

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

CENTRAL PARK, HAWORTH

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Name:	CENTRAL PARK, HAWORTH
District:	Bradford (Metropolitan Authority)
Parish:	Haworth, Cross Roads and Stanbury
label.localisation:	Latitude: 53.829398 Longitude: -1.9517554 National Grid Reference: SE 03273 37016 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001659 Date first listed: 13-Nov-2002

Details

A public park opened in 1927.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The creation of a public recreation ground was considered by Haworth Urban District Council in 1921 as part of a scheme which included public baths and a washhouse. An area of land adjoining Belle Isle was selected for the park but an initial application to the Ministry of Health to purchase the site was rejected due to funds no longer being available (Davids 1994). In 1926, however, the Ministry of Health approved the proposal to provide a pleasure ground although considering the proposals to be 'on somewhat expensive lines' (Haworth UDC Minutes, 3 August 1926, item 2460). The Council unanimously resolved to pursue the scheme as submitted and also to make an application to the Unemployment Grants Committee (ibid, items 2460, 2463). In November 1926 the Council accepted a grant from the Unemployment Committee, made on condition that works on a recreation ground and park were commenced by 15 November 1926 and completed within twelve months (ibid, 2 November 1926, item 2576). This grant did not apply to the cost of the land, which was £1700.

The park, opened in 1927, did not include facilities for organised games. Tennis courts and a small pavilion were provided on land to the north, outside the park, in the early 1930s, and a bowling green was added within the park in 1937. For many years the park keeper was housed at Park House, at the north-east corner of the park on Butt Lane (Davids 1994); this building is now (2001) in private ownership. A building is indicated on the site of Park House on the 1852 OS map. Prior to 1927 it is thought that the site of the park, then open agricultural land, was used regularly for Haworth Galas.

Central Park remains (2001) in public use and is in the ownership of the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Central Park lies at the centre of Haworth village and has an area of c 3.6ha. The park occupies the majority of a rectangular site bounded by public roads with Rawdon Road to the west, Bridgehouse Lane to the south, Belle Isle Road to the east, and Butt Lane, laid with stone setts, to the north. In the south-east corner the park boundary is irregular where it adjoins C19/early C20 dwellings, one now a nursing home, on Bridgehouse Lane, and a former cinema, the Hippodrome, and a small former public hall on Belle Isle Road. At the north-east corner of the park the boundary is also irregular where it adjoins Park House.

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The site occupies part of the western slope of the narrow valley of the River Worth with the natural ground level sloping steeply down to the east. Boundaries are generally marked with low stone walls with flat stone copings, in the local gritstone, stepped to follow the gradient. Along Rawdon Road the boundary wall also acts as a retaining wall, with the park lying c 1.5m below road level, and is topped by c 1.2m high C20 railings with decorative open-scroll panels at c 1.8m centres. On Butt Lane and Bridgehouse Lane sockets in the stone copings to boundary walls give evidence of former railings now (2001) removed. North of the entrance on Belle Isle Road the boundary wall steps up to c 1.8m above the road level to form a retaining wall to the park. For c 80m north of this entrance the boundary wall is topped by c 1.2m high railings of a simpler design to those on Rawdon Road.

In the western half of the park the ground slopes down gently from the Rawdon Road boundary. The eastern half of the park slopes down steeply to the eastern boundary with Belle Isle Road with retaining walls used to form the area of the bowling green in the north-east. From the higher land in the west of the park there are views out to the east, across the Worth Valley to Haworth Brow and Brow Moor Edge.

The park is located at the centre of a large village with mainly C18 and C19 residential properties to the west and south, and with tennis courts, Haworth School, built in 1896, and a community centre on Butt Lane to the north. There are a number of small commercial properties on Belle Isle Road together with a museum in the former cinema. To the east of, and parallel to, Belle Isle Road are the River Worth and a railway line, with Haworth Station to the north-east of the park.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES There are two corner entrances, the principal to the south-west at the junction of Rawdon Road and Bridgehouse Lane and the other to the north-west at the junction of Rawdon Road with Butt Lane. The principal entrance, c 4m wide, is set back at an angle to the road junction between low stone walls, and is marked by stone piers without gates. A stone plaque set into the boundary wall to the west of the entrance records that the park was opened in 1927. The north-west entrance is similar but c 3m wide, set close to the road line and with low stone piers. Some 190m east-north-east of this entrance a further entrance from Butt Lane is set into the north boundary at the centre of a semicircular indentation in the boundary wall. Pedestrian entrances from Bridgehouse Lane and Belle Isle Road, 75m east and 225m north-east of the principal entrance, are marked by c 1.8m and c 0.6m stone piers respectively. All entrances are now (2001) without gates.

Within the park, situated 15m north-north-west of the principal entrance, is a small, single-storey building in natural stone with a red tile roof. This building, together with one of a similar size, situated 15m east of the entrance, are indicated on the 1935 OS map. The latter no longer (2001) survives.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS Principal features of the park are the formal terrace, with views out across the valley to the east, and the lower circular area surrounding the site of a former bandstand of which only the stone base now (2001) survives.

The terrace, c 12m wide and 100m long, runs north-north-west to south-south-east along the slope for over half the width of the park, and lies c 50m from and parallel to the Rawdon Road boundary. From the two entrances at the south-west and north-west corners of the park gently curving paths lead respectively north-west and south-east to join the terrace c 20m from each of its ends. To the east, the centre of the terrace is linked to the lower former bandstand area by two flights of stone steps, set 15m apart, leading down to two symmetrical curving paths edged with rockworks. From the c 30m diameter circular area a formal walk leads east-north-east for 25m. The terrace, together with these other features which are set on a counter west-south-west to east-north-east axis, form a strong formal design which contrasts with a more informal layout in other areas of the park.

Some 7m north-east of the principal south-west entrance, two informal secondary paths lead off, one to the north and the other to the east. The northerly path winds along the slope for c 100m to join the main path leading from the north-west entrance to the terrace. This secondary path is linked to the main path from the principal entrance by two further informal paths and, 65m north-north-west of the principal entrance, a path leads off eastwards, down the slope, to the centre of the terrace. This area of the park, west of the terrace, is laid mainly to grass with groups of shrubs and trees defining paths and open areas. Main paths from the principal south-west and north-west entrances are lined with borders planted with seasonal bedding.

The informal path leading east from the principal entrance follows a curving line within the south and east boundaries of the park and, 190m north-east of the principal entrance, includes two consecutive flights of stone steps from where the path continues

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down to the eastern, Belle Isle Road entrance. In the south-east corner of the park two further paths lead off this outer path towards the children's play area located 140m to the north-east of the principal entrance and the formal walk to the east of the bandstand area. Some 60m east-north-east of the principal entrance this outer path is linked to the south end of the terrace by a path leading north and 80m east-north-east intersects with a path running north from the Bridgehouse Lane entrance towards the centre of the park. The path from Bridgehouse Lane divides, 60m north of the entrance, around a circular grassed bed before curving east towards the children's play area. Low stone walling and steps to the west of the play area are evidence of a former paddling pool indicated on the 1935 OS map.

From the Butt Lane entrance on the north boundary a main path runs south-west for 90m to meet the eastern end of the broad walk which leads east from the former bandstand area. To the south-east of this entrance path is a square bowling green with a bowling pavilion to the north-east in stone and timber below a blue slate roof. The bowling green and pavilion lie on a terraced area, below the level of the entrance path, with the terrace supported by stone retaining walls to the north-east, south-east, and south-west. Two stone walls retain the entrance path to the north-west of the green with a c 3.5m wide viewing terrace set between on the intermediate level. A metal plaque set in the terrace wall commemorates the opening of the bowling green and pavilion on the Coronation day of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on 12 May 1937.

From the Butt Lane entrance a curving, stepped path runs to the north-east of the bowling green to the Belle Isle Road entrance. Two curving secondary paths, 25m and 60m south-west of the Butt Lane entrance, lead westwards before joining to following the line of the northern boundary to the northern end of the terrace. The triangular area between these paths is laid out with formal planting beds set in grass with seasonal bedding.

Boundaries and informal grassed areas within the park are well defined with trees and shrubs, many evergreen, which screen and divide the spaces. Evergreen shrubs, mainly rhododendrons, also provide a dense screen around the former bandstand area and the great majority of the terrace. Views out of these areas, particularly over the valley to the east are thus largely obscured and may not be in accordance with the intent of the early C20 design indicated on the 1935 OS map, the structure of which remains in other respects very little changed.

REFERENCES

Haworth Tourism and Conservation, (Civic Trust for the North West 1970) S Davids and G Moore, Haworth in Times Past (1983), pp 24-5 S Davids, Haworth Pictures from the Past (1994), pp 6-9

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1938 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 1935 edition

Archival items Haworth Urban District Council records: Minute Book, 1926-7; Parks Committee Minutes, 1932-8 (BABMTHA), (Keighley Reference Library) Early to mid C20 photographs (private collection)

Description written: July 2001 Amended: August 2001 Register Inspector: HMT Edited: July 2003

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.