

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

GRIMS DYKE

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

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Name:	GRIMS DYKE
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Harrow (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.623582 Longitude: -0.35347341 National Grid Reference: TQ 14077 92924 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001254 Date first listed: 05-Jul-1996

Details

Gardens and pleasure grounds laid out in the 1870s as the setting to a private residence, developed and extended in the 1890s and early 1900s.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Frederick Goodall (1822(1904), artist, purchased c 40ha of the Harrow Weald estate from the Marquess of Abercorn in 1856. The land was subject to twelve remaining years of an existing lease, but Goodall obtained permission to plant nurseries of choice conifers and shrubs, particularly rhododendrons and hardy azaleas, as preparation for the development of the grounds. In 1870-1, Richard Norman Shaw started work on the house and it was at his request that the name of the property was changed to Graeme's Dyke. Goodall was 'particularly fond of gardening and flowers' and, on completion of the house 'laid out gardens for fruit and flowers, and moved the conifers to their final place' (Goodall 1902). He was responsible for 'laying out thirty acres of ground as a landscape garden', an exercise which he later described as 'the greatest spell of relaxation I ever enjoyed' (ibid). In 1880, Goodall sold the property to a banker, Robert Heriot, who in turn sold it in 1890 to the dramatist W S Gilbert (d 1911, by drowning in the lake). Gilbert changed the name back to Grim's Dyke and, c 1890-1, called in the firm of Ernest George & Harold Peto to alter and extend the house. The house became a sanatorium in the 1930s and is currently (1996) an hotel and restaurant.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Grim's Dyke is situated to the north-west of Harrow Weald. The 11ha site lies to the north of the Old Redding road and Harrow Weald Common, which forms its southern boundary. To the east the grounds adjoin a further part of the Common; to the north is farmland. The OS map of 1877 shows the present boundaries of the site in place although the land was then still part of the Common.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES A serpentine drive leads north from the gate piers between railings at the South Lodge (listed grade II), built in 1871 by Norman Shaw, at the south-east corner of the site. Passing through wooded pleasure grounds, this approach arrives at the yew-hedged court on the north front of the house. A second drive leads off the A409 to the east,

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passing across the Common and between New Lodge and North Lodge, behind which stand the stables, to join with the southern approach. To the east of the house is a tarmacked car-parking area.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The large, irregular house (listed grade II*) is in a modified Tudor style of two and three storeys. It is built of red brick and stone, with timber-framed gables, and is situated in the centre of the landscape.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS To the south of the house lies a formal lawn surrounded by a low wall, with a yew hedge along the top of the retaining wall which forms its southern edge. A walk extends along the west side, beneath the west front of the house, to join with the flight of steps leading up from the entrance court. A second set of steps leads down through the balustraded flint and brick retaining walls to the sunken formal garden which lies to the north-west of the house. Presumably dating from the 1870s, the garden is laid out with a large circular bed at either end.

From the western end of the sunken garden, a yew-hedged walk leads to walks through the wooded pleasure grounds which surround the lake beyond. The lake was dug in 1900 under the personal supervision of Gilbert. A promontory with an artificial rockwork cascade juts into the northern end of the water while to the south the surface is broken by an island. Cibber's statue of Charles II, rescued from Soho Square, stood in the gardens during Goodall's time; it was returned to the Square in the 1930s.

The pleasure grounds are enclosed to west and north by the earthworks of Grim's Ditch (scheduled ancient monument), alongside the garden edge of which lies a long narrow canal formed by the damming of the brook at the bottom of the Ditch. This canal is crossed by two bridges, one from the north side of the sunken garden on an axis with the west terrace, the other, dated 1875 and with rockwork beneath, beyond the west end of the sunken garden. The bridges are said to incorporate fragments removed from Harrow on the Hill parish church during its restoration. Both carry paths leading to the kitchen garden.

KITCHEN GARDEN Established in the 1870s, the kitchen garden is situated directly to the north of the Ditch. A modern (late C20) hotel annexe has been built within the garden walls. To the east of the kitchen garden are stables and outbuildings built for Gilbert.

REFERENCES

Architecture 2, (1897), pp 355-68 The Reminiscences of Frederick Goodall, RA (1902) International Architect 6, (1980), pp 45-7 A Goodman, Gilbert and Sullivan's London (1988) B Cherry and N Pevsner, The Buildings of England: London 3 North West (1991), p 277

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1877 2nd edition published 1897 3rd edition published 1920

Description written: March 1999 Register Inspector: CB Edited: June 2001

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.