

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

HEATON PARK

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

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**HEATON PARK**

Name: HEATON PARK

District: Bury (Metropolitan Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

District: Manchester (Metropolitan Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

label.localisation: Latitude: 53.534606  
Longitude: -2.2618038  
National Grid Reference: SD8274504249  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1000854  
Date first listed: 20-Feb-1986

## Details

A park and pleasure grounds retaining elements of schemes probably designed by William Emes and John Webb.

### CHRONOLOGY OF HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Heaton Estate had been consolidated by the early C17. It was acquired through marriage by the Egertons, later Earls of Wilton, in 1684. Sir Thomas Egerton, first Lord Wilton, made several payments to William Emes (1729-1803) during the period 1770-2 when the park was being redesigned. Further works were undertaken during the period 1808-9 by John Webb (1754-1828), a pupil of Emes, at the same time that Lewis Wyatt (1777-1853) was working on the Hall. Sir Thomas Egerton's interest in contemporary ideas about landscape is witnessed by his Grand Tour journal of 1784-5 and the fact that he bought two Claude glasses for his trip. The site was acquired by Manchester Corporation in 1902 and subsequently used as a public park.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Heaton Park is situated c 5km north of Manchester city centre. The site is defined by Sheepfoot Lane to the south, Bury Old Road to the west, St Margaret's Road and the M66 motorway to the north and Middleton Road to the east. Motorway widening has encroached slightly into the historic parkland at its northernmost point and in the north-west corner a C20 reservoir cuts into the park, but otherwise the boundary is marked by a mixture of brick walls, railings and walls surmounted by railings. These generally represent the replacement or rebuilding of a 3m high wall which was built to enclose the site during the period 1807-14, probably under the supervision of John Webb and Lewis Wyatt. Some parts of the wall survive to the original height on Middleton Road and adjacent to the former main entrance flanking the Grand Lodge, on the corner of Sheepfoot Lane and Bury Old Road. The c 240ha park is situated on land which rises from the south and west, and there is a valley running through the northern and north-eastern part of the site. The setting is urban in character but there are views over partially open country to the east and south-east and to the Pennines to the north and north-west.

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**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** There are six main entrances, four with lodges. At the principal entrance is the Grand Lodge (early C19, listed grade II\*) designed by Lewis Wyatt which is situated at the junction of Sheepfoot Lane and Bury Old Road. A drive leading to the Hall appears to follow the line of an avenue shown on an estate map of c 1750. An entrance called Heaton Gates, with lodge, gates and gate piers of early C20 date, is situated on Middleton Road. Another entrance north of this has a neo-classical octagonal stone lodge, known as Smithy Lodge (late C18, grade II\*). This entrance, with a driveway leading to the Hall, has a late C20 golf driving range c 30m south-west of the lodge building and a late C20 golf club house c 70m west of this. An entrance on St Margaret's Road has a small lodge of simple design. The drives leading from these lodges to the Hall were widened following acquisition by Manchester Corporation and these, as well as later routes through the park, are almost all fenced with railings of various C20 dates.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Heaton Hall (listed grade I) was designed by James Wyatt 1772-89 for Sir Thomas Egerton, seventh baronet. There is evidence that part of an earlier house, shown on an engraving of c 1750, was incorporated into the design. The Hall is considered to be the finest of its type in the region and one of the finest in the country (Pevsner 1969). It is situated almost at the centre of the park and faces south-east, with views to the south and east now obscured by C20 planting. In 1830 an orangery was added to the east wing of the Hall, probably by Lewis Wyatt.

The stable block and site of a home farm are situated c 60m north-west of the Hall. The stable block, attributed to Samuel Wyatt (late C18, listed grade II), is used partly for offices and partly as stables. The home farm was situated c 100m west of the stables; the early C19 bailiff's house and part of another building of similar date survive but the rest was demolished in the 1970s. The remains of an icehouse c 20m to the north-east of the farm were excavated by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit in 1989.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The pleasure grounds consist of a terrace on the south-east front of the Hall and an area to the north and west, including the stables and home farm, enclosed by a ha-ha shown on a sale map of 1866. The ha-ha is partially extant and it is well-preserved in the area north of the Hall where it exhibits signs of later C20 repair. A path is shown on the 1st edition OS map surveyed 1844 leading along its inside edge, following the contours of the slope, from a point c 50m north of the Hall around to the south front of the building where the ha-ha disappears. A modern path which leads between the terrace in front of the Hall and the bowling greens beyond appears to follow its line.

The C20 terrace in front of the Hall is laid out as a formal garden with geometric beds. C20 bowling greens lie below the terrace to the south-east and the area is screened with C20 planting. The land rises steeply behind the Hall on the north and north-east sides and on the highest point of this eminence is a circular neo-classical temple, probably by Samuel Wyatt (c 1795-1802, listed grade II\*). This commands panoramic views of the surrounding area and the Pennines to the north, east and south.

West of the Hall, in the area between the stables and the home farm, is a garden enclosed by a brick wall on the north side running between the stables and farm, the fenced site of the farm and a causeway on the west side, a tree belt to the south, and the stables on the east. The garden is reached by a path which runs west from drives on the south side of the Hall. The north end of the garden has lawns and geometric beds on the site of hothouses shown on the 1844 and 1933 OS maps. The land slopes down to the south where there are lawns and specimen trees fringed with a belt of trees. A stone grotto consisting of an arched recess flanked with rockwork is set into a slope c 10m south of the home farm site. On the west side of the garden a tunnel in the form of a rustic stonework bridge leads beneath a causeway. The causeway leads from the park to the home farm and was probably provided so that cattle could be driven there without entering the gardens. Beyond the bridge is a clearing and a path leading into the Dell, an irregularly shaped wooded area with curving paths leading through it, and to a small lake c 300m south-west of the stables. This is overlooked by a C20 bandstand. The walks are connected by a path leading west through a belt of woodland to the kitchen garden. This path, the causeway, the Dell and the lake are all shown on the 1844 OS map. At that time the lake was of serpentine shape.

**PARK** There are tree belts around the parts of the northern, north-western and north-eastern park boundaries which are the survivors of the extensive perimeter plantings shown on the 1844 OS map. The northern and north-eastern part of the park is described as a deer park on the 1844 OS map. In this area there are three small lakes and a stream which runs in a steep wooded

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valley. The northernmost lake is called New Pond on the 1844 OS map. These parts of the park are otherwise mainly open grassland which has been turned into a golf course.

An ornamental temple called the Dower House (late C18, listed grade II) is situated c 300m north-west of the Hall on the edge of woodland which screens the south-east end of a reservoir. This was constructed in the 1930s, taking an area of c 15ha from the north-west corner of the park; a water treatment plant was added during the 1950s at the south-east end of the reservoir. A telecommunications tower was erected c 320m north-west of the Hall in the 1960s. Playing fields are situated south of the reservoir in the north-west corner of the park.

The southern part of the park is also open grassland with some tree cover, including C20 avenues along parts of the drives from the Grand Lodge and Heaton Gates. This part of the park is illustrated in a watercolour of 1802 (Manchester City Art Galleries 1972) which indicates that there was fairly extensive tree cover with planting north and west of the Hall, together with clumps and belts of trees in grassland. This view shows the park after it was redesigned in the 1770s. The redesign included the removal of a formal garden with radiating avenues and terraces on the south front of the Hall which is shown on an estate plan of c 1750. Two other views of this area by John Ferneley (*ibid*), painted in 1829 after John Webb had been involved with the landscape, show a racecourse in the south-eastern part of the park which had been created in 1827 and was situated c 600m south of the Hall. A comparison with the 1802 watercolour suggests that the tree cover had been thinned out to give better views to and from the Hall.

This part of the park is now dominated by a large boating lake which was made on the site of the racecourse in 1912-13. At the same time, part of the facade of Manchester's former Town Hall designed by Frances Goodwin in 1822-4 (listed grade II\*) was erected c 20m south of the south end of the lake. There is a boathouse on the western shore and a tram line runs east from the north end of the lake to a large tram shed of early to mid C20 date c 280m west of Heaton Gate.

The south-west part of the park is mainly open grassland with some fenced areas where cattle are grazed. A section of railway shown on the 2nd edition OS map published 1889 emerges from a tunnel c 1km south-west of the Hall and runs for a short distance through the park and thence into a tunnel beneath Bury Old Road.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** A brick-walled kitchen garden is situated c 400m west of the Hall. It is shown on the 1844 OS map when, as now, it was linked to the pleasure grounds by a path leading through a belt of woodland. The north-east wall has been reduced in height, while other walls are intact. Inside are a number of late C20 glasshouses. A gardener's house (listed grade II) lies immediately to the south-east within a garden bounded by hedges.

#### REFERENCES

The Victoria History of the County of Lancashire 5, (1911), pp 80-2 Country Life, 36 (28 November 1914), pp 710-17; 58 (29 August 1925), pp 322-8; (5 September 1925), pp 354-9 N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: South Lancashire* (1969), pp 328-30 Heaton Hall, Manchester, (Manchester City Art Galleries 1972) J Lomax, *Heaton House* (1983), (reprinted from *Trans Lancashire Cheshire Antiq Soc* 82, pp 58-101) *Parks for the People*, (Manchester City Art Galleries 1987), pp 19-20 Heaton Park Icehouse, (Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit 1991) *Heaton Park - Summary of Landscape History*, (Elizabeth Banks Associates 1995)

Maps Estate Map, c 1750, Greater Manchester Record Office

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1844 2nd edition published 1889 revised 2nd edition published 1907 provisional edition 1932 with additions 1938

Map attached to 1866 Sale Prospectus, reproduced in Lomax 1983 M66 Manchester Outer Ring Road Draft Landscape Proposals, 1991

Description written: February 1997 Amended: June 1998 Register Inspector: CEH Edited: March 1999

## Legal

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