

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

WESTOVER

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

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| Name: | WESTOVER |
| District: | Isle of Wight (Unitary Authority) |
| Parish: | Calbourne, Newtown and Porchfield |
| label.localisation: | Latitude: 50.664895 Longitude: -1.4132675 National Grid Reference: SZ 41564 85189 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF) |
| label.overview: | Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000931 Date first listed: 09-Jan-1987 |

Details

A late C18/early C19 country house, gardens and park, set in an ornamental agricultural and wooded landscape.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The medieval manor of Westover was purchased by the Rev Leonard Troughear Holmes in the 1760s. He built a hunting box and surrounded it with a park, both of which being mentioned and illustrated in Worsley's History of the Isle of Wight which was published in 1781. In 1793, the Ordnance Surveyor's draft drawings confirm that Westover House had a small park to the east and a walled garden to the west. The Rev Holmes was created Lord Holmes in 1798 and the property remained with his descendants until the early C20. At the beginning of the C19, the House was substantially rebuilt for Sir L T Worsley Holmes, possibly by John Nash. At this time it was turned from a hunting box into a fashionable house, the park and gardens were extended, and several thatched cottage orné lodges were erected (Brannon 1824). This new layout is shown on the OS map of 1866. During this period land outside the park was also ornamented with copses, shelter belts, and plantations. In the early C20 the House was purchased by Octavius Moulton Barrett, the youngest brother of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. During the C20 the Westover estate was broken up and the historic park sold into divided ownership, in which it remains (2001).

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Westover House lies c 10km west-south-west of Newport, on the south side of the village of Calbourne which is located in the western half of the Isle of Wight. The c 114ha site is bounded to the north by Winkle Street, Newport Road, and the village of Calbourne, to the east by Lynch Lane, to the south by wooded downland, and to the west by farmland. The ground at Westover slopes slightly to the north and north-west and is overlooked to the south-west by Westover Down, to the south by Brightstone Down, and to the south-east by Newbarn Down.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The principal approach to Westover House is from Winkle Street in Calbourne at the north-east corner of the site. The entrance here is marked by octagonal stone gate piers set next to an early C19 octagonal cottage orné lodge (listed grade II) standing beside a small early C19 ornamental lake. The drive is carried past the west side of the water over an ornamented stone bridge of coursed rubble on one side and ashlar on the other (listed grade II), built when the lake was created. The drive, its curving path lined with trees (C20), curves gently south to arrive at the north corner of the House. Here it divides, the east drive leading to the north-east front of the House and the west branch leading to the stable block. A second entrance, off Newport Road, is marked by the early C19 thatched Sweetwater Lodge (listed grade II), a cottage

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orné which stands on the park boundary c 1km west of the House. The drive turns east-south-east through farmland and then east through the park to join the north drive beside the stable block. Two further early C19 thatched cottages stand close to the park boundary: Wheelbarrow Cottage, c 200m further south-west of Sweetwater Lodge on Newport Road (outside the area here registered), and a lodge cottage c 150m to the north-west of Westover Park Farm. Map evidence shows that in the mid C18 when Westover was first built, the approaches were from the south, but the present layout of drives and lodges date from the late C18/early C19 expansion of the park.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Westover House (listed grade II*) is a large stuccoed country house built in two storeys under a hipped slate roof. It has a moulded cornice and parapet with a porch over the north-east front supported by fluted Doric columns and a supported verandah along the south-east, garden facade. The character of the present house dates from the early C19 when the much simpler hunting lodge erected by Thomas Holmes in the 1760s was largely rebuilt for Sir L T Worsley Holmes, possibly to designs by John Nash (1752-1835).

The square, one and a half-storey stable courtyard stands on the west side of the House and is contemporary with the remodelling of the House. It is entered through an archway on the north range and has a sundial in the centre of the courtyard.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens lie to the west of the House. A path from the south-west front connects the House to the walled kitchen garden and runs alongside a mixed border planted at the external base of the south range of the stable courtyard. On the south side of the walled garden further borders look onto a C20 swimming pool with a pavilion on its south side. The pool is flanked to east and west by small lawns enclosed by hedges and scattered with mixed species trees and shrubs. The remainder of the ornamental gardens lie within the walled kitchen garden (see below).

Beyond the pool pavilion is an area of wooded pleasure ground, shown on the 1866 OS map to be cut through with serpentine paths and walks. Part of this area has recently (1999) been replanted.

PARK Westover House stands in the north-east corner of the park, the majority of which is laid out to the south and west. From the north-east and south-east fronts, lawns scattered with mature trees run up to a boundary plantation to the east, and a ha-ha to the south which marks the line of the mid C18 approach drive. The ornamental lake in the north-east corner of the site, the source of the Caul Bourne, is shown in existence on Andrews' county map of 1769.

The remainder of the park is partly laid to grass with some surviving mature parkland trees and copses close to the House. The west park is partially divided by hedges into smaller fields and is bordered to the south-west by Withybed Copse, which appears for the first time on the mid C19 OS maps. Some 500m to the south-west of the House stands Westover Park Farm, beside and beyond which the park is under arable production, although the dense woodland plantation along the eastern boundary still forms a link from the Winkle Street Lodge to Westover Plantation at the southern edge of the site. This plantation runs all along the slope of the Downs c 1.2km to the south of the House and was planted in the early C19.

The original mid C18 extent of the park is recorded on Andrews' county map of 1769 and the OS surveyor's drawings of 1793. Soon afterwards, in the early C19, the landscape was greatly altered around the newly rebuilt house and the park extended to the south and west.

KITCHEN GARDEN The c 1ha walled kitchen garden lies on the west side of the stable courtyard. Its northern half contains C19 glasshouse ranges, a hard tennis court, and areas for fruit and vegetable production. The southern half is laid out as an ornamental flower garden with long herbaceous borders backed by clipped yew hedges. The walled garden is shown in this position after 1793 and is therefore likely to be contemporary with the rebuilding of the House.

REFERENCES

J R Worsley, *History of the Isle of Wight* (1781) G Brannon, *Vectis Scenery* (1824) Victoria History of the County of Hampshire V, (1912), pp 217-21 N Pevsner and D Lloyd, *The Buildings of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (1967), p 736 V Batsford, *Historic Parks and Gardens of the Isle of Wight* (1989), pp 45-6

Maps J Andrews, *A topographical map of the Isle of Wight in Hampshire, 1769* (Isle of Wight Record Office)

OS Surveyor's drawings, 1793 (British Library Maps) OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1866 2nd edition published 1898 3rd edition published 1909 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1866 3rd edition published 1909

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Description written: November 2001 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: January 2005

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.