

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

Garden at Turn End

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

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*Garden at Turn End*

Name:	Garden at Turn End
District:	Buckinghamshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Haddenham
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.771830 Longitude: -0.92976616 National Grid Reference: SP7394308670, SP7395008650, SP7396008663, SP7398208676, SP7399408673 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.localisation:	[51.7718750872429,-0.929009372153722], [51.7718742828333,-0.929029026056369], [51.7718755042955,-0.929055160598034], [51.7718296500636,-0.929055376120558], [51.7718295238125,-0.929011899740335], [51.7718750872429,-0.929009372153722]
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1445345 Date first listed: 30-Nov-2017 Statutory Address 1: Turn End, Townside, Haddenham, Aylesbury, HP17 8BG

## Historique de la conservation

Peter and Margaret Aldington bought the site, 7 Townside, chosen for its mature trees and walls in the village setting, in April 1963. Already with outline consent for three conventional bungalows the site, between High Street and Townside, was once the garden of a large Victorian house on High Street and included an old orchard, wicket walls (built prior to a map of 1820) and mature specimen trees which they were determined to keep. Following their planning application for three linked single-storey houses, debate about local policy on road widening versus historic roadside trees and walls dragged on. They eventually gained consent to build a single house on the site in May 1964 and promptly started work building Turn End for themselves, moving into its shell by the end of the year; Middle Turn and The Turn followed in 1965-1968 once the planning debate was resolved. All three houses share a common Forecourt and garage Court with a rear access service area off Townside. The private gardens of Middle Turn and The Turn are not included in the registered landscape.

During 1965 Aldington built the courtyard garden within Turn End, while work began on the main garden in autumn 1967, helped by one of the two former students who had worked on the houses, creating the central glade the following year. At the end of 1968 the Aldingtons were able to buy 8 High Street, adding a further strip of land to the east, bounded by tall conifers and the coach house, and in 1971 they acquired land to the north beyond the Horse Chestnut tree, with 6 High Street, which in 1979 became the practice office for Aldington and Craig. A series of garden rooms evolved in the new spaces, created between 1970 and 1976. In 1970 John Craig had bought 16 High Street, and part of that garden was retained by the Aldingtons, becoming known as No-Mans, to the south of the house.

The interweaving of house and garden is integral to Aldington's belief in the indivisibility of landscape and building design, breaking down barriers between the external and internal in the tradition of Frank Lloyd Wright and Mies van der Rohe, whilst being informed by existing features - in this case small sturdy cottages. While planting plays a strong part in the underlying

design and ongoing evolution of the garden, reflecting Peter Aldington's horticultural skills and interest, the plan and structure are evident in the fabric and form of the garden rooms and spaces, using the village plan, existing buildings, wicket walls and mature trees as a framework. Strongly evident is the two-way relationship with the house, and journey through and round them, 'a superb composition of widely different spaces of which one is always aware from the house' (Peter Shephard in Brown, 1999 p7), creating 'a "magical union" of indoors and outdoors, making them extraordinary, precious and rare' (Dan Cruikshank in Brown, op cit, p15). It is not contrived, or fixed in time, but is a very natural evocation of an evolving garden created within the heart of a village, an expression of Aldington's hands-on philosophy, experience and deep understanding of materials and plants, the local climate, geology and ecology.

The Turn End Charitable Trust, now Turn End Trust (a charitable incorporated organisation), was set up in 1998 to secure the future of the houses and garden, its aims being: their sympathetic conservation, protection and maintenance; the advancement of education and scholarship in fostering the integration of building and garden design, and the promotion of public perception and understanding.

The garden has been widely discussed and published in both the architectural and gardening press. A short bibliography is given below. A very detailed history of the garden has been curated and archived and is available in a Resource Pack.

## Details

A garden of interlinked informal spaces and garden rooms with naturalised planting around existing trees and an orchard, interwoven with the house - Turn End - designed and created by the architect Peter Aldington, principally from 1965 to 1976. The private gardens of Middle Turn and The Turn are not included in the registered landscape.

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM AND SETTING** The three houses and their gardens lie between High Street to the east and the entrance forecourt on Townside to the west.

The garden of Turn End, on a site of little more than half an acre, wraps around the house to its south, east and north. The site is in the middle of the village, screened from the roads by tall trees to the east (themselves part of an important and historic streetscape) and by wicket walls to the north and to the south. The ground rises gently from the south-east. Geology is limestone, with a shallow limy soil which has necessarily been improved to create the garden. The garden comprises two sunken gardens, raised beds, formal box garden, richly planted borders, two small pools and a central glade framed by the ancient walls, hedges and mature trees.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES AND VIEWS** The houses are set back from Townside around a shared court, the entrance defined by 9 Townside, the important visual pivot for the design of the three houses. Natural rendered wicket and white-painted roughcast walls with pantile roofs enclose this forecourt of Oxfordshire shingle accommodating visitor parking, with a path of inset pavers leading to each house. A walnut tree (transplanted from the house court) casts dappled shade; roses, Clematis and Euphorbia are planted against the houses, some in planting boxes; the setting, and Kerria, Hydrangea petiolaris, wisteria and forsythia, evoking an oriental courtyard.

This Forecourt leads to the Garage Court, from which a gateway leads to No-Mans.

No-Mans is the only open area of the garden, with a view of the southern side of the house and over walls to the High Street roofscape. Arches lead to the House Court and to a shaded triangular lobby, the Small Court. This in turn opens into the main garden, which is enclosed and fully secluded by walls and mature trees. Stone and gravel paths wind initially through a wooded Spring Garden, to lawn glades surrounded by curving, deep borders. Beyond, to the north-east are a series of paved courtyard gardens on different levels. These are bounded by the Victorian buildings, linked by steps and strong visual axes through arches and openings. **GARDEN** The garden is continuously evolving in response to the passage of time and changing climate but is essentially a series of interlinked informal spaces and garden rooms with naturalised planting around existing trees and orchard, interwoven with the house.

No-Mans, considerably warmer by several degrees than the main garden, has gravel paths reflecting light; its successional planting is overall more delicate, reflective of seasons and, like the contiguous house court, has winter structure. Its rectangular

raised beds are edged with a double layer of railway sleepers and planted with heat loving plants such as Lavender, bearded Iris and a succession of bulbs, grasses, silver leaved and other Mediterranean plants with succulents and alpines in troughs pans and an alpine bed. The backdrop at the southern end is a pergola with pale flowered climbing roses and *Actinidia chinensis*, and the secretive greenhouse. Arches lead to the House Court and to a shaded triangular lobby, the Small Court, where wickert walls are planted with vigorous climbing roses, Cecile Brunner and Felicite´ et Perpetue, and bamboo. This in turn opens into the wooded Spring Garden.

However, given that the architect's belief is that architecture and landscape design are an 'indivisible whole', it follows that the best way to access the garden is through the house.

From the front door there is a sight line, past the dining area, through the living room, and out into the garden via the glazed door which pierces the east wall, to a large Urn by Monica Young. This Urn is also on sight lines from beyond the chestnut tree as well as the Sittery area, so it forms a visual focus and reference point for both garden and house.

The eastern door opens onto the cool, shady woodland Spring Garden, and the remnant 120 year old orchard with its underplanting of successional bulbs, bluebells, native violets and primroses. Subsequent plantings of birch and bamboo maintain an airiness of foliage contrasting with the further garden, as well as emphasising the contrast with the warmer Small Court and No-Mans to the right.

The House Court is embraced by the house on three sides and an old wickert wall on the fourth, pierced to provide a view out to the armillary, the central feature of No-Mans. Large terracotta floor tiles are used seamlessly inside and outside. Beneath the shade of a Robinia is a pool (created by the hole left by the walnut tree replanted in the entrance forecourt). Large rocks are adjacent to and in the pool which is planted with white water iris, water-hawthorn and waterlilies. A concrete bench extends from the wall of the house over the pool.

This intimate linkage of house and garden is considered rare in mid-C20 house design.

A meandering path of found limestone and gravel winds through the Spring Garden leading to the central grass glade. Beyond to the east is a group of substantial sheltering trees including a Holm Oak, the giant Sequoia and a gate by the former dairy leading to High Street. 'From the Sequoia the grass rolls gently upwards and westwards as the sunny glade' (Brown, 1999, p79). The meandering lawn leads northward past a walnut tree to the horse chestnut, and to the wickert boundary beyond, which is planted in curving beds with green and gold foliage with primarily yellow and white flowering perennials. Opposite a beech and yew hedge defines this area from the lower Box Court, Coach House and Daisy Garden, whilst to the left, the west border under the trees adjacent to the boundary wall with Middle Turn, is planted with hellebores.

The bed in the centre and brightest part of this garden, planted as a summer garden with a cool colour palette, weaves north towards the coach house, encompassing a square pergola, which marks the junction with the route from the central grass glade. A sequence of garden rooms starts here. The axis from this pergola runs through the sunken 'daisy' garden and the open part of the old coach house to the large cast iron mixing bowl (from the old bakery) in the Box Court, both areas paved with 'found' materials from the old bakery. A cross axis is suggested (Brown, 1999, p71) by the timber seat in the Daisy Garden, through the gap in the hedge opposite, to the fluted urn, also by Monica Young, just beyond the chestnut tree.

From the pergola another gravelled path with steps angled by railway sleepers descends to the eastern glade, a narrow grass area flanked by climbing roses, golden ivy and ferns against its eastern wall and the Cupressus, shrubs and varied planting of the summer border opposite and above. Terminating the northern end of this glade is the secluded Sittery.

Returning through the Daisy Garden, behind the coach house, a stone, wickert and brick building with tile roofs and sett floor used as a potting shed, is the Box Court. A north-facing enclosed garden room, it has a geometric arrangement of box-edged beds housing colourful displays of seasonal annuals, while the outer walls are covered by Ceanothus, fan-trained golden gage, Morello cherry and a Himalayan Giant blackberry. Importantly, above the northern wall are the borrowed landscape of Irish yews from the garden of the listed adjacent Dove House.

From Box Court the conclusion of these garden rooms is the Office Court, defined by the walls of 6 and 8 High Street. In keeping with the ethos of 'inside/outside' this garden was an outdoor office - at one with the glass wall of this part of 6 High Street, the former practice office. It is a quiet water court with a raised circular pond at the centre. Raised beds of imported soil

accommodate lime-hating plants - Rhododendron, Camellias and Skimmia, underplanted with Hepatica, fern, ivies and wood anemones, backed by a Fig, Magnolia grandiflora and Wisteria.

Throughout, the garden is enriched with stoneware pots by Svend Bayer and Monica Young, found artefacts from the bakery once on site, and seasonally planted containers.

PRINCIPAL STRUCTURES Turn End, Middle Turn and The Turn, a geometry of white rendered walls, pantiled roofs and timber joinery are listed as a group at Grade II\*.

NOTE: while reference is made to the non-structural planting above as it illustrates the design intention, this is not included in the registration which is confined to the garden layout, structure and structural planting.

## Summary

A garden of interlinked informal spaces and garden rooms with naturalised planting around existing trees and an orchard, interwoven with the house - Turn End - designed and created by the architect Peter Aldington, principally from 1965 to 1976.

## 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.

## Reasons for Designation

The garden at Turn End, designed and created by Peter Aldington from 1965 to 1976 in conjunction with the house, is included in the Register of Parks and Gardens at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Design interest:

\* a post-war garden of interlinked informal spaces and garden rooms with naturalised planting around existing trees and orchard, interwoven with the house, it reflects Aldington's hands-on approach, spatial skills as a designer and deep understanding of materials and plants; \* created in conjunction with the house, it is an expression of the architect's belief that architecture and landscape design are an indivisible whole; \* this intimate linkage is rare in a later C20 scheme, here devised by the same hand; \* the houses and garden are exemplary as a model of later C20 intervention in a historic environment and are held in high regard by the architectural and horticultural professions. Historic interest:

\* created by a nationally acclaimed architect, for himself and his family, it is an evolving garden within the heart of the historic village of Haddenham.

Group value:

\* with the Grade II\* listed Turn End, Middle Turn and The Turn, with which it is indivisibly connected.

## Bibliographie

### Books and journals

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Harwood, E (editor), Davies, J O (photography), England's Post-War Listed Buildings, (2015), 344

Powers, A, Aldington, Craig and Collinge, (2009)

Aldington, P, Bryant, R, Einzig, R, 'Post War Houses, Twentieth Century Architecture 4, Architecture and the Landscape Obligation' in Twentieth Century Society Journal , (2000), 20-28