

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

HAREFIELD PLACE

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Name:	HAREFIELD PLACE
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Hillingdon (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.594337 Longitude: -0.47922549 National Grid Reference: TQ 05440 89483 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001525 Date first listed: 30-Apr-2001

Details

The C17 and later remains of the gardens of a country mansion (demolished), set within the earthwork remains of a wider ornamental landscape which included ponds and avenues. Within the main walled ornamental enclosure are the remains of C17 terraces and other features, dominated by a rare and extensive early C17 brick garden arcade.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Harefield was the principal manor among several in the parish of Harefield from the C11 to the early C20. It was owned by the Newdigate family from the mid C15 until 1586. A mansion house at Harefield is first mentioned in 1559 and a survey of 1593 lists 'the site of the Manor of Herfelde Hall with all manner of edifice and buildings, courts, orchards, gardens and yards to the same belonging'. In the early C17 a prominent Elizabethan statesman, Sir Thomas Egerton, lived at Harefield with his second wife, Alice, Countess of Derby. Elizabeth I visited Harefield for three days in 1602 (VCH 1962) and in 1608 Sir Thomas made payments for building work on a mansion house. Egerton died in 1617 and his widow remained at Harefield until her death in 1636. The Egertons knew Francis Bacon well and the poet John Donne was Egerton's secretary for a time. The Countess' family provided an entertainment for her at Harefield c 1632, which included a masque for which John Milton (who lived nearby) provided the words. This was later published, entitled *Arcades* (ie dwellers in Arcadia). It is possible that the walled garden with its arcades was the site of the performance.

By the 1680s (estate map, 1681-5) a substantial mansion and grounds stood in a roughly rectangular enclosure. The church stood close by to the north-west and another, smaller building stood at some distance to the north-east, set within a deer park of 234 acres (c 97ha). A slightly later plan (estate map, late C17/early C18) gives more detail of the enclosures around the mansion, and ornamental elements within the wider landscape. Features shown in the wider landscape include avenues and a large octagonal enclosure occupying the area where the second building was shown on the 1680s map. Several linear features are marked with dotted lines on the later plan, possibly indicating fence or hedge lines. The building on the 1680s plan which was set some distance to the north-east of the mansion may possibly have been a standing, as a straight feature c 700m long, marked by dotted lines and possibly a deer course, was aligned from the south-west on the octagonal enclosure to the north-east. The enclosure corresponding to the largest walled garden which now (2001) remains was shown enclosed on only three

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sides, the fourth, south-east side being bounded by the long straight feature, this itself having been overlooked by the arcades on the higher, north-west side of the enclosure.

According to Lysons (1800) the principal house was remodelled by Sir Richard Newdigate (d 1710) by 'uniting the two lodges with an intermediate building', this being confirmed by a description and inventory of 1722. The inventory included details of the gardens comprising three main elements: a main garden containing a garden house, a waterhouse, and a bee house; a kitchen garden; and an orchard. Harefield Place was sold by the Newdigates in 1760, and by 1813 the mansion had been largely demolished, leaving only its southern end and part of the coach house. During the C19 the main walled garden was planted as an orchard (OS 1st edition) and in the C20 the remaining coach house and walled kitchen garden areas were turned over to a nursery garden. The site remains (2001) in divided private ownership.

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Harefield Place lies on the north-west edge of London, 1km south of the village of Harefield. The c 2.5ha site is bounded to the north by the parish church, enclosed by the churchyard which was extended during the C20 to include parts of the former grounds of the mansion. To the east and south the site is bounded by agricultural land, formerly part of the deer park associated with the mansion. To the west the site is bounded by a curved track which links the parish church and the remains of the Place with the main Harefield to Ickenham road to the west. This track may follow the former course of the main road, which appears to have been diverted to the west (estate map, 1681-5; estate map, late C17/early C18; Map of Harefield, late C18/early C19). In the late C17 an avenue aligned on the south-west, entrance front of the mansion linked the lane to the west with the main road beyond (estate map, late C17/early C18).

Along the north-west boundary of the site the land occupies a plateau which dips to the south-east into a valley running south-west from a ridge in the field to the north-east. Views extend to the south-east and south across the surrounding countryside.

The setting is largely rural, the site being separated from the village of Harefield by fields to the north, and with the C20 development of South Harefield to the west and south, separated by Church Road and Harvill Road.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The principal approach is from Harefield to the north-west, via Church Hill. A lane leaves Church Hill 300m north-west of the site, running south-east, passing to the west of the church and walled churchyard (outside the area here registered). It then passes c 40m west of the site of the former mansion. At the end of the lane, 100m south of the church, a track turns north-east, entering the registered area, continuing for 50m to arrive at the north-west side of the coach house. The line of the lane continues south-west as a footpath (outside the area here registered). This marks the former continuation of the lane back to the main road.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The coach house (C17 and later, listed grade II), now (2001) known as Nursery Cottage, stands towards the centre of the site, c 20m south of the site of the former mansion. The coach house is built of red brick and is of two storeys, with the south-west wall ornamented by four blank arcades (late C18 or C19). It has been converted for domestic use, and extended with a single-storey extension to the north-east. It overlooks to the north-east a small, rectangular walled compartment which is laid to lawn.

The site of the former Harefield Place (demolished early C19) lies c 20m north of the coach house, towards the west corner of the site, set back from the lane to the west. Before its demolition the Place appears to have been a substantial brick mansion with some Dutch influence in its architectural style (Lysons 1800). By the late C18/early C19 (estate map) the mansion was approached immediately from the south via the track which now leads to the coach house, this having led to a curved forecourt on the south-west, entrance front. The garden front faced north-east. A depression in the ground now (2001) marks the site of the mansion.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens of the former mansion lie to the north-east and south-east of its site. The garden compartment to the north-east of the mansion site is now largely overgrown with scrub and is bisected from north to south by the remains of a curving ha-ha (C18 or early C19), its course shown on the late C18/early C19 plan of Harefield. The boundary of this compartment with the field to the north-east, as shown on the late C17/early C18 plan, is still clearly visible. North of this area lie several ponds, probably medieval in origin (RCHME 1998).

South of this compartment, c 20m east of the site of the mansion lies the c 1ha east walled garden. Rectangular in shape, it is enclosed on all sides but the north-west by c 3m high brick walls, largely of C17 origin, which in places have suffered some

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collapse. The area is bisected by a stream in a pronounced valley which runs from north-east to south-west. The stream emerges from a culvert several metres inside the north-east wall, the wall at this point being marked by a Tudor-headed niche which has largely been bricked up. The stream follows a fairly straight course through the area before disappearing into a brick culvert some metres inside the south-east wall. The stream is fed by the ponds to the north.

The north-west valley side rises up from the stream to a broad earth terrace which runs along the north-west boundary of the area, this being backed by a c 50m long brick arcade (early C17, listed grade II). The arcade, which is let into the terraced ground of the north-east compartment above, consists of the remains of thirty-three round-backed niches with domed heads, c 1.8m high, opening onto the terrace. The arcade and terrace overlook the garden below, with long views north-east up the valley across the former deer park, and south and south-east towards Park Lodge Farm. Approximately twenty-eight of these niches remain in varying states of repair; they may once have been plastered. Their use is unknown, but they may have been used for specimen trees in pots, or sculpture (less likely), or even as a backdrop for Milton's 1630s masque Arcades. At the north-east end of the arcade, in the north corner of the garden, the garden walls project around a levelled area which may formerly have been the site of a designed prospect area or building.

South-east of the stream the valley rises up to the south-east wall, beyond which lies a further terrace reached by a break in the wall at the north-east end. The terrace descends to ground level towards the south-west end of the wall, overlooking the agricultural land to the south and south-east. This outer terrace follows the line of the feature marked on the late C17/early C18 map which may have been a deer course and is aligned to the north-east on the site of the building which stood in the former octagonal enclosure.

The east walled garden is planted with mature fruit trees and coppiced hazel stools, but is largely overgrown in between these. **PARK** The area formerly occupied by the deer park lies outside the area here registered; it is now (2001) largely agricultural land, lying to the north-east and south of the garden. Several ponds lie to the north-east of the garden, partly set in woodland. The triangle of land between the lane and Church Road contained in the late C17 or early C18 (estate map) a double avenue aligned on the south-west front of the mansion; a further avenue extended south-east.

KITCHEN GARDEN The rectangular kitchen garden, or west walled garden, lies south-east of the coach house, adjacent to the south-west of the east walled garden. It is walled on three sides, the fourth, to the south-east, being marked by a bank. The north-east boundary is marked by the south-west wall of the east walled garden. The area is now (2001) largely occupied by derelict glasshouses.

REFERENCES

D Lysons, *An historical account of those parishes in the County of Middlesex which are not described in the environs of London* (1800), p 109 E Walford, Greater London: a narrative of its history, its people, and its places I, (c 1883), pp 244-8 *Victoria History of the County of Middlesex III*, (1962), pp 237-58 *Roy Comm Hist Monuments Engl*, Harefield Place, Greater London, (unpublished report 1998) [contains copies of most of the maps referred to below]

Maps Survey, Harefield Place, 1593 (Acc 1085, EM1), (London Metropolitan Archives) Estate map, Harefield Place, 1681-5 (Acc 1085, EM14), (London Metropolitan Archives) Estate map, Harefield Place, late C17/early C18, (Acc 1085, EM15), (London Metropolitan Archives) A map of Harefield, late C18/early C19 (Acc 1085, EM17), (London Metropolitan Archives) Enclosure map for Harefield parish, (1273/2A), (London Metropolitan Archives)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1916 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1864-76

Archival items A collection of material relating to Harefield Place is held at the London Metropolitan Archives (Acc 1085) Further items are held at the Warwickshire County Record Office including: Indenture between Sir Richard Newdigate and the Lady Dowager Lempster, to which is attached an inventory of the house, ancillary buildings and gardens (C2392); letter dated 6 November 1686 from Robert Beale to Sir Richard Newdigate, referring to the rotten condition of the park pale, and discussing the possibility of disparkment (CR136 B/14/1145).

Description written: April 2001 Register Inspector: SR Edited: May 2002

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.