

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

HENHAM

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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Name:	HENHAM
County:	Suffolk
District:	East Suffolk (District Authority)
Parish:	Blythburgh
County:	Suffolk
District:	East Suffolk (District Authority)
Parish:	Wangford with Henham
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.342606 Longitude: 1.6012603 National Grid Reference: TM 45400 77720 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000557 Date first listed: 01-Jun-1984

Details

Remains of C19 pleasure ground for which W B Thomas (possibly William Broderick Thomas) provided garden designs in 1863, set in a large C18 landscape park developed from earlier parkland for which Repton produced a Red Book in 1791.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The lordships of Henham and Wangford were held by Ralph Baynard at Domesday but by 1440 they had passed into the hands of the De la Poles who erected the first mansion. In 1544 the Rous family purchased the estate from Sir Arthur Hopton and in 1660 John Rous became a baronet. Speed's map of Suffolk dated 1610 records a park at Henham and a survey by R Nicholson dated 1699 shows the park laid out in a series of tree-edged fields with a long lime avenue running south from the hall. During the middle of the C18, from 1747 onwards, work was undertaken at the hand of the fifth Baronet to embellish the park around the mansion. A stable block was added and plantations were created around the west, south and east perimeters. In 1773, whilst the young sixth Baronet, Sir John Rous, was in Italy, a disastrous fire razed the old hall to the ground and it took until 1790 to gather the funds to begin work on a new hall. Sir John commissioned James Wyatt to design the new house (Sandon 1979) and in the following year, 1791, he asked Humphry Repton (1752-1818) to prepare proposals for the landscape. The introduction to the Red Book however acknowledges to Sir John that 'many of the ideas are as a result of your own observations' and some of the works were already in hand before 1790. Wyatt's new house was situated c 100m south of the old hall site but the surviving walls of the old kitchen garden, which lay to the north, were retained and incorporated in a larger walled garden. Between 1787 and 1839 the park was extended to the north and south with the addition of new drives and lodges (Hodskinson, 1787 map; White, 1839 map). In 1821 the sixth Baronet became the first Earl Stradbroke, the year before he died. During the middle years of the C19 his son, the second Earl, was responsible for altering the gardens surrounding the new hall, to a plan dated

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1859, adding complex parterres on the east and west terraces designed by W B Thomas, possibly William Broderick Thomas. A brick loggia was also constructed on the north-west corner of the hall sometime after 1865 when Stagoll completed his estate survey and before the 1883 OS 25" map was published. No further works were undertaken in the park or the gardens after the end of the C19. The hall was demolished in 1953 and the gardens abandoned. The estate remains (1998) in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Henham Park lies c 16km south of Lowestoft, to the west of the main A12 Lowestoft to Ipswich road, 6.5km inland from the Suffolk coast near Southwold. The park covers c 330ha, of which c 3.5ha are garden. It is roughly triangular, tapering to a tip at the south end. It is bounded to the east by the A12 and to the west by the A145 Beccles to Blythburgh road. To the north the park is bounded partly by a minor county road, mineral extraction and agricultural land. The registered site falls very slightly from north to south, the main body of the park being relatively flat on the higher ground with the house platform sitting on a very slight eminence. There is also a gentle fall to the east along the north end of the east boundary. The Hen valley crosses the site in the south and forms a shallow, narrow valley, the land rising again to High Lodge. Henham enjoys a predominantly rural and agricultural setting, with Wangford village to the north-east and Blythburgh and the Blyth estuary to the south and south-east. It is completely surrounded by parkland tree belts apart from the western end of the north boundary so there are no views into park. From the house platform there are views south into park and the carriage drives provide views back towards the platform. Wangford church provides a focus for views from the east drive.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Henham Park has four principal entrances: High Lodge in the south, East Lodge along the A12, Wangford Lodge at the north-east corner and an estate road to the north of Beccles Lodge (situated to the west of the A145) on the west boundary. The drives from High Lodge, East Lodge and Wangford Lodge now exist as hard-core tracks through the park, whilst the west drive is tarmac and runs east to the farmhouse and buildings north of the kitchen garden. The west drive originally served the old hall and was realigned in the early C18 to run east from Beccles Lodge to arrive at the south front of the new house. It has since been removed. The C18 Wangford Lodge is a single-storey brick building with pitched pantile roof, painted white with ornate metal grilles to the windows. The green-painted iron entrance gate hangs on stone piers topped by cast-iron leaf pyramids and marks the beginning of a drive lined with sweet chestnut which runs south-west through parkland, into Tuttle Wood and then back into parkland to sweep round to the south front of the house platform. East Lodge (listed grade II) lies midway along the east boundary, to the south of the drive, and is built in Picturesque style with white brick and fish-scale slate roof. This entrance is marked by a semicircular arrangement of walls, topped by stone coping with piers at each end and secondary piers beside the drive which create pedestrian entrances. The drive runs through East Lodge Covert and emerges into the park south of Oakhill Wood in a shallow valley filled with ancient oaks. The drive then runs west to join the Wangford drive east of the house platform. The south drive enters the registered site through Spring Hill where it is lined by late C18/early C19 lime trees. A metalled road divides Spring Hill from the main body of the park and on the north side of the road sits High Lodge. Either side of the lodge is a curved brick wall with pierced work top and return walls to east and west. Piers on the return walls are topped by stone ball finials, the remaining piers carry cast-iron leaf pyramids (as at Wangford Lodge). The two-storey lodge forms an archway over the entrance drive with one bay either side and a further storey above the arch. It is built of cream brick with stone dressing under a hipped roof. The south drive runs north through parkland down towards the western tip of the lake. From here it sweeps up through the valley along the west boundary before rising through West Hill to the higher ground, giving views north towards the house site. This drive originally met the old west drive just south of the house site. The southern entrance lodge and drive were proposed by Repton in 1791 to make a grand entrance when seen from the Blythburgh road.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Henham Park had an old hall which was lost to a fire in 1773. The replacement new hall was designed by James Wyatt, built in the 1790s and itself demolished in 1953. Both were situated in the north-west quarter of the park, to the south of the kitchen garden.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens and pleasure grounds at Henham survive today (1998) mainly as earthworks. To the west of the house site is the remains of a curved ha-ha (C18 with C19 wall). At the northern end of the ha-

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ha, between this and the kitchen garden wall, is a C19 weeping larch, supported on timber posts and tubular steel bars. All that visibly remains of the gardens is a post-1865 brick loggia which was originally attached to the north-west corner of the new hall. On the west side is a scatter of evergreen and coniferous trees.

PARK Henham Park covers c 330ha and lies mainly to the south of the house site. South of the house platform is an open expanse of park with a few scattered trees and two pillboxes to the south-east. By contrast, to the east and west of this central section there are greater numbers of old trees, particularly the ancient oaks at Oak Hill, beyond which lie the perimeter plantations. This represents the core of the park, a result of the work of the fifth Baronet in the mid C18, and Repton's dressing at the end of the C18, both phases of work respecting and preserving the large oaks as remnants of the C17 landscape. The remains of an icehouse are situated to the south of Icehouse Plantation which forms part of the eastern boundary tree belt. Some 600m south from the house site the park is divided by a belt of trees which crosses from the east boundary at Pump Nursery, through Hospital Pit to the middle of the park at Clay Pit. North-west of this lie two small plantations (Bence's Nursery and Peartree Clump) giving filtered views south, before the western boundary plantations are reached. Immediately to the west of Pump Nursery are the remains of a lime avenue, possibly that shown on the Nicholson survey of 1699. Henham House (listed grade II) and Park Farm (barn listed grade II) sit to the south of this tree line, surrounded by a band of large pasture fields which span the park from east to west. These buildings are of early C18 origin and the house has an early C19 facade. Beyond this to the south is a belt of coniferous trees along the grassy northern bank of the lake, obscuring views of the water from the upper areas of the park. The lake was not excavated until 1991(2, although it was proposed by Repton as a long-term aim, once the surrounding plantations were suitably mature. South of the lake the land rises through a central section of parkland surrounded by dense plantation to reach High Lodge and the southern boundary wood. In the centre of this area of parkland is a monument engraved with the words 'Henham to London 100 miles'.

North-east of the house site the parkland character continues as far as Tuttle Wood on the north boundary. Close to the house site on the east side are the early to mid C18 stables (listed grade II); constructed of red brick under a pantile roof they have been converted to residential use. North of the kitchen garden is a complex of farm buildings with the farmhouse dated 1866 on its south gable. Beyond these buildings, in the north-west corner of the park, the land is under arable production and divided into hedged fields. There are a number of rectangular ponds located close to the farm buildings; the largest is marked as a fishpond on early maps and dates from at least the C18 (Repton plan 1791).

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden lies immediately to the north of the old hall site and consists of high brick walls with a mix of brick and stone coping. The main entrance lies to the east of centre on the south wall. There are further entrances on the south wall, one on the west wall and others on the north wall. The main feature of the kitchen garden is a serpentine or crinkle-crankle east wall (listed grade II) dating from before 1800, whilst the other walls are possibly pre 1700. There is a breach in the north wall and a minor breach in the south wall. Internal divisions have been removed and the area is currently (1998) unused.

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OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1884 2nd edition published 1905 1928 edition

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1883 2nd edition published 1904

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Description written: October 1998 Amended: May 1999 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: December 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.