

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

LADBROKE ESTATE

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Name:	LADBROKE ESTATE
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Kensington and Chelsea (London Borough)
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.514026 Longitude: -0.20955913 National Grid Reference: TQ 24337 80975, TQ 24366 80713, TQ 24412 80894, TQ 24414 80574, TQ 24473 80456, TQ 24480 80826, TQ 24511 80611, TQ 24564 80685, TQ 24565 80997, TQ 24589 80506, TQ 24607 80903, TQ 24648 80757, TQ 24664 80546, TQ 24711 80838, TQ 24792 80758, TQ 24838 80619 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000242 Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987

## Details

Sixteen mid C19 private communal gardens together forming the Ladbroke Estate, laid out between 1840 and c 1868 as a planned garden suburb, largely to the overall plan of Thomas Allason, architect and surveyor.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In the early C19 the Kensington estate of the Ladbroke family was one of the largest holdings in the parish. The estate is thought to have been acquired in the mid C18 by Richard Ladbroke of Tadworth Court, Surrey, brother of the banker, Sir Robert Ladbroke (LCC 1937). After Richard Ladbroke's death the estate passed first to his son, also Richard, who died without heirs, and then in 1819 to a nephew, James Weller (d 1847), who assumed the name of Ladbroke in accordance with his uncle's will. During James Weller Ladbroke's ownership (1819-47), building development started on the estate, which was under the management of Smith Bayley (Bayley and Jackson from 1836), a firm of solicitors, acting in conjunction with the architect, Thomas Allason (1790-1852). In addition to acting for Weller Ladbroke, Allason was surveyor to other Kensington estates, to the Stock Exchange, and to Lord Shrewsbury at Alton Towers (qv). He remained surveyor to the Ladbroke family until his death in 1852.

Allason's original plan for the Ladbroke Estate was drawn up in 1823 and shows a large circus, similar in design to proposals for Regent's Park (qv), with detached and semi-detached villas on either side of a circular road and along a central axial road (along the line of the future Ladbroke Grove). There were two semicircular shared greens, and a triangular piece of ground, which were marked on the plan as paddocks (ibid). By 1832 the building boom of the early 1820s had collapsed and it became clear that the proposed development was too far west to support grand houses. The architect J B Papworth (1775-1847) was almost certainly influential on the next phase of development (ibid) and Allason's scheme was modified by James Thomson (1800-83), a pupil of Papworth. Thomson designed a number of smaller, mainly terraced, houses to the west of Ladbroke Grove. The plans for this scheme were drawn up in liaison with the surveyors and architects for the lands to the east of Ladbroke Grove (Harwood 1988). In August 1836 development was at a standstill, and a Mr John Whyte took a twenty-one year lease of 400 acres (c 162ha) from Weller Ladbroke and laid out courses for steeple chasing and flat racing. The first meeting at the new Hippodrome

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took place on 3 June 1837. The enterprise was not a success and building work resumed in 1841, with the houses on Ladbroke Square being started in 1842. It is uncertain whether Allason retained any overall control but he was still working on the project in the 1840s and was probably responsible for the layout of the largest garden, Ladbroke Square, in 1849. By this date James Thomson had ceased to be involved and Allason was working with the builder and surveyor, William Reynolds. The houses built in the 1840s were relatively simple brick or stucco houses but after Allason's death in 1852, a much more theatrical style of architecture was used. The artist and designer, Thomas Allom (1804-72) was responsible for the design of this new phase of development, with mansions along Kensington Park Gardens and Stanley Crescent, and a streetscape incorporating views of St Peter's church on Kensington Park Road. The gardens to these houses may have been laid out and were probably planted by the landscape gardener and nurseryman, David Allan Ramsay (b 1796; designer of parts of Highgate Cemetery, qv), who was also responsible for many of the houses of the Ladbroke Estate. Like many of the developers of the estate, Ramsay became bankrupt in 1854, probably because of the scale of the houses and the low density of development. By the 1860s the estate was nearing completion and, as new transport made it more accessible, it became popular with professionals.

The ownership of many of the gardens was conveyed to a Trust but other gardens had a single owner (Felix Ladbroke retained ownership of Stanley Crescent Garden (later demised to Trustees) and South Stanley Garden and was one of the three trustees of Ladbroke Square Garden) or were owned by the freeholders of the surrounding properties. Committees were set up to manage the gardens, and by-laws were introduced.

During the Second World War the path layouts in some of the gardens were simplified and most of the railings were removed but bomb damage was minimal. Following the war the area became run down, especially in the lower, northern part of the estate but few changes were made. The area became fashionable again in the late C20 and the houses and gardens have been restored.

#### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** The Ladbroke Estate (c 11ha as here registered) is situated in Notting Hill, west London and lies c 500m north of Holland Park (qv), c 800m north-west of Kensington Gardens (qv), and c 850m south of the A40(M). The area within which the sixteen gardens lie is bounded by Kensington Park Road to the east, the houses along the south sides of Lansdowne Walk and Ladbroke Square to the south, Clarendon Road to the west, Blenheim Crescent to the north-west, and Elgin Crescent to the north-east. Ladbroke Grove runs north/south through the centre of the estate, with ten gardens to the west and six to the east. The names of the gardens are those generally used by the Garden Committees and are mostly derived from the names of the roads which border the garden. As a result, some of the names are very similar to each other. The gardens to the west of Ladbroke Grove are, from north to south (and west to east as relevant): Blenheim and Elgin Crescents Garden; Lansdowne ? Elgin Garden; Montpelier Garden; Lansdowne Road ? Lansdowne Crescent Garden; Lansdowne Crescent Garden; Clarendon Road and Lansdowne Garden; Notting Hill Garden; Clarendon Road and Lansdowne Road Garden; Hanover Gardens; and Ladbroke Grove Garden. The gardens to the east of Ladbroke Grove are, from north to south (and west to east as relevant): Arundel ? Elgin Garden; Arundel and Ladbroke Garden; Stanley Crescent Garden; Stanley Gardens North; Stanley Gardens South; and Ladbroke Square Garden.

There are vistas within the gardens, from the roads into the gardens through gates or gaps between semi-detached villas, and along the roads, often aligned on dominant buildings including the churches of St John the Evangelist (1845, by J H Stevens and G Alexander in an Early English Gothic manner, listed grade II) on the west side of Ladbroke Grove between Lansdowne Crescent Garden and Ladbroke Grove Garden, and St Peter's (listed grade II\*) on Kensington Park Road, aligned on the east end of Stanley Gardens. The south-east corner of the estate is largely level, from where the ground falls to the west and north. The gardens are arranged concentrically on the sloping ground, with fourteen laid out behind the houses, and two in front of the houses. The gardens are accessed either directly from the backs of the houses and their gardens, or from gated entrances from the surrounding streets.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** Blenheim and Elgin Crescents Garden, 0.81ha, lies between the terraces along Blenheim Crescent (built 1861-3) to the north, Elgin Crescent (north side 1858-62) to the south, and Clarendon Road to the west. Large private gardens lead onto a long communal garden, with a path layout much simplified from its original pattern

(OS 1867). There is a hard games court at the east end, screened by evergreen shrubs, and the rest of the garden is largely open with scattered mature trees. The original street railings survive along Ladbroke Grove.

Lansdowne and Elgin Crescent Garden, 0.82ha, is a large, curving garden near the foot of the hill. It lies between the painted stucco houses along the south side of Elgin Crescent (mostly 1852) to the north and Lansdowne Road (c 1862) to the south with their private gardens. It retains most of its mid C19 paths, although simplified in the centre, and its original railings with cast-iron coping along Rosmead Road. Shrubberies back three large oval-shaped lawns and there are dense evergreen shrubberies at the west and east ends. Osbert Lancaster (1908-86) lived in Elgin Crescent as a child and described it in *All done from Memory* (1963) and the Ladbroke Estate in general in *The Pleasure Garden* (1977), co-authored with Anne Scott-James.

Montpelier Garden, 0.66ha, slopes to the west, and is largely open with fine mature trees. The garden curves between Lansdowne Road to the east (with semi-detached villas (nos 45 and 47 together listed grade II), 1847, and terraced stucco houses, 1855-62) and the terraced houses along Clarendon Road and Elgin Crescent to the west and north-west. The mid C19 meandering perimeter path survives but the central path has been lost. The scattered mature trees on the lawn include ash, poplar, horse chestnut, a weeping willow, and a liquidamber. Iron gates were installed for the 1977 Jubilee.

Lansdowne Road and Lansdowne Crescent Garden, 0.48ha, is a curving, triangular-shaped garden on a steep slope. The garden is backed by terraced houses on two sides, Lansdowne Crescent (1860-2, nos 19?28 together listed grade II and nos 29-38 together listed grade II) to the south and Lansdowne Road (1860-4) to the north. Part of the original path layout survives with some mature ash trees, supplemented by late C20 trees and shrubs and with a playground inserted.

Lansdowne Crescent Garden, 0.30ha, is situated on the crest of the hill, bounded along the curving west side by the semi-detached villas along Lansdowne Crescent (1844-5) and their private gardens. The vicarage to St John's church is situated in the southern corner of the garden. To the east, the garden is bounded by a tall terrace of houses along Ladbroke Grove (1841-2), which was originally terminated at each end by houses with large private gardens. These have been replaced by C20 blocks of flats, that to the south designed by Maxwell Fry (1938, listed grade II). There are no private gardens along the east side which has a raised terrace. The original path layout has been simplified and an additional path has been added across the centre of the garden. Most of the garden is open but there are roses trained on poles and pergolas.

Clarendon Road and Lansdowne Garden, 0.41ha, is one of the earliest gardens in the estate. It is bounded by large stucco houses along Clarendon Road to the west and Lansdowne Road to the east (nos 29 and 31, 33 and 35, 37 and 39, 41 and 43, listed grade II as pairs). Both streets were built in 1846. The garden slopes gently to the west and is backed to the west and east by private gardens with original internal railings. Most of the garden is open with scattered mature trees, and is bounded by a perimeter path and shrub beds. A grove of birch trees stands in the centre of the gardens, replacing a central shrub bed which was originally connected to the perimeter path by cross paths.

Notting Hill Garden, 0.20ha, is a small garden on the hill near St John's church. It is bounded to the west by stucco mansions along Lansdowne Road (1846, with C20 flats replacing bomb-damaged houses) to the west, Lansdowne Crescent (1846) to the north, and St John's Gardens (1846) to the south-east. There are no houses along the east side but the garden is concealed from Lansdowne Crescent by a privet hedge. The original path layout survives with a fine horse chestnut, supplemented by self-sown sycamores and late C20 tree planting.

Clarendon Road and Lansdowne Road Garden, 0.41ha, is one of the earliest gardens in the estate, bounded by large brick houses with stucco detailing along Clarendon Road (built 1846) to the west and Lansdowne Road (1846) to the east. The garden slopes gently to the west and has a central shrub bed, connected to the perimeter path by a cross path which runs west/east (the mid C19 north/south cross path has now gone). The communal garden is backed to the west and east by large private gardens, with replicas of the original street railings, including a curved cast-iron coping. The rest of the garden is open with scattered mature trees, including exceptionally fine planes and hawthorns.

Hanover Gardens, 0.78ha, is bounded by buildings on two sides, with tall terraced houses (James Thomson 1842-3) along Ladbroke Grove to the east, and semi-detached villas (1845) with infills along Lansdowne Road to the west. The sloping garden is one of the earliest on the estate, with views to the spire of St John's church (1845) between shrub beds, scattered mature trees and clumps. The original path layout survives, with a straight terraced path along the east side and a meandering path

across the centre. The internal mid C19 railings survive along the Lansdowne Road side. A bench marks the 90th birthday of the landscape architect, Dame Sylvia Crowe, a former resident.

Ladbroke Grove Garden, 0.10ha, set back from Ladbroke Grove, has terraced houses on the west side. The small rectangular garden of grass and trees is unenclosed except for a low brick wall.

Arundel ? Elgin Garden, 0.53ha, is bounded by the terraced houses on Elgin Crescent (built 1852) to the north and Arundel Gardens (1862-3) to the south. There are small private gardens leading to a broad, level communal garden, dominated by a huge plane in the centre. An oval enclosure, surrounded by a privet hedge, is flanked by lawns backed by beds with flowering shrubs. The complex mid C19 path layout has been simplified and some of the original internal railings survive.

Arundel and Ladbroke Garden, 0.49ha, lies between the stuccoed terraced houses along Arundel Gardens (1863) to the north and Ladbroke Gardens (originally designed by Thomas Allom in 1852, but not completed until 1866, nos 1-14 together listed grade II) to the south. Private gardens lead onto the steeply sloping communal garden, planted with C19 planes and other large trees including a catalpa, horse chestnut, and two Turkey oaks, underplanted by small flowering trees and woodland shrubs. The mid C19 path layout, some of the original internal railings, and eleven large plane trees survive.

Stanley Crescent Garden, 0.68ha, retains its early Victorian paths, internal railings and character. Three large open lawns are bordered by shrubberies and trees, separated by gravel paths. The west side is bordered by the private gardens and semi-detached villas along Ladbroke Grove (1843-61, nos 36, 38, and 40 in the south-west corner, together listed grade II) and the curving east side is enclosed by the large houses along Stanley Crescent (Thomas Allom 1854 (nos 1-9 together listed grade II, nos 10-11 listed grade II, and nos 12-13 listed grade II), and the slightly narrower houses in the northern section, early 1860s). Large shrubberies with evergreens fill the triangles formed by paths and there are many large C19 trees, including narrow-leaved ash, horse chestnuts, beech, lime, and plane trees. There are private gardens along the west side, which is lined by a broad gravel path terminating at gated entrances onto Ladbroke Gardens to the north and Kensington Park Gardens to the south. The private gardens along Stanley Crescent are smaller or non-existent. A large mid C19 urn stands at the centre of the garden.

Stanley Gardens North, 0.36ha, slopes steeply to the north, between the terraced stucco houses along Stanley Gardens (Thomas Allom 1854, nos 1-11 together listed grade II) to the south and the terrace along Ladbroke Gardens (1858-62) to the north. The garden was designed without private gardens and has a broad terraced path along the south side. The mid C19 path layout survives around the perimeter, although a central cross path has been lost. There are fine trees including hawthorns, limes, and a weeping wych elm in the centre, and these trees have been supplemented by late C20 planting of flowering trees including a magnolia.

Stanley Gardens South, 0.61ha, is a trapeziform garden backed by the tall mansions along Kensington Park Gardens (Allom 1852-3, nos 25-33 together listed grade II and nos 34-47 together listed grade II) to the south, with a break in the centre and a gated entrance (directly opposite a gated entrance to Ladbroke Square Garden on the other side of Kensington Park Gardens). The stucco houses with their bow fronts along Stanley Gardens (Allom 1853-4, nos 12-16 together listed grade II and nos 17-29 together listed grade II) form the boundary to the north and north-east. The garden was designed without private back gardens and retains its original path layout, internal and street railings, and many C19 trees. The mid C19 circular bed has been converted into a children's playground and the C19 planting has been continued with C20 trees and flowering plants.

Ladbroke Square Garden, 2.82ha, is the largest garden on the estate. It is enclosed on the north side by the tall stucco mansions along Kensington Park Gardens, the eastern part designed by W J Drew, 1849-50, and the western part designed by Thomas Allom, and built by David Ramsay, 1853-8 (nos 10-22 together listed grade II). There is a break between the two terraces with an entrance and a pair of mid C19 cast-iron gates (listed grade II, and with the coat of arms of Felix Ladbroke on shields in the centre of inscribed circles), opposite the gated entrance to South Stanley Garden. The square is open on the other three sides which are bounded by railings. The garden slopes from north to south, and retains its original path layout (including a broad walk running from west to east along the south side), a circular fountain (now a flower bed) surrounded by ornamental cast-iron urns on piers, a wooden summerhouse (one of a pair, the other demolished in the 1980s), and a gardener's cottage in the north-east corner. The paths cross the garden to form three large lawns, backed by shrubberies, with a tennis court near the

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south-east corner. The mid C19 planting includes planes, limes, beech, evergreen and semi-evergreen oaks, hawthorns, and horse chestnuts, which is supplemented by more recent planting of trees and flowering shrubs.

#### REFERENCES

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Maps OS 25" to 1 mile: 3rd edition published 1914 OS 60" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1867 2nd edition published 1895  
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## 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.