

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

WYTHENSHAWE PARK

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Name:	WYTHENSHAW PARK
District:	Manchester (Metropolitan Authority)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 53.404314 Longitude: -2.2757731 National Grid Reference: SJ 81763 89757 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000857 Date first listed: 20-Feb-1986

Details

A park laid out by 1830 which incorporates elements of a landscape shown in an estate map of 1641, and a garden of c 1850 probably designed by John Shaw with the owner Thomas William Tatton.

CHRONOLOGY OF HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The site was formed from part of a deer park and a deer fence is mentioned in a pre 1300 charter. The Tatton family owned land in the area as early as 1297, but there is no evidence for a house on or near the site of the present building until the C16. Robert Tatton commissioned a survey of the estate's tenanted and demesne lands and a map was prepared by surveyor Richard Martinscroft in 1641. The Hall was surrendered to Parliamentary forces in 1643 but returned to Robert Tatton following the Restoration. The estate remained in the Tatton family until 1926 when the Hall and 250 acres of the estate were purchased by Sir Ernest Simon and his wife Shena who presented them to the City of Manchester.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Wythenshawe Park is situated c 8km south of Manchester city centre, between Northern Moor to the north and Baguley to the south. The land is level and the area is urban and residential in character. On the west side of the c 56ha park is an extensive area of playing fields and recreational facilities formed from estate land, which forms part of the setting. The boundaries are formed by Wythenshawe Road to the north, the M56 motorway to the east, and Altrincham Road to the south, following the old course of the road to Wythenshawe Bridge. The western boundary is formed by a drive running south from Wythenshawe Road along the edge of the gardens and kitchen garden area to Baguley Brook where the boundary of the historic park merges with former fields to the west. An estate map of 1830 shows it followed the line of Baguley Brook as far as Wythenshawe Bridge. The north, south and east boundaries conform closely with boundaries suggested by roads, lanes and the Baguley Brook on the estate map of 1641.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES There are three main entrances to the park. On Wythenshawe Road there is a lodge called North Lodge (listed grade II) of c 1870, and iron gates. The northern entrance appears to be on or close to the site of an entrance shown on the 1641 estate map. A drive shown on the 1830 estate map runs south from the lodge to the Hall. It continues south through the park to the former line of Altrincham Road where there is the remains of an entrance with a stone gate pier c 10m east of Wythenshawe Bridge. A lodge was formerly situated c 20m to the north of this and is shown on the 1st edition OS map published 1882 and a 1927 deed of conveyance (Manchester Local Studies Library). Another entrance is situated on

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Wythenshawe Road c 200m west of the North Lodge. This was formerly a service entrance leading to the stables and is shown on the 1882 OS map; it is now the principal vehicular entrance. There are a number of informal pedestrian entrances around the perimeter.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Wythenshawe Hall (listed grade II*) contains fabric probably of C16 date. There is evidence that Robert Tatton built a hall in the years after 1530, possibly replacing an earlier building. The site is thought to have been moated (Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record), and a depression immediately outside the wall of the garden on the east side of the Hall could be the remains of a moat. The Hall was remodelled c 1795-1800 by Lewis Wyatt and possibly by Edward Blore c 1840. Works of restoration in the mid and late C20 have included substantial rebuilding and replacement of timbers. The Hall is situated towards the western edge of the park looking over parkland to the east and gardens to the west. Some 50m west of the Hall is a stable block of late C18/early C19 date (listed grade II) which consists of stables and related accommodation ranged around a courtyard; this is now used for offices and storage. A dairy yard was formerly situated immediately to the west of the stable block; this was demolished c 1965.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS On the east side of the Hall a stone wall encloses a forecourt which has a central circular bed with a sundial and rectilinear lawns on each side, approximating to the layout shown on the 1882 OS map. Early C19 views suggest that this replaced a less formal arrangement with shrubberies and specimen trees. There is a gated entrance in the stone wall aligned with the main entrance to the Hall.

On the west side of the Hall a garden is enclosed by the stable-yard walls to the south-west, a brick wall to the west and a hedge around the north and west. An entrance between the Hall and stables leads past a rock garden in the south-east corner of the garden. Formal beds which extend along the west front of the Hall were formerly laid out in the form of heraldic motifs drawn from the family coat of arms. A conservatory probably designed by John Shaw (fl 1845-90) and constructed in 1855 has been demolished, as has a first-floor conservatory in the Hall which overlooked the rock garden. A pond, probably of late C20 date, is situated c 40m west of the Hall in the southern part of the garden. A path runs west from the Hall across lawns with specimen trees and divides after c 70m. One path leads northwards through woodland along the northern perimeter of the garden and another leads south-west to an entrance in a brick wall with a central arched gateway flanked by brick piers. The gardens were laid out during the 1850s and John Shaw of Manchester was probably the designer, in collaboration with Thomas William Tatton (TLCAS 1991). The boundary conforms with that shown on an estate map of 1830 when the garden on the west side of the Hall was wooded, with an open area in front of the Hall. The map suggests that the mid C19 alterations introduced new formality on the eastern and western fronts but retained the existing woodland.

PARK The park is situated on the north, south and east sides of the Hall and consists of open grassland with clumps and belts of trees substantially as shown on the 1830 estate map. There are three large clumps in the parkland to the east and north of the Hall and belts of trees along the north and east boundaries, around the kitchen garden and to the south of the Hall and stables. An additional clump c 400m to the south-east of the Hall, not on the 1830 map, is shown on the 1882 OS map. A tree belt along Gib Lane, on the south-eastern boundary, conforms with planting shown on the 1641 estate map. The largest clump is known as the Big Round and is situated c 200m south-east of the Hall; this seems to be defined partly by the rounded edges of two fields known as Swine Parkes in 1641. Some 100m to the north of the Big Round is another clump, and between the two are the remains of a ha-ha wall. This feature survives as a depression elsewhere and can be traced across the park from the northern to the southern boundary; it is shown on the 1830 estate map and it appears to follow the western boundaries of fields called Great Saxfield and Lesser Saxfield on the 1641 estate map. Ridge and furrow is visible in the area once covered by these fields. The Tatton family papers list substantial sales of timber in 1810 and the felling of trees at this time suggests a possible date for the formation of the park as shown on the 1830 estate map.

An avenue of chestnuts which was planted c 1934 is aligned with the east front of the Hall and runs east to the park boundary from a point immediately east of the ha-ha. A statue of Oliver Cromwell of 1857 (listed grade II) by Matthew Noble was moved from Manchester city centre in 1967 and positioned c 100m east of the Hall, in line with the avenue. Mature planting between the ha-ha and the Hall is suggestive of a vestigial avenue and conforms with the lines of field boundaries shown on

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Inventory of Great Britain
WYTHENSHAWE PARK

the 1641 estate map. The 1830 estate map shows some planting in the area and the appearance of an avenue was reinforced by the 1930s? planting.

A late C20 children's playground is situated between the woodland belt around the kitchen garden and woodland to the south of the Hall and stables.

KITCHEN GARDEN A walled kitchen garden is situated in a patch of woodland c 250m south-west of the Hall. The walls of the garden are of red brick and there is a range of bothies and other buildings on the outer face of the north wall. Inside there is fencing relating to its late C20 use as an aviary and for keeping small animals. Greenhouses in the garden shown on the 1882 OS map and on the 1927 deed of conveyance plan have been demolished. The garden and surrounding woodland are shown on the 1830 estate map and conform approximately with the shape and position of a field called Laton Eye on the 1641 estate map.

REFERENCES

Trans Lancashire Cheshire Antiq Soc 20, (1902), p 269 N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: South Lancashire* (1969), pp 343-4 W H Shercliff (ed), *Wythenshawe, a History of the Townships of Northenden, North Etchells and Baguley 1*, (1974), pp 72-4 Trans Lancashire Cheshire Antiq Soc 80, (1979), pp 25-9 *Parks for the People*, (Manchester City Art Galleries 1987), p 23 Trans Lancashire Cheshire Antiq Soc 87, (1991), pl 38

Maps R Martinscrofte, *A True Mapped or Topographical Description of The Lordshippe of Northenden*, 1641, (Manchester Local Studies Library, non OS map collection) W Nevil, *Plan of Estates Belonging to Thomas William Tatton Esq., 1830 (M/10/21/6)*, (Manchester Central Reference Library Archive Department) Plan which formed part of a deed of conveyance by which Lord Simon gave Wythenshawe Hall and Park to Manchester Corporation, 1927 (Manchester Local Studies Library, non OS map collection)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1882 3rd edition revised 1904-5 and 1907-8, published 1911 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition revised 1872-6, published 1898 3rd edition published 1910

Archival items Aerial photograph of Wythenshawe Hall and Park, 1951 (Wythenshawe Park Manager's Office)

Description written: March 1997 Register Inspector: CEH Edited: March 1999

Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.