

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

GREATHED MANOR

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Name:	GREATHED MANOR
County:	Surrey
District:	Tandridge (District Authority)
Parish:	Dormansland
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.160367 Longitude: 0.019802196 National Grid Reference: TQ 41334 42063 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000272 Date first listed: 22-Sep-1988

Details

Early C20 formal gardens, possibly designed by Harold Peto, set in a park associated with a country house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Greathed Manor, originally called Ford Manor, was built 1862-8 by Robert Kerr, for Joseph Spender Clay who had recently purchased the estate. The house replaced an older property c 200m to the east-north-east, adjoining the present stable block, which is shown on the early C17 estate plan and the Tithe map of 1846. In 1904, Joseph's son, Captain Herbert Spender Clay married Pauline, daughter of the first Viscount Astor, and Ford Manor became a venue for numerous pre-First World War house parties. Herbert and Pauline's eldest daughter married into the Nichols family while their younger daughter, Rachel, married David Bowes Lyon, the younger brother of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. The Hon Paul Phipps (1880-1953), architect, who was apprenticed to Sir Edwin Lutyens c 1897, married Lady Astor's sister, and their daughter Joyce (later Grenfell) spent some of her childhood at Ford Manor. Phipps was responsible for alterations to the Billiard Room in 1906, and drainage works on the site. During the First World War the house was used as a convalescent home for American officers. Herbert Spender Clay died in 1938, leaving the Manor to his eldest daughter, Phyllis Nichols. His widow had a new house, also called Ford Manor, built to the south-east. Standing south-west of the stables and kitchen garden complex, the garden incorporated the woodland and water garden of the main mansion. During the Second World War the main house was used first as a nursery school for evacuees from London and then as a hospital for Canadian troops. Afterwards it was leased by the London College of Divinity. In 1959 the house and garden were leased to Mutual Households Association (MHA), now Country Houses Association Ltd, and divided into forty-three apartments for the elderly. In 1960 the name of the property was changed to Greathed Manor in honour of the founder of the MHA, Rear Admiral Greathed. The house continues (2000) in this use, with Ford Manor in separate private ownership, as is the surrounding parkland.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Greathed Manor lies in the south-east corner of Surrey, 4.5km north-east of East Grinstead and 1km due east of the village of Dormansland. The Manor lies in the centre of a c 70ha park consisting of a mixture of woodland and fields, some arable and some pasture. Estate fencing is used around most of the

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boundary of the estate, which adjoins arable land or woodland on all sides. The ground is undulating and the site is bisected by a stream, dammed to form several pools, which runs from south-south-west to north-north-east. Unlike the site of the original Ford Manor, which was low lying beside a stream, the present Greathed Manor stands at almost the highest part of the site. The Manor commands extensive views to the north but views to the south are now (2000) obstructed by trees.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Access to the Manor is from Ford Manor Road to the north, via the B2028 east from Lingfield. The drive enters the estate past the former Dormans Lodge (now known as Morvan Lodge), then joins the drive which once led from Cedar Lodge (formerly North Lodge) at the north-east corner of the estate, to lead south-west across the park. Formerly the parkland continued on the north side of Ford Manor Road and by 1868 (OS) the lane had been sunk to conceal it from view.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Greathed Manor (listed grade II) is described by Pevsner (1971) as 'A rock-hard stone pile ... [with a] long front which seems to contain one of everything, starting with a tower at one end, ending with a French pavilion roof at the other, and with Dutch and English gables in between'. It was designed by Robert Kerr, an influential architect of the mid to late C19 and author of *The English Gentleman's House*. The Manor, which is principally three storeys high, has a rambling plan and is made of coursed wealdstone with ashlar dressings, with slate roofs of various types. The entrance on the north front had an imposing porte-cochere until 1912, and on the southern elevation was a large conservatory, called the Winter Garden, which had also been removed by 1912.

The old stables are situated c 200m east-north-east of the Manor, to the north of the kitchen garden. The timber-clad Ford Manor was erected in the mid C20 and lies c 120m south-east of Greathed Manor.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS Some 10m to the west of Greathed Manor lies an oval-shaped formal garden which dates from the early C20. Its design has been attributed to Harold Peto (Tudor Edmonds 1974). Stepped terraces and flower beds surround an oval pool set in decorative paving, the whole being contained by a balustraded sandstone wall with a seat set into an alcove on its north side. The wrought-iron gates and grille which formerly marked the west end (photographs, NMR) had been removed but in 1996 these were replaced by new gates designed by a resident of Greathed Manor, Isolde Wigram, in memory of a past resident. Prior to the construction of the oval garden, the area to the south was occupied by a circular arrangement of flower beds with a stone plinth and large urn in the centre (photograph, Greathed Manor). Beneath the south facade of the Manor is a broad terrace, from which there are limited views of the park and woodland beyond. The views are more extensive from the terraced steps which link the Manor to the park on the east side.

PARK The park surrounds the Manor on all sides. A series of pools runs from south-south-west to north-north-east through the park, created by damming a stream. At least one of the pools appears on the Tithe map of 1846 but the series appears complete for the first time on the 1st edition OS map, surveyed 1869?74, suggesting the others may be contemporary with the building of the Manor. The central pools, linked by waterfalls and weirs, formed part of a water garden and arboretum planted by Pauline Spender Clay in the 1920s-30s. This she referred to as the 'American Garden' (letter, private collection). In a letter (private collection) Rachel Bowes Lyon wrote of her mother's love of gardening:

My mother became a creative gardener in the 1920s when a double herbaceous border (which gave no pleasure) was abandoned on the field side of the string of lakes, and natural planting of shrubs and plants along the stream and into the woodland started. Lilies were her love ... Rhododendrons were the furnishing ...

In the 1950s Eric Parker comments on the variety and quality of trees in the woodland and the massed blue and white hydrangeas beside the water (Parker 1954). These gardens are now attached to the present Ford Manor.

The park is based on a pre-existing pattern of ancient woodland, St John's Wood to the south appearing on an estate map of the early C17 (Surrey History Centre). The land towards the north and east boundaries is now divided into fields and partly ploughed. The remains of an C18 icehouse stand close to the northernmost pool, c 360m north-east of the Manor. The OS 1st edition map of 1871 shows an extensive orchard at the north-west corner of the estate; this had been much reduced by 1899 (OS) and has since been removed.

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KITCHEN GARDEN The brick-walled kitchen garden stands c 180m east of the Manor, just to the south of the stables and the site of the old house. The garden was formerly surrounded by an extensive complex of buildings and glasshouses (OS 1896). Most of the buildings have been converted into residential units and the walled garden is now used as a private garden area.

REFERENCES

E Parker, *Surrey Gardens* (1954), pp 249-51 N Pevsner et al, *The Buildings of England: Surrey* (1971), p 266 H Tudor Edmonds, *A Brief History of Greathed Manor (formerly Ford Manor)*, guide leaflet, (1974) Storm Damage Report, (Debois Landscape Survey Group 1988) [copy on EH file]

Maps Plan of the Manors of Blockfield, Ford, Dormans, 1609-27 (Surrey History Centre) Tithe map for Lingfield parish, 1846 (Surrey History Centre)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1869-74, published 1872/8 2nd edition published 1899 3rd edition published 1914 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1896 3rd edition published 1912

Archival items Early C20 photographs (Greathed Manor) Early C20 photographs (NMR, Swindon) Letter from Rachel Bowes Lyon, mid 1990s (private collection) [copy on EH file] Letter from Francis Nichols, mid 1990s (private collection) [copy on EH file]

Description written: February 2000 Amended: May 2003 Register Inspector: BJL Edited: September 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.