by Clerk as 'The Universal Architect of Scotland', gives Mavisbank outstanding historical value.

*We concur broadly with this Outstanding rating, with previously noted reservation about the ferme ornée.*

*An additional factor of historical significance that has emerged is the importance of Mary E Burton as head gardener from c1836 and her pioneering position as a female professional gardener and in the therapeutic use of gardening for the mentally ill.*

### **Horticultural, Arboricultural, Silvicultural Value, Little**

The surviving plant collection at Mavisbank has little Horticultural value.

*While there are surviving 18th century and later trees of value as veterans and evidence of period planting, and some other late-19th century ornamental planting, all of which are of high local or site interest, in the broader context these are of low value in national terms.*

### **Architectural Value, Outstanding**

The designed landscape provides the setting for Mavisbank House, listed category A, thought to be the most important surviving small country house built in Scotland in the early 18th century, and for associated buildings and features, category A group, giving it outstanding architectural value.

### **Scenic Value, Some**

The mature parks and woodlands of Mavisbank policies make some contribution to the variety of the surrounding scenery.

*The enclosed valley setting of the designed landscape limits its effect in the scenery of the local area, particularly from the north. However, there are spectacular views from the Polton side to the south, taking in the valley landscape and its wider setting, and these should justify a higher rating. The site's visibility from the Esk Valley Way is also an important consideration.*

### **Nature Conservation Value, High**

Mavisbank was named after the song-thrush and still has some value in this category through the diverse habitats provided by the unmanaged woodlands,

lochan and river. The designed landscape is adjacent to the Bilston Burn and Hewan Bank Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

*Previous ecological assessments identified only local values in terms of nature conservation. However, as a section of fairly continuous river corridor wooded habitat, the landscape has high value in the region as a green or wildlife link. Ecological re-assessment under the CMP confirmed the values in this respect. The natural topography is also highly important and provides the base for the designed landscape and a component of the house setting.*

### **Archaeological Value, Outstanding**

The presence of a large circular earthwork, garden archaeology, and the potential to discover related works and evidence, as well appreciation of how archaeological remains were viewed and adapted in the early years of the Scottish Enlightenment, give Mavisbank outstanding archaeological value.

*There are no Scheduled Monuments at Mavisbank, although the site was formerly so designated on account of the house, doocot, policies and earthwork. The site was removed from the list of scheduled monuments in October 2016 due to the house and gardens being more appropriately designated as an A-listed building and in the Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes. Extensive archaeological evidence for the development of the house and landscape, and other uses in the landscape, exists but it should be considered to have lower level of significance than the primary buildings and landscape.*

### **Recreational value, High**

*Recreational value is not considered in the HES Inventory evaluation, although we consider it an important value in most designed landscapes, whether public or private places, and include it in CMPs. The existing level of use of Mavisbank policies for walking, enjoying nature and similar exercise or activity, including through routes on long distance paths, gives it high local or regional value, with potential for many additional forms of recreation for a wider base of users.*

### **3.4.2 Particular significance of Mavisbank**

- A natural valley containing the remnants of a designed landscape in a degraded state but virtually intact in terms of area within a highly urbanised and industrialised part of Midlothian.
- Whole site including the house and landscape recognised as of outstanding significance in the architectural and garden history of Scotland and the UK.
- Collaboration of Sir John Clerk and William Adam in the house design, both premier figures in the Scottish cultural history and the Enlightenment.
- Extensive documentary evidence in the Clerk of Penicuik archive (GD18) including the manuscript of *The County Seat* and other documentary sources.
- Survival of both Penicuik and Mavisbank with their principal buildings and designed landscapes add to this site's significance and are a major asset within Midlothian.
- A complete set of estate buildings including mansion house, walled garden, various garden buildings, doocot, game larder / ice-house, dairy and lodges, although in varying degrees of preservation and alteration.
- Landscape features including the lochan and old trees that show the evolution of the landscape through its different periods.
- Veteran trees from the earliest periods of the designed landscape.
- Archaeological evidence for the evolution of the Mavisbank landscape with high potential for investigations to reveal information useful for understanding and restoration.



- Evidence of mining from different periods that is significant in the relation to the source of the Clerks' wealth that made Mavisbank possible.
- Later use of the house by the Mavisbank Company as a *Private Lunatic Asylum* under the direction of Sir John Barry Tuke (aka Dr Batty Tuke, 1836-1913) with large sums spent on building extensions and improvements. Tuke was one of the most influential British psychiatrists of the late 19th-early 20thC and pioneering in his humane patient care and treatment that included the therapeutic use of the gardens and landscape that had begun at Saughton Hall in the west of Edinburgh before moving to Mavisbank.
- Mary E Burton as head gardener from c1896 for 38 years, reputedly the first female to be a head gardener in Scotland, and her pioneering position as woman within the gardening profession and its institutions, and her groundbreaking therapeutic use of gardening for the mentally ill.
- Features of decline include aspects that show the landscape in transition and a return to a more natural state, including landslips and natural regeneration of woodland.
- One of chain of designed landscapes and post-industrial sites along the valley of the North Esk and North Esk Way. Mavisbank is one of a number of cultural landscapes in the North Esk valley: Newhall, an 18thC picturesque landscape laid out along the river glen; Penicuik, an influential and fine example of the early 18thC and home of Sir John Clerk, creator of Mavisbank, that remains the residence of the Clerk family; Roslin Glen and Hawthornden Castle, a cultural landscape developed during the 18th and 19thC, epitomising the Scottish Romantic landscape as portrayed by numerous artists, historical and literary figures; Melville Castle, where elements of the designed landscape dating from c1765 survive; and Dalkeith House or Palace, a formal design, modified to an informal layout in the late 18thC that includes the meeting of the north and south branches of the river Esk.

### **3.4.3 Intrusions or negative significance**

Several major aspects of Mavisbank undermine the significance of the designed landscape including the following.

- Ruinous state of Mavisbank house; division of the house from the landscape by security fence.
- Degraded state of the designed landscape including loss of visual structure and loss or decline of historic planted features (parkland and avenue planting).
- Loss of two main drives to public use that prevent easy public access and limit maintenance / construction access to the landscape.
- Separation into different ownerships, particularly the division of the walled garden and the 'the Clumps' area from the main body of the landscape.
- Land slips breaking the line of east drive and exacerbating drainage problems.
- Land drainage issues creating access and land use problems.
- Power line crossing the valley.
- Siltation and colonisation of the lochan disguising the form of the waterbody; reduced water level.
- Visual intrusion of neighbouring buildings.

### **3.4.4 Significance by Zone**

(Plan 12)

#### **Zone 1 Mavisbank house and forecourt**

Outstanding national significance

#### **Zone 2 Roman hill**

Outstanding national significance

#### **Zone 3 South approach and woods**

Outstanding national significance

#### **Zone 4 North approach and woods**

High national significance / outstanding site significance

#### **Zone 5 Clumps parkland**

High national significance / outstanding site significance

#### **Zone 6 Walled garden and estate buildings**

Outstanding national significance

#### **Zone 7 Central parkland**

Outstanding national significance

#### **Zone 8 Lochan and setting**

Outstanding national significance

#### **Zone 9 Valleyside woods, south**

Some national significance / high site significance

#### **Zone 10 River terrace woods**

High national significance / high site significance

#### **Zone 11 Valleyside woods, north**

High national significance / outstanding site significance

#### **Zone 12 Garden park**

High national significance / outstanding site significance

#### **Zone 13 Cumming and Kevock parks**

Some national significance / high site significance

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## 4 Management issues

The following are broad management issues resulting from our analysis of the designed landscape today and in its historical context that are affecting the significance of the place or could affect it in the future. These are set out as part of the process of defining what needs to be done to best conserve the designed landscape through objectives and policies for the future in the next section.

### 4.1 Coordination of conservation priorities and uses for the designed landscape with those for Mavisbank house

Plans for future of the house and plans for the landscape have been evolving during the preparation of this CMP. Proposals for both parts of the place are now the subject of a single project being prepared for a National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) funding bid which will present a coordinated approach.

In the event of an unsuccessful bid, the house would continue to face an uncertain future but the landscape would still require management and a level of investment to achieve a sustainable future. The CMP needs to cater for both scenarios.

### 4.2 Division of house and the landscape

At present the house and landscape are separated by a security fence and overgrown vegetation, particularly in the forecourt area. This will inevitably change with restoration of the house, although the options for use of the parterre area between the wings and outer forecourt will be affected by the circulation requirements for the uses of the house and pavilions, including possibly residents, disabled, staff and visitor parking, service access etc.

### 4.3 Loss of use of north and south drives / vehicular access to the site for essential visitors, maintenance and construction

The ownership of the north drive and use restrictions on the south drive are a major impediment to the development of the house and landscape, both in terms of the access they could provide for pedestrians and vehicles and the loss of the planned approaches to the house and through the landscape. The routes have further limitations including poor sightlines and width restriction on the north drive at the north lodge on Lasswade Road and very narrow and twisting approach roads through residential areas to reach the south drive at Polton bridge, as outlined in an initial assessment of access options by Midlothian Council Transportation Dept in July 2015.

Resolution of the impediments to the use of the drives through consultation with landowners needs to be taken forward in conjunction with the development of proposals for the future of the house in order to allow a degree of access to the house, for disabled visitors to access the house and landscape, for local users on foot and for construction. Beyond that provision for the bulk of visitor access, both local people and regional or more distant visitors, will need to be made elsewhere. Previous studies and our assessment show that a new access point from Lasswade Road with a small car park and pedestrian and maintenance routes down into the valley to be the most practicable option.

### 4.4 Good access for visitors on foot

The main route for visitors from the directions of Lasswade, Loanhead and Polton on foot is along the North Esk Way from the south-west or north-east. From both directions the path is problematic – narrow, steep and stepped from Kevock and narrow and uneven with potential stability issues from Springfield. The only option for car-borne visitors is to park at Springfield Mill (car park or roadside), which for visitors from a distance is difficult to find and involves negotiating very narrow and winding roads down into the valley. Local people find their way into

Mavisbank by a number of worn paths from Loanhead and from Kevock road following the east drive (all as shown on Plan 6).

While some of these routes can be upgraded to a degree, making them accessible to all users is difficult. To make a viable project that provides the investment needed for proper conservation and management of the landscape, and caters for less able visitors, an alternative access route with car parking is needed, as well as improving pedestrian access from Loanhead centre, Polton, Bonnyrigg and Lasswade.

#### **4.5 Provision of off-site car parking for visitors**

Options for car park locations are very limited given the lack of vehicle routes into the site. Expansion of the Springfield Mill car park from the 4 or 5 current spaces is possible (with some loss of amenity space) and would provide useful additional capacity, although the narrow approach roads and their routes through residential areas limit this option. The only other viable option would be a new access route from Lasswade Road to the north, as noted in 4.3.

This option has been investigated previously by the Mavisbank Trust and a proposal for an 3.5m wide access road and 30-bay car park developed by Wren & Bell (drwg.no.12.054-AD01 rev.E). The road was intended to join an upgraded section of the east drive to reach the house and core of the landscape and was discussed with Midlothian Council Planning in a pre-application meeting. Implementation of the scheme by the Royal Engineers was also considered.

#### **4.6 Protecting the setting of the landscape**

The Inventory boundary recognises the importance of the open land to the north of the site to the setting of Mavisbank, while recognising that it was never part of the policies. The Conservation Area boundary goes further and includes the well-wooded south side of the valley. The survival of Mavisbank policies within a heavily urbanised and industrialised part of the Lothians has been noted as a major significance factor. There is a case for permanently protecting the setting by including the lands between the policies and Lasswade Road in the plan with proposals for suitable additional planting and provision for access, maintaining some agricultural use as a permanent extension to the landscape of the policies.

#### **4.7 Balancing community interests with viable future use for house and landscape**

Planned futures for the house and landscape need to restore the house to viable uses and provide a complementary plan for the cultural landscape while also developing the place as both an asset for the local communities and destination for visitors from further away – preserving and enhancing the cultural values of the place while also recognising its natural values in terms of topography, scenery, habitats and species.

We take the view that the site's future lies in accepting the site as it now is, rather than in prioritising a short period of its past history, and that this current state embodies these cultural and natural values. In adopting this type of approach, it is hoped that the interests of all stakeholders and existing and potential users can be met. Previous community consultations have shown appreciation of the natural environment and tranquility of the place, with considerable support for at least a partial restoration of the landscape.

Community interest potentially extends far beyond having a nice quiet place to walk the dog – with employment and training opportunities, with encouraging more people to enjoy the health benefits of exercise outdoors in various activities, with enhanced value for educational uses, with active management and improvement of the natural environment, and with a wide-ranging programme of activities and events.

#### **4.8 Balancing conservation of the cultural landscape with nature conservation**

The site has outstanding architectural and designed landscape values on a national basis and significant nature conservation value on a local basis. Much of the attraction of the landscape now comes from its visual or internal scenic value in its semi-natural state, particularly around the lochan, in addition to its scientific ecological values – this being overlaid on the naturalistic style of designed landscape that evolved in the 19th century. Many people value these natural features over the cultural landscape, without always having an understanding of the evolution of the landscape. In any case, accessible semi-natural landscape with uses in education, healthy exercise and so on is to be valued. A balance of cultural and nature conservation priorities needs to be embodied in the plan.

#### **4.9 Achieving a sustainable future for the landscape**

To achieve a sustainable future for the landscape the plan needs to be attractive to visitors, both local and distant, it needs to be robust in conservation terms, restoring the house and revitalising the cultural and living landscape, it needs to be made fully accessible and safe and it has to be affordable – the investment has to be in proportion to the levels of visitors and income that can expect to be generated and at a level that is realistic to funding agencies while also being affordable in terms of long-term running and maintenance costs to be borne by HES or others who may become responsible for the site.

#### **4.10 Sufficient evidence for a period restoration of the landscape**

Despite previous plans for the restoration of the formal landscape in the period of the John Clerk 2nd baronet in the early-18thC to complement the house, there are huge gaps in our knowledge of the landscape, with much of the evidence being circumstantial and very fragmentary and certainly insufficient to restore the detail of this landscape. There is not much potential for further research, apart from archaeological investigation (see below), that could fill the wide gaps in our knowledge of the place. While some research and site investigations may answer some questions, the big issue remains as to whether it is right to restore a transitory landscape of which little remains on the ground.

What mainly survives on site is the 19thC landscape in the naturalistic design style, with its overlay of naturalisation, and this would be destroyed to a significant degree by restoration of the earlier landscape. We believe the future lies in working with what we have on site, preserving all evidence of the phased evolution of the landscape, rather than in what is often referred to as ‘turning back the clock’.

#### **4.11 Restoration of views**

Almost regardless of any periods being prioritised in management or restoration, there is value in reopening and maintaining the most important view lines that have been a major feature of the landscape at various points in the site’s history, including the axial *allée* views. Such views would add to the attractions of the landscape and, with interpretation, increase visitor’s appreciation of its history.

#### **4.12 Archaeological investigation**

Despite the number of reports and plans for Mavisbank over the years, very little has been done in the way of archaeological investigation to help answer some of the key questions about the layout of the early landscape, for example, the line of the *allées* and their planting, or the lines of paths and their dimensions and materials. A programme of archaeological investigation, particularly by trenches across suspected lines, needs to be a priority in the development stage of the project, with the evidence produced potentially having an impact on the emphasis of the landscape proposals.

#### 4.13 Resolution of long-standing drainage problems

Land drainage problems affect several parts of the site and have been investigated and recorded by HES and others, as summarised in Plan 7 and under W08 above. Works have been undertaken to resolve some issues, as also shown in Plan 7 and W08. Considerable areas of poor drainage or wetland remain, particularly affecting parts of the east drive and being an underlying cause of land instability in the east of the site. A coordinated plan to rectify drainage issues is needed as part of the management plan, related to restoration of the lochan and historic drainage features. However, works need to be balanced with the benefits of wetland areas to nature conservation.

#### 4.14 Dealing with landslips and reinstatement of East drive

Slope instability is a characteristic of the valley landform and is likely to be exacerbated by poor drainage resulting from failure of land drains. Landslips in the east part of the site have destroyed the route of the east drive and resulted in a significant failure below the doocot. The works here in 2018 were only to improve local stability of the top headscarp and there is a continuing risk of global instability in the wider slope. This will need to be assessed in relation to the restoration of the east drive, which is likely to be an essential part of a masterplan for the policies, as well as the general use of the area in future plans.

#### 4.15 Visual intrusion of buildings and power lines

Given the wider setting of Mavisbank, it is surprising that there are few visual intrusions into the rural character of the valley, except for the modern house overlooking the site from the north-east end, ie. 16 Kevock Road, a Cat B listed building by Morris & Steadman from 1952, described in the listing as “overlooking the glen down to Mavisbank ... carefully designed to take maximum advantage of the magnificent view. Perhaps inspired in form by Frank Lloyd Wright’s ‘Falling Water’”. The building’s elevated position makes screening difficult, but it may be possible for screen planting to block the most intrusive views.

Otherwise the only notable intrusion is the power line on poles cross the valley close to Glenkevock.

#### 4.16 Grassland management

Large areas of the site – approximately 14 of the 27 hectares – are grassland and likely to remain so – in the central parkland, Garden park and Cumming and Kevock parks. The areas have been grazed in the past, and are fenced accordingly, but are now mown due to the incompatibility of grazing livestock with a high level of public access. Grassland management in the future needs to be sustainable, avoiding frequent mowing and leaving some areas uncut, and to be related to ecological objectives for habitat enhancement and species diversity. A number of internal stock fence lines could be removed if grazing is unlikely in the future.

#### 4.17 Woodland and individual tree management

The majority of the rest of the landscape is woodland, either of plantation origin or natural regeneration, all in a virtually unmanaged state. Part is identified by SNH as ancient woodland of semi-natural origin (by 1750) while the majority is long-established woodland of plantation origin (by 1860). All needs to be brought under systematic management based on the objectives for the cultural and natural landscape. The 2011 *Woodland Management Plan* by Lothians and Fife Green Network Partnership for Midlothian Council provides a thorough basis for a new woodland management plan, to update the earlier surveys and revise its proposals to reflect the approach and objectives in this CMP. The Ecology report 2019 outlines the main measures from a nature conservation perspective for each WMP compartment that need to be incorporated (see MBEC Table 6: Summary of Proposed Management Objectives for each Woodland Compartment).

Significant individual trees are included in the updated *Tree Survey* by Donald Rodger Associates 2019. While no immediate tree works were considered necessary under the prevailing level of public use, this will need to be reviewed in relation to the CMP proposals; for example, works may be necessary to trees near new or reopened path routes or new public facilities.

#### **4.18 Water and wetland management**

The presence of spring lines and a high water table in parts of the site contributes to the site's nature conservation value. The ecological impact of drainage proposals needs to be carefully considered so that existing wetland areas of value can be retained and protected.

Some carefully targeted ecological improvement of the lochan is possible, allied with reinstatement to its former water level by restotation of the weir outfall or a replacement weir. However, it is recommended that a detailed survey of the lochan (plants and invertebrates) is completed prior to implementing any management measures that could directly or indirectly affect the habitat value of the water body.

The extent of open water within the lochan appears to have reduced markedly since 2014. Although this is partly the result natural successional processes, some of this change is due to the rapid growth of New Zealand pygmyweed. This plant should be removed / controlled (as noted below). There is also the potential to improve the habitat diversity of the pond by some careful removal (by hand) of bulrush to reduce the extent of dense growth on the pond margins.

#### **4.19 Protection of valued species**

Measures need to be included in site management and development to ensure that legally protected species receive the consideration and protection they require by law. Species identified at Mavisbank include badger, bats in buildings or ruins, bats in trees and breeding birds, while further surveys should be undertaken before works for great crested newts and otters to ensure no detrimental effects, all as contained in the Ecology report.

#### **4.20 Control of non-native invasive plants**

Control of invasive plant species is necessary. Rhododentron presents the biggest problem, particularly in the woodland areas and shrubberies nearest to the house. The significant progress that has been achieved in rhododendron clearance in recent years needs to be continued to achieve complete eradication.

Other invasive species present in the site are Japanese knotweed and Indian balsam, that also have been controlled, although stands of both remain and require further herbicide treatment to eradicate them. Several other invasive species of garden origin occur locally in small numbers and also require control.

As noted above, New Zealand pygmyweed is a significant problem in the lochan. It is a fast growing non-native invasive aquatic plant that is easily spread, with new plants being able to grow from a small fragement of stem material. It out-shades other aquatic species and can deplete oxygen levels in a pond, which can be detrimental to aquatic organisms. The New Zealand pigmyweed within the lochan should be treated to reduced and if possible remove the dense stands that have developed on the margins. The emergent parts of the plant could be treated with an approved herbicide, following SEPA guidance, during the autumn, within the plants growth period. It can be a very difficult to eliminate and it is likely that a number of treatments will be required. The site should be monitored for signs of regrowth

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## 5 Management policies and proposals

### 5.1 Overall vision

To manage and develop the Mavisbank policies to preserve and enhance their cultural and natural significance and to create a distinctive visitor attraction based on their intrinsic values in coordination with restoration of Mavisbank house.

The future of Mavisbank policies lies in celebrating the site as it is now, recognising its seminal flowering as laid out by Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, but also the evolution of the landscape in the natural style in the 19th century, its subsequent use for psychiatric therapy, and the present environmental values of the more naturalised landscape and its topographic and scenic setting.

The future therefore lies with working what we have on site rather than turning back the clock, to maximise Mavisbank's value for all audiences and to adapt and manage the site to reflect the needs and priorities of 21st-century society.

While aiming to prevent further loss of features of the 18th and 19th centuries and restore significant features where practicable – for example, by reopening key vistas, restocking parkland, avenues and woods and restoring historic paths – the revitalisation of the landscape will also respect the site's ecological, geological and other scientific values. This will create many ways to use and appreciate the policies, significantly improve accessibility and provide opportunities for new activities.

### 5.2 Conservation management objectives

Objectives are simple statements of what it is intended to achieve in the planning and design of the project, covering all relevant areas of interest, as the basis for the proposals of the plan, that is, the policies and any actions derived from them. The aim should be to balance objectives where there may be a degree of conflict through the adopted policies. No priority in the objectives is intended by the order in which they appear.

- To conserve historic features – standing, buried and living – of all periods by protection, stabilisation and restoration as appropriate.
- To achieve integrated development of the house uses and proposals with those for the landscape.
- To maximise accessibility of the landscape for all users and provide links with and between local communities.
- To plan for the use of Mavisbank by both local people and visitors and involve them in planning and management.
- To preserve and enhance the separation of the settlements of Loanhead, Lasswade, Bonnyrigg and Polton provided by the wooded valley of the Esk at Mavisbank.
- To encourage mental and physical health and well-being in the local and wider community by enjoyment of the outdoors and exercise.
- To promote understanding of the history and development of Mavisbank and its natural values and make good use of its educational potential.
- To enhance the existing natural habitats and increase their species diversity, including care of protected species.
- To incorporate new uses and features where compatible with the significance of the place that will benefit future viability.



- To increase knowledge and understanding of the development of the landscape by research and site investigations.
- To manage using environmentally sustainable methods, minimising environmental impacts.
- To develop proposals that make full use of funding opportunities and income from the resources of the site.

### **5.3 Conservation management policies by zone**

(Plan 12)

Broadly defined proposed policies for conservation management for each Landscape Character Zone are given here and shown in Plan 12. More detail on policies affecting publicly accessible parts and the actions proposed for the site is shown in the next section (5.4).

#### **Zone 1 Mavisbank house and forecourt**

Outstanding national significance

- Archaeological investigation
- House and pavilions restoration
- Forecourt restoration
- Access for house uses
- Restock planting

#### **Zone 2 Roman hill**

Outstanding national significance

- Archaeological investigation
- Restore terraces and paths
- Parkland and shrubbery restocking
- Boundary and internal walls

#### **Zone 3 South approach and woods**

Outstanding national significance

- Archaeological investigation
- South drive service access
- Woodland and shrubbery management
- Restore paths and steps
- Restore garden buildings and structures
- Boundary treatments

#### **Zone 4 North approach and woods**

High national significance / outstanding site significance

- Drive and paths restoration
- Woodland management
- Boundary treatments

**Zone 5 Clumps parkland \***

(\* = outwith HES ownership)

High national significance / outstanding site significance

- Maintain existing use
- Encourage parkland restocking

**Zone 6 Walled garden and estate buildings \***

(\* = outwith HES ownership)

Outstanding national significance

- Maintain existing uses
- Public access route improvements

**Zone 7 Central parkland**

Outstanding national significance

- Archaeological investigations
- Restore *allée* route, drives and paths
- Land drainage
- Rationalise fences
- Parkland restocking

**Zone 8 Lochan and setting**

Outstanding national significance

- Archaeological investigations
- Lochan dredging, weir restoration
- Restore drives and paths
- Parkland restocking

**Zone 9 Valleyside woods, west**

Some national significance / high site significance

- Archaeological investigations
- Drive and paths restoration
- Visitor access
- Land drainage
- Woodland management
- View management
- Rationalise fences
- Boundary treatments

**Zone 10 River terrace woods**

High national significance / high site significance

- Archaeological investigations
- Woodland management

### **Zone 11 Valleyside woods, east**

High national significance / outstanding site significance

- Archaeological investigations
- Drive and paths restoration
- Land drainage
- Woodland management
- View management
- Boundary treatments

### **Zone 12 Garden park**

High national significance / outstanding site significance

- Archaeological investigations
- Land drainage
- Woodland management

### **Zone 13 Cumming and Kevock parks**

Some national significance / high site significance

- Paths upgrading
- Grassland management
- Boundary treatments
- New uses

## **5.4 Management policies and proposals**

(Plan 13)

General policies (shown bolder below) and actions derived from them are presented here. These are derived from the assessment of the significance of the Mavisbank landscape in all its aspects and the related management issues in the preceding sections. The policies and proposals are summarised in Plan 13.

The priority of proposals is indicated by the following suffixes:

E = early action, required to progress the project to the next stage

S = short term or first priority

M = medium term or second priority

L = long term action or management

**MP1. Manage the landscape to conserve its extant character, features and surviving historic artefacts of all periods, prioritising management or restoration of features that survive intact or for which there is good detailed evidence, while not precluding the possibility of more complete restoration of the key early Clerk landscape in the future when understanding and resources allow.**

- Restore particular built, water, circulation and planted features as included below. S or M
- Ensure archaeological monitoring of excavation works and all other works associated with historic structures or other features. L

**MP2. Prioritise archaeological investigation and recording of garden buildings, allées, path routes, former building locations etc as a basis for restoration of key features.**

Particular priorities for research and recording include the following.

- Investigation of the earthwork site of the farm steading complex that is shown on the 1697 Mavisbank plan. This farm ended its life with the development of Mavisbank house and policies in the early 18th century and its site remained undisturbed since then – an interesting time-capsule. Investigation might include high resolution geophysics followed by some evaluation. If preservation proves to be good then consider further work. M
- Investigation of ‘Roman Fort’ hill – to determine whether there was an early origin to the feature or whether it was wholly an invention of the Clerk family; if the latter, the nature and extent of any 18thC earthworks. E or S
- Historic building survey of the early structures – eg. doocot, walled garden gates, other gates, game larder etc. Some of these would be excellent as public-engagement training exercises. E
- Historic building survey and ground investigation of the cricket pavilion site on the exterior east side of the walled garden wall, an early historic sporting-related site of the mid 19th century. E
- Investigation of the mansion forecourt area and 18th century landforms between it and the canal / lochan; investigation of the lines of all three *allées* and evidence of their ‘construction’ and planting; ditto for terrace walk and second north *allée* aligned on Roman hill. E
- Investigation of all known path lines and steps, mainly known from map and ground evidence, their materials, construction etc. E
- Investigation of 18th / 19th century water and drainage systems, particularly in the vicinity of the canal / lochan and group of features to the south; also those associated with mine day levels north of Garden park. E

**MP3. Restore or stabilise garden buildings and recreate lost features**

- Stabilise outbuildings to north and south of house and pavilions, restoring those that can be utilised in estate management, including the vaulted store. S
- Complete stabilisation of game larder and ice-house building with works to ice-house entrance, secure iron grille gate, works to chamber as necessary and paths restoration. S
- Investigate site of former summer house and create viewpoint. S or M
- Stabilise doocot, with iron grille gate, form paths and steps, create viewpoint. S
- Restore ha-ha and wall lines at Roman hill (B19), Valleyside Wood south (B22), south boundary (B25) and retaining walls in the vicinity of the house and along its access routes. S or M

**MP4. Develop and restore the immediate curtilage of the house and pavilions to new uses balancing historic reconstruction with the requirements of public amenity and access**

- Provide disabled car spaces and access routes to the house and pavilions. S
- Provide essential routes for paying guests and servicing requirements. S
- Ensure public path routes take account of the privacy and tranquillity of paying guests in the main house. E

**MP5. Restore water and drainage system (main drains and land drainage), including the informal lochan, and deal with land instability where this affects access and safety.**

- Investigate land drains and reinstate drainage system at west end of east drive. E & S
- Investigate land drains and reinstate drainage system along the route of the east drive as necessary to facilitate use of drive as a main path route. Drainage of areas to be balanced with ecological aims, with the option of boardwalks through wet areas. E & S
- Investigate land drains and reinstate drainage system in east of site, south of doocot, to establish need for further drainage and stabilisation of slopes and alternative measures. E & S
- Investigate water supply to lochan (former north burn, springs to north) and residual drain / outfall from lochan; restore lochan weir (or stabilise and construct new weir) and lochan banks; dredge lochan in sections (following Ecologist report recommendations and SEPA advice) to re-establish former water level of lochan (see also MP14). E & S

**MP6. Maximise accessibility within the landscape on foot and cycle using the historic system of routes, adapted to present ownership boundaries and with new links to create a comprehensive system catering for circular walks and through routes**

- Restore paths in South drive woods, Roman hill, forecourt, Valleyside woods and elsewhere where there is good evidence. S
- Create new paths and selected formalised worn paths to create comprehensive path layout with circular routes including in the above locations, Kevock park and elsewhere. S to M

**MP7. Provide for convenient access for car-borne visitors and essential users while planning for the use of public transport**

- Develop disabled visitor parking area in vicinity of the house with shared house access. S
- Develop new car park adjacent to Lasswade Road (potentially up to 40 car spaces) with pedestrian routes to link with east drive (direct main route and shallow gradient zigzag route), for use also for maintenance access, with screen and amenity planting. S
- Expand car park at Springfield Mill for local use. S or M
- Plan bus stops at Lasswade Road access point. S

**MP8. Maximise access to Mavisbank on foot and by cycle by maintaining or upgrading existing routes, ranging from informal worn paths to core paths, in cooperation with Midlothian Council, land owners and other stakeholders**

- Upgrade riverside route from Springfield Mill by restoring retaining walls, stabilising river bank and providing all-users surface. S and M
- Maintain and upgrade where necessary the path from Kevock Road. M
- Upgrade access to east drive from Kevock Road in consultation with adjoining owners. S
- Formalise worn path from Braeside Terrace and other routes. S
- Include other opportunities for footpath access. M

**MP9. Re-establish the historic visual structure of clearly-defined open spaces, routes, viewpoints, vistas and views, by managing existing tree cover to re-create period features, so enhancing the visitor experience.**

- Re-establish the historic visual boundaries to character areas / plantations under woodland management. S to M
- Re-open principal view-lines (central *allée*, north *allée* etc) where opportunity arises in woodland management, eg. felling of spruce plantation, natural loss of trees. S to M
- Group trees in pairs in the restocking of the central parkland to channel vistas along former *allée* lines. S

**MP10. Manage the enhancement of all habitats of value as contained in the Ecological report, including woodlands, grasslands and water bodies or wetlands, including their natural scenic value.**

- Conserve areas of special natural scenic value that have evolved naturally during periods of neglect, eg. north-east of the lochan. S to L
- Generally pursue the objectives for habitats recommended in the Ecological report, as summarised in the following policies. S to L

**MP11. Manage woodlands, scrubland and individual trees for mixed objectives including those for access, amenity, designed landscape and habitat values, including replanting / restocking to add to these values and respecting historic plantation boundaries.**

- Commission a revised update to the 2011 Woodland Management Plan by Edinburgh and Fife Green Network Partnership for Midlothian Council. reviewed in detail to reflect the current condition of woodland and scrub habitats, the CMP objectives and policies, and the Ecological report recommendations as covered in its Table 6: Summary of Proposed Management Objectives for each Woodland Compartment incorporating the following of its general principles. E
- All specimen, veteran and ancient trees and their root plates should be protected from damage caused by works to footpaths, drainage, regrading etc. Tree work for public safety and amenity should be limited to essential works, retaining as much standing deadwood as possible. S to L
- Selectively thin sections of dense woodland and some areas of mature scrub, to create open glades and encourage natural regeneration and a more natural woodland understory, thus improving the structural diversity of the woodland, increasing light to ground-flora level and the range of and quality of habitats for woodland and woodland edge plants and invertebrates. S to L
- Any felled or fallen wood should be kept on site and used to create woodland floor deadwood habitat and suitable refugia for invertebrates, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians. S to L
- Manage towards achieving a largely native species composition in all woodlands where exotic species are not part of the landscape character. All restocking of trees should be with suitable native species of as local provenance as possible. S to L
- Control rhododendron, together with cherry laurel and cotoneaster where not identified as a design component for retention, following the same methods that have previously been successful within the site (as under invasive species below). S

**MP12. Recreate parkland and wilderness landscape character areas by restocking trees, shrubbery etc.**

- Restore / restock central parkland, as below. S
- Restore / restock south drive woodland / wilderness-type planting. S to M
- Manage and restock plantation woodlands generally to this policy as included in an updated WMP. S to M

**MP13. Manage grassland and other open ground sustainably to enhance landscape character and the value of habitats.**

- Plan mowing regimes to enhance grassland habitats and species diversity including unmown and infrequently mown areas in the outer landscape, as recommended in the Ecological report. S
- Remove fences and gates that are superfluous to management without grazing animals. S

**MP14. Manage the lochan and wetlands to conserve or enhance their ecological value in coordination with aims for access, landscape restoration and new uses.**

- Retain and protect existing wetland areas of value where they are not affected by access proposals, new uses etc and maintain spring lines and high water table that contribute to the site's nature conservation value, limiting drainage proposals to essential works. S to L
- Re-establish the water level in the lochan and increase the extent of open water by New Zealand pigmyweed treatment, bulrush reduction, phased dredging and restoration or replacement of the outfall weir to improve it as an amenity and as a freshwater and marginal habitat. A detailed survey of the lochan plants, amphibians and invertebrates should precede any management measures that could directly or indirectly affect the water body. E and S

**MP15. Conserve animal and plant species protected by law, together with species of local and regional value, and enhance their habitats**

- Conserve the habitats and known sites of protected species – including badgers, bats in buildings and ruins, bats in trees, breeding birds – during the planning, design and construction stages of the project, observe breeding seasons etc for works and obtain licences as necessary, as described in the Ecological report (para 4.2). S, M and L
- Resurvey for great crested newts and otters to ensure none are affected by the project proposals, otherwise follow preceding policy. E
- Conserve and enhance habitats of other species of local or regional value by similar measures where ever possible. S, M and L

**MP16. Control non-native invasive plants**

- Continue removal of rhododendron through mechanical clearance and stem treatment in all areas where it occurs to eradicate all remaining established plants. Apply similar control methods to laurel, cotoneaster and buddleia (as above). S
- Control Japanese knotweed and Indian balsam by continued herbicide treatment to achieve complete eradication; similarly any other scheduled species. S to L

- Treat New Zealand pigmyweed in the lochan to achieve its eradication. The emergent parts of the plant should be treated with approved herbicide, following SEPA guidance, in the autumn during the plant's growth period; repeat treatment to achieve complete elimination. S

**MP17. Supplement the protection of the Mavisbank site and enhance the Conservation Area by off-site planting and landscape management in cooperation with owners.**

- Extend planting of The Bowl (car park site) to the whole field. S or M
- Extend roadside tree planting along the whole A768 boundary as far as Kevock Road. S or M

**MP18. Plan for and encourage the use of paths and spaces for easy general access for walking, cycling and running while planning and equipping specific routes for exercise and as interpretive trails**

- Plan and equip path layout for different forms of exercise and publicise with leaflets, web-based information etc eg. fitness trail, orienteering etc. S to M
- Plan and waymark path layout for different themed trails and publicise with leaflets, web-based information etc eg. nature subjects, tree trail, landscape evolution etc. S to M

**MP19. Incorporate appropriate new features and facilities in keeping with the *genius loci* where this will benefit the appeal and viability of the project.**

- Develop potential public / community use for former cricket field (possible return to cricket, annual events); ditto other large spaces. S to M
- Plan spaces and facilities for other suitable activities: adventure playground, wildlife watching, artwork, community garden and others. S to M
- Develop theme of Landscape Evolution that typifies Mavisbank – the natural forces and man-made changes that have created it and continue to affect it. S

**MP20. Promote understanding of the history and development of Mavisbank by on-site and web-based interpretation, and by site works.**

- Instigate works that increase understanding of the landscape such as parkland tree groups above. S
  - Commission an Interpretation Strategy. E
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## Appendix 1

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Designed Landscape  
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