

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

PARHAM

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Name:	PARHAM
County:	West Sussex
District:	Horsham (District Authority)
Parish:	Parham
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District:	Horsham (District Authority)
Parish:	Storrington and Sullington
National park:	SOUTH DOWNS
label.localisation:	Latitude: 50.917823 Longitude: -0.49331685 National Grid Reference: TQ 06007 14232 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1000161 Date first listed: 01-Jun-1984

Details

An C18 pleasure ground and walled garden, with additional mid C19 features, which was further developed in the C20 by the Hon Clive Pearson with the architect Victor Heal, set in a park established in the mid C17 but largely planted in the C18 and early C19.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The manor of Parham was granted by Henry VIII at the Dissolution to Robert Palmer whose son, Sir Thomas, rebuilt the present house from a former fortified manor from 1577. His son, another Thomas, sold Parham in 1601 to Thomas Bysshopp of Henfield, whose family remained in ownership until the early C20. Sir Cecil Bysshopp, the eighth Baronet, established a claim to the Barony of Zouche of Haryngworth in 1816 and became the twelfth Lord Zouche. In 1922, the seventeenth Baroness Zouche sold Parham to the Hon Clive Pearson, second son of Viscount Cowdray. He died in 1965 and in 1996 his descendants transferred ownership to the present Parham Park Trust and the management of the house and estate to Parham Park Ltd.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Parham Park is situated 1.5km west of Storrington, south-west of the A283 Storrington to Pulborough Road. The 152ha registered site, which comprises c 4ha of formal and ornamental gardens surrounded by a 148ha park with woodland and lakes, lies on a band of greensand which forms level or gently sloping ground to the west (the West Plain), south-east and north-east of the house but which rises suddenly to intervening, steep-sided rounded hills to the north (Fangrove Hill) and east (Windmill Hill). South-west of the house the ground drops away steeply

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to a north-west-running stream valley. The site is enclosed on the east side by a stone rubble wall, beyond which is wooded farmland and the western edge of Storrington. The remaining boundaries comprise deer fencing, beyond which lies North Park Wood (to the north and planted mid C18) and the meadow land of the Arun valley (to the west). The southern boundary runs along the foot of the north-facing, steeply rising scarp of the South Downs.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The site is entered from the north-east corner. A drive leads westwards from the A283 to stone gate piers and timber gates in the east boundary wall, on the south side of which is Douglas Lodge, a two-storey stone cottage with a porch and gable above, built by 1876 (OS 1st edition). The drive continues westwards on level ground before turning south-westwards along the lower slopes of Windmill Hill to reach the gates in the east wall of the entrance court on the north side of the house. Entrances to the park and drives to the house from the west, at the pair of C18, stone rubble West Lodges (listed grade II), from the north, and from the south-east (from the Amberley to Storrington road 250m beyond the boundary), are shown established to the present pattern on Gardner and Gream's map of 1795, the east to west drives forming the main highway until this was replaced by the turnpike to the south in 1816.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Parham Park (listed grade I) stands on level ground at the centre of the park. Built from 1577 on the site of, and incorporating parts of, a former fortified manor house, it is constructed of stone rubble with ashlar quoins and a Horsham slab roof. It has a principal, E-shaped south front with projecting wings surmounted by gables and a central porch which formed the main entrance until this was moved to the north side in 1830-40. Considerable alterations were carried out in 1705 (Poore 1991) and again in both the mid and late C19. From his purchase in 1922 until the 1960s, the Hon Clive Pearson undertook the complete restoration and refurbishment of Parham with his architect, Victor Heal. The north front is approached through the walled Fountain Court, laid out between 1870 and 1871 (guidebook) by the fourteenth Lord Zouche, to a gravelled carriage circle, lawn and a central stone fountain basin. The court is enclosed on the north side by the stables and laundry wing (listed grade I), a mixture of two- and three-storey stone buildings built 1778-9 around a further courtyard, the wing facing into the Fountain Court (enlarged 1870-1) surmounted by a central square turret with a clock face, cupola and dome.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The south front of the house opens onto a gravelled walk and a rectangular, level lawn terminating on its south side (some 40m distant) at a stone ha-ha built, with the extension of the lawn southwards, in the mid 1960s and replacing former iron park paling. The ha-ha extends around the west front to enclose further lawn and a stone sundial centred on the west axis. A gravelled walk along the west front leads northwards into the Pleasure Grounds. These, which extend north-west of the Fountain and Stable courtyards, around the east end of the lake (the Pleasure Pond) and along its north shore, were enclosed by the eighth Baronet in the late C18 or early C19 with a ha-ha and fence on land which had been ornamentally planted with trees, including a beech grove (adjacent to the lake and largely destroyed in the 1987 storm), in the mid C18 (Poore 1991). The southern part of the grounds (south of the wall of the kitchen garden) are now (1998) enclosed from the park by a yew hedge and are laid out to lawns informally dotted with ornamental trees of mixed ages and species and with, adjacent to the south-west corner of the kitchen garden, a brick and turf maze constructed in 1991 to a design from a Parham embroidery. The lawns extend around the east end of the Pleasure Pond, which was enlarged to its present size from a pond in the mid C18 and which terminates in a stone balustrade built c 1863 (garden guide). The rising banks of the north shore are dotted with exotic trees and a few shrubberies and, 250m north-west of the house, a small, three-bay, classical summerhouse known as Cannock House and erected in the mid C19 (ibid). The north boundary of the Pleasure Grounds is enclosed from the west to east drive by a high stone wall with, at its east end and facing south down a walk along the west wall of the kitchen garden, a three-arched stone summerhouse built in the late 1920s by Victor Heal on the site of a late C19 garden building.

PARK The park, which comprises a mixture of open grassland with bracken, scattered mature oak trees and small enclosed woods, copses and clumps, surrounds the house and gardens on all sides, all open land being permanently grazed by the 200 strong fallow deer population. Although its boundaries have expanded and contracted since it was enclosed from common land in the early C17 (Saxton's map of 1575 shows no park at Parham, the first reference to the post-enclosure park occurring in 1643), the extent of the park at present was largely established by 1842 (Tithe map; Poore 1991).

To the north and north-east of the house, the park is well furnished both with scattered mature oaks (which become more dense towards the northern boundary) and with small, enclosed woods or copses, on Fangrove Hill and in Strawberry Grove (to

the north) and on Windmill Hill (planted 1778-1816 and restored after storm damage). An icehouse stands set into the north-west slope of Windmill Hill (c 500m north-east of the house). Some 50m east of the kitchen garden wall is an C18 round dovecote, built of stone rubble with a tiled roof and wooden cupola (listed grade II). The present pattern of woodland was largely established in the C18 when, from 1725 to 1778, the sixth Baronet began planting the pre-enclosure park landscape of scattered broadleaved trees (Yeakell and Gardner, 1778). According to Lady Pechell (daughter of the eight Baronet), writing in the early C19, her father planted the woods in the North Park and all the fir plantations (Poore 1991). A number of small deciduous plantations were added in the mid C20.

West and south-west of the house, West Plain is open in character (the eastern end laid out to a cricket field) but is framed on its northern and southern sides by the remnants of several clumps of exotics (some replanted following 1987 storm damage) including Sycamore Grove and Church Grove (these two on the south side) which survive from the ornamental planting carried out in association with the enclosure of the Pleasure Grounds by the eighth Baronet between 1779 and 1828. The ground drops steeply away south-westwards below Church Grove into a north-west-running stream valley which is dammed to form Woodmill Pond and the series of pools and weirs along the stream course above it, the pond being enlarged to its present size after 1778 (Yeakell and Gardner). The south-west side of the valley is well scattered with mature oaks, the plantation in the south-west corner of the park being added in the late C19.

South-east of the house the land sloping gently to the site boundary is open in character and divided by an internal east to west paling fence lined with mature oak and post-storm replacements. Some 120m south of the house stands the cruciform building of St Peter's church, largely rebuilt c 1820 but retaining a chapel of 1545 (listed grade I). The surrounding buildings of Parham village which still remained were demolished by the seventh Baronet c 1778-9.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden lies to the north of the house and its stable and service courtyards. The 136m x 115m rectangle is enclosed by a mixture of brick and stone walls with its main entrance, at wrought-iron gates in the south wall, approached by the gravelled walk running north from the west front of the house. The garden, its outline shown on Yeakell and Gardner's map of 1778, is quartered by paths which were established by the late C19. The present ornamental structure was laid out in the 1920s by Clive Pearson and Victor Heal, the planting being partly replanned and simplified by Peter Coats in 1982 (drawing at Parham). The main north to south path is lined by broad mixed borders backed by timber trellis-work on the west side and a high stone wall to the east. North of the central crossing, the walk and borders (of roses) are backed by low stone walls built in memory of Clive Pearson in 1965. The walk terminates at a stone summerhouse built against the north wall by Heal in 1927 (drawings at Parham). The north-west quarter of the garden is laid to lawn with a white border along the west wall designed by Lanning Roper and with a two-storey children's playhouse dating from the 1920s (Head Gardener pers comm, 1998) built into the north-west corner. The north-east quarter is laid to formal rectangles of box-edged vegetable beds, designed in the mid 1990s. The east/west cross walk is flanked by blue borders at the west end and by gold borders at the east end (redesigned by Coats in 1982). The south-west quarter is planted as an orchard while the south-east quarter contains, in its northern half, a yew-hedge-enclosed herb garden with a central pond and an adjacent lawn with a central sundial, and in its southern half, a c 30m long, lean-to greenhouse surviving from a set of four built by Mackenzie & Moncur of Edinburgh in 1923 and now displaying flowering plants.

REFERENCES

Country Life, 11 (19 April 1902), pp 496-501; 109 (1 June 1951), pp 1716-19; (8 June 1951), pp 1800-3; (15 June 1951), pp 1884-8; 177 (6 June 1985), pp 1566-70; (13 June 1985), pp 1658-62; 179 (13 March 1986), pp 622-4; (20 March 1986), pp 740-2 I Nairn and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Sussex* (1965), pp 291-2 A Poore, *Parham Park Restoration Plan*, (Savills 1991) Parham Park, guidebook, (1985; 1992) Lady Emma Barnard, *A Guide to the Gardens at Parham* (nd, early 1990s) Maps W Yeakell and W Gardner, *An Actual Topographical Survey of the County of Sussex ...*, 1778 W Gardner and T Gream, *A Topographical Map of Sussex ...*, 1795 Tithe map of Parham, 1842 (West Sussex Record Office)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1875-6, published 1879 2nd edition published 1898 3rd edition published 1913 1938 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1876 2nd edition published 1911

Description written: February 1998 Amended: January 2000 Register Inspector: VCH Edited: June 2000

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.