

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

PAMPISFORD HALL

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**PAMPISFORD HALL**

Name: PAMPISFORD HALL

County: Cambridgeshire

District: South Cambridgeshire (District Authority)

Parish: Pampisford

label.localisation: Latitude: 52.113604  
Longitude: 0.20200341  
National Grid Reference: TL 50878 48429  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: II\*  
List Entry Number: 1000321  
Date first listed: 16-Jan-1985

## Details

A mid C19 pleasure ground, arboretum and the remains of a formal garden, laid out from 1840 onwards to original designs by R Marnock (presumably Robert Marnock) with further later planting.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Pampisford Hall and park occupy an area which was entirely under arable cultivation until the early C19. The principal manor in Pampisford was acquired by the Parker family in the early C18. On the death of William Parker in 1776 the estate was divided for a time between his sisters, Grace and Elizabeth. Grace died in 1781 and her portion passed to Elizabeth, who married William Hamond. On her death in 1789 the whole estate passed to her son William Parker Hamond I who, in 1812, was succeeded by his son William Parker Hamond II. It was he who was responsible for erecting the hall and laying out the grounds. Following the Enclosure act of 1799, William Parker Hamond I received 535 acres (c 223ha) of enclosed fields and commons and his son used c 244 acres (c 101ha) of this for the new hall and its surroundings which were developed between 1820 and 1831. R Marnock (presumably Robert Marnock, the notable landscape designer) was commissioned to advise on the design of the grounds whilst the owner continued to indulge his passion for tree planting by adding to the increasingly important arboricultural collection he had started in 1820 (Inspector's report 1988). During the 1860s the architectural partnership of Messrs Goldie and Child was commissioned to extend the Hall and in 1873, following his father's death, William Parker Hamond III continued to develop and extend the pleasure grounds and arboretum for a further twenty years until his death in 1893. His successor, Col R T Hamond (a cousin) sold most of the estate, including the park and Hall, to James Binney. He further extended the Hall, adding a new wing and a loggia along the south-west front. Cecil Binney succeeded upon the death of his father in 1935 and remained at Pampisford, caring for and developing the arboretum until his death in 1966 when the estate passed to his younger brother Hector Binney. In 1969 Roy Lancaster visited the site to record the extent of the collection at that time. The site then entered a period of decline. In 1986 Hector Binney was succeeded by his daughter Arabella Killander who received advice on the renovation and replanting of the grounds from Alan Mitchell following damage sustained during the storms of 1987 and 1990. The site remains (2000) in private ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

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**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Pampisford Hall lies c 8km south-south-east of Cambridge, in a busy rural part of the county on the south-east edge of the villages of Pampisford and Sawston and covers c 60ha. It sits in a triangle of land enclosed by the recently dualled A11 and the busy A505 Royston road which forms the northern boundary of the site. Pampisford village lies to the west, and farmland to the south. The A11 lies to the east, with an agricultural field dividing the road from the historic park which is enclosed on all sides by woodland belts and plantations. There is one major view into and out of the site: that along the south-east Cedar Avenue which lies in the pleasure grounds and focuses the eye out to the surrounding countryside.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** There are two approaches to Pampisford Hall, both lying to the north. That from the west end of the site is known as the Whittlesford Drive and is marked by elaborate gates (listed grade II) erected in c 1880 to designs by Goldie. The drive runs south-east between small open areas of parkland, then turns north-east on entering the pleasure grounds, to arrive at the gravelled north-east front. The second north entrance, known as the Newmarket Drive, originally entered the park off the A505 past a late C19 red-brick and tile lodge but has recently (1990s) been realigned at the north end through agricultural land as a result of road improvements and a new lodge is being constructed at the entrance. The realigned drive rejoins the original north drive close to the A505 and runs south along the edge of the park before turning west to arrive at the north-east front. The drives, entering the park in the north, sweeping past the Hall, and exiting to the south-west survive from Marnock's original layout of the site.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Pampisford Hall (listed grade II) is a large Victorian country mansion of gault brick under slate and lead roofs, built in two and three storeys in Italianate and French Renaissance styles. It sits in the centre of its grounds which are roughly triangular in shape. The original hall, erected between 1820 and 1831 by William Parker Hamond II, had a main south-east block with a long north-west wing and a kitchen wing to the north-east. These were infilled and extended to three storeys in the 1860s by the architects Goldie and Child for William Parker Hamond II. His son, William Parker Hamond III was responsible for the redecoration of the Hall in its present style. James Binney added a four-bay loggia to the south-west front in the early C20.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The pleasure grounds cover almost half of the area here registered and are entirely enclosed by iron rail fencing (restored late C20). The simplified remains of a small, formal sunk Italian Garden lie below the south-west front, comprising gravel paths and upright Lawson cypress surrounding a pattern laid out in box. This garden was originally designed by Marnock in the 1840s. The south-east front looks onto an open lawn, bordered by a c 200m long cedar of Lebanon avenue (replanted c 1990 following storm damage) which leads the eye beyond the iron rail which divides the garden from the park, out into the open countryside. The gravelled forecourt on the north-east front is bordered by grass backed by a dense mixture of exotic tree species. To the north-west lies a yew walk leading to the Dell.

Surrounding these garden areas immediately around the Hall is an arboretum of great variety both in terms of its species and the age of its specimens, which include some particularly rare species and varieties of conifers. The whole of the pleasure ground is cut through with walks, rides and avenues of differing character lined with a variety of both broadleaved and coniferous species. From the eastern boundary of the walled garden north of the Hall runs the Great Eastern Walk, lined with mature juniper. Further to the north, between the walled garden and the boundary, is a recently planted (1990s) Wellingtonia glade. Some 150m to the south-west of the Hall is the Dell, a sunken area of the pleasure grounds with a grass centre, developed from a disused chalk pit. This part of the garden was used in the early C20 as an outdoor theatre and the grass performance platform survives. A linear defensive work comprising a bank and ditch, known as the Brent Ditch and probably of Dark Age origin (C Taylor pers comm, 2000), runs south-east from the edge of the Dell for c 950m into the surrounding farmland, enclosed on either side by a continuation of the pleasure-ground ornamental planting. The chalk pit predates the Hall and grounds, being shown on the 1798 Enclosure map.

Much of the fabric of the original layout by Marnock survives although some of the paths in outlying areas have been lost. The collection of trees and shrubs however, widely acknowledged for its extent, variety and importance in the gardening press at the end of the C19, has continued to develop and change ever since it was started in the 1820s. Despite significant losses through storm damage in the late C20 it continues to include mature examples of many rare and unusual exotic species.

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**PARK** Pampisford Hall has a small park in relation to the size of its pleasure grounds, divided into three sections of open park. The largest area lies to the north-east of the Hall, whilst the remaining two flank the north-west drive, the largest of these lying to the south-west. All three are well planted with individual trees and groups of a wide mix of exotic species which reflect the character of the arboretum, including some fine mature cedars.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The walled kitchen garden lies c 50m north of the Hall. The walls are composed of a mixture of brick and flint, with high walls enclosing the main compartment and low flint walls to the south-east and north-east enclosing nursery beds for trees, frames and workshops. The main garden is quartered by grass paths aligned on gates in the centre of each wall. The beds are edged by herbaceous borders and are planted with flowers, fruit and vegetables. The walled garden was built by William Parker Hamond II in the 1820s at the same time as the Hall was erected.

#### REFERENCES

Gardeners' Chronicle, (26 July 1879); (3 May 1884) Victoria History of the County of Cambridgeshire VI, (1978), pp 105-13 J Kenworthy-Browne et al, Burke's and Savills Guide to Country Houses III, (1981), p 23 Inspector's Report, (English Heritage 1988) Cambridgeshire Parklands, (Cambridgeshire Record Office 1990), p 50

Maps Enclosure map for Pampisford, 1799 (Q/RDc2), (Cambridgeshire Record Office) Map to accompany sale particulars, 1893 (Cambridge Local Studies Library)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1891 2nd edition published 1903 1948 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1886 Archival items Pampisford Hall estate sale particulars, 1893 (Cambridge Local Studies Library)

Description written: November 1999 Amended: December 2000 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: January 2001

## 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.