

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

GROVELANDS PARK

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Name:	GROVELANDS PARK
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Enfield (London Borough)
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.632448 Longitude: -0.11545578 National Grid Reference: TQ 30527 94308 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1000395 Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987

Details

Late C18 landscape park and lake by Humphry Repton, extended in the mid C19, and laid out as a public park in early C20 by Thomas H Mawson.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Since the medieval period, an extensive estate known as Lord's Grove lay between the villages of Southgate and Winchmore Hill. The estate contained a large area of coppice woodland, remnants of the Forest of Middlesex, and was run for the commercial profits gained from the timber. In the C18 the estate was owned by the third Duke of Chandos, and it was his son-in-law who, in c 1796, sold the estate of around 230 acres (c 96ha) to Walker Gray (d 1834). The land consisted of a small valley with a stream running through it from north to south, Winchmore Wood to the east, and open meadow and pasture with small groves and scattered oaks. Gray, a wealthy Quaker brandy merchant from Tottenham, who had recently inherited a fortune from his father, commissioned John Nash (1752-1835) to design a new house and Humphry Repton (1752-1818) to lay out the gardens and park. Repton's work included siting the new house, forming the lake (with a bridge and fishing temple), laying out the gardens and pleasure grounds, carriage drives and entrances, and planting the park. The work was completed in the early 1800s and the property was known as Southgate Grove. The integrity of the design was initially compromised by the land immediately south of the lake and a portion of ground to the north of the house, being outside Gray's ownership.

Walter Gray died in 1834 and the house, together with 36 acres (15ha) of park (between the house and the lake) and 260 acres (180ha) of meadow, arable land and woodland were put up for sale. The property was not sold and it passed to Gray's nephew, John Donnithorne Taylor (1798-1885). Taylor was the brother-in-law and partner (in the brewery Taylor Walker) of Isaac Walker, of Arnos Grove and the sale plan of 1834 shows that Walker also owned land immediately to the north-east and south-west of the Southgate Grove property. Taylor sold his interest in Taylor Walker and retired to Southgate Grove, which he renamed Woodlands, and then Grovelands. As neighbouring plots of land were put up for sale Taylor acquired them, enlarging and consolidating the estate from the original c 260 acres which he inherited to an estate of over 600 acres (250ha). The main additions were the Home Farm land to the north (acquired c 1839) and the Old Park Estate to the south (acquired 1840). Taylor demolished the house (Cullands Grove) in the Old Park Estate and laid out a carriage drive across it to form the southern approach to Grovelands.

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Inventory of Great Britain
GROVELANDS PARK

John Donnithorne Taylor died in 1885 and the estate passed to his son, Major Robert Kirkpatrick Taylor (1834-1901). He maintained the estate but following his death in 1901, his son, Captain John Vickris Taylor (b 1872), put the 250ha estate up for sale. Much of the Palmers Green (southern) extension of the estate was sold at the auction in 1902 and developed for housing. Lot 9, which included Grovelands house and the surrounding 314 acres (c 131ha) of parkland and wood, failed to reach the reserve and was withdrawn from sale. Captain Taylor continued to live at Grovelands until 1907, when he moved away leaving the estate in the hands of his trustees. In 1911 64 acres (c 26.5ha) of the park were purchased by Southgate Urban District Council and laid out as a public park, Thomas H Mawson acting as the landscape architect. Grovelands Park was officially opened on 12 April 1913, the park being extended soon afterwards by a further 30 acres (12.5ha). The resulting park retains the core of Repton's landscape (with the loss of some of the land he laid out to the west and the east) but also includes areas to the south of the lake which were not part of the park in his time. Since 1965 the park has been owned and managed by the London Borough of Enfield.

The house and the land to the south-west were not included in Southgate UDC's purchase. Between 1907 and 1916 the house was unoccupied and then was temporarily used in 1916 as a hospital for wounded soldiers. In 1921 the house was purchased by the Royal Northern Hospital, and adopted by the NHS in 1948, after which it was used as a convalescent home until 1977. The house was then unoccupied until 1985, when it was purchased by the Priory Hospitals Group, and restored (with additional new buildings to the west) by Bodnitz Allan & Partners, with Donald Insall & Associates as consultants.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Grovelands Park, c 40ha, is located to the north-east of Southgate, in the London Borough of Enfield. The site is bounded by Church Hill and the houses and gardens on Branscombe Gardens and Seaforth Gardens to the north-east, by the gardens of the houses on Broad Walk to the south-east, by The Bourne to the south-west, and by Queen Elizabeth's Drive, Wynchgate, and the gardens of the houses on Park View to the north and north-west. The ground at Grovelands Park comprises a gently sloping valley falling slightly from south-west to north-east. The boundaries of the park are marked by wrought-iron railings (along The Bourne and Church Hill) and wooden fences.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main approach to the mansion at Grovelands is from the corner of The Bourne and Queen Elizabeth's Drive, 400m to west-south-west of the house. The entrance is marked by brick walls, with rusticated stone piers holding wrought-iron double gates (c 1800, listed grade II), and with a single-storey stuccoed lodge with a rusticated centre bay (c 1800, listed grade II). The drive leads eastwards through an avenue of mixed trees, bordered to the north and south by land which is used as a tennis club. The courts and pavilions are set in rough grass with scattered trees and enclosing hedges. To the south of the tennis courts and south-west of the house is an area of open lawn, set aside for future use as a reservoir and bounded on the south side by a belt of trees along the boundary with The Bourne. The drive continues on past outbuildings (to the west of which is a small car park), to the gravelled entrance forecourt to the north of the house.

The main entrance to the public park is from The Bourne, 300m south-south-west of the house, through wrought-iron gates given by Lord Inverforth in 1925 and along an approach avenue into the park. There are further entrances to the park from Queen Elizabeth's Drive, Wynchgate, Church Hill, Branscombe Gardens, Seaforth Gardens, and Broad Walk.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Grovelands (listed grade I) is situated on rising ground on the western side of the park. It was built as Southgate Grove in c 1797 by John Nash for Walker Gray. The two-storey house is stuccoed with stone dressings and has a hipped, slated roof with a shallow glass dome, and an attic storey with horizontal oval windows. The entrance front is to the north and the garden front to the south. The main front is to the east overlooking the lake and the park. This front has five bays, with a three-bay central loggia recessed between the broader end bays. The loggia is supported by four giant Ionic columns with Coade stone capitals. The north and south fronts are of three bays, with two pairs of Ionic columns supporting two-storey porches, which flank the central doors (from entrance forecourt to vestibule to the north, and from garden to drawing room to the south). A conservatory designed by Repton was demolished by 1850.

A range of buildings leads from the west front off to the west and includes the late C18 stable buildings and offices, and a range of late C20 buildings. An ornamental octagonal granary on staddle stones and with a pointed, slate roof (c1800, listed grade II), stands 100m to the west of the house.

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
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GROVELANDS PARK

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUND The house is set within an oval-shaped enclosure, which incorporates the gardens and kitchen gardens and is bounded by a ha-ha and wrought-iron fencing around the west, south and east edges. There is a small car park to the north of the forecourt, which is enclosed by shrubbery and pleasure grounds to the north and by planting to the south adjoining the entrance forecourt. The garden to the east of the house has open lawn and overlooks the lake and park. To the south of the house the lawn is bounded by shrubberies and ornamental planting, forming the pleasure ground which wraps around the south-east wall of the kitchen garden and leads to the orchard to the south-west of the kitchen garden.

From the north-east corner of the ha-ha, a path leads out into the park, where it joins the main paths to the park which cross at this point. The main path to the north curves in a circuit around the northern part of the park, returning to its starting point. The main path to the south leads directly to the entrance from The Bourne, with smaller paths branching off to the east, to join the circuit path around the lake. The ground falls gently from the ha-ha down to the lake edge, which is planted with alder and willow. There are two islands, one in the centre of the northern half and one at the southern end. The lake was formed by Repton in the early 1800s and his scheme included a bridge to the southern island (OS 1867, 1896, 1913, removed by the 1950s) and a fishing temple (OS 1867 but no longer recorded on OS 1896). The lake was enlarged by Taylor in the mid C19 and the second island was formed at this time. The lake was further altered and the dam reconstructed at the northern end in the early C20.

A path along the dam continues to circuit the lake or alternatively leads east to the entrance from Broad Walk, past an aviary donated by G W S Ingram in 1931. To the south-east of the lake there is a pavilion, with a terrace on the west side overlooking the lake and park. To the south of the pavilion there is a children's playground. The pavilion and playground are backed to the east and south by belts of trees and by woodland.

To the south-west of the lake there is a miniature golf course which consists of lawn with scattered trees. The golf course is bordered to the north-west by the main path, which is lined by an avenue of trees, each planted by successive mayors of Southgate between 1933 and 1945. To the north-west of the main path is a putting green, which adjoins the area of grassland set aside for a reservoir.

To the north-east of the lake is an area of fairly dense woodland, predominantly oak, with some beech and shrubberies including yew, rhododendron and holly. From the lake, the outlet of The Bourne stream enters a brick-lined channel, which is stepped down the slope of the dam, and then flows through the woodland, where it is landscaped with rocks along the banks. To the north of the woodland is a large area of open parkland with scattered mature trees and boundary tree belts. The area is used for sports pitches and there are tennis courts located to the west of the wood and just south of the path which circuits this area. A path leads north-east from this main boundary path to the entrance from Church Hill, past the bowling green pavilion and bowling green. Further paths lead south-east off this path to the entrances on Seaforth Gardens and Branscombe Gardens.

The landscape has been little altered since the early C20 and retains much of the Repton layout in the centre: ha-ha, kitchen gardens, pleasure grounds, lake and woodland. The house and landscape together are a good example of a Nash-Repton partnership. The landscape modifications of the mid C19 survive in part. Taylor laid out a drive from a lodge at Alderman's Hill across newly landscaped ground to the south of the lake and from there around the east and north sides of the lake before approaching Grovelands from the north-east but this was removed in the early C20. Much of the mature tree planting and the enlarged and altered shape of the lake date to Taylor's ownership. In the early C20 Mawson was responsible for new paths, fencing the lake (with post and single rails), perimeter planting of chestnut trees, and providing tennis, putting and bowling facilities. The putting green has been moved to the other side of the south entrance drive but the other elements of Mawson's scheme survive.

KITCHEN GARDEN The polygonal walled kitchen garden, c 1800, is located to the south-west of the house. The kitchen gardens are laid to grass with rows of old fruit trees and a free-standing glasshouse in the northern section.

REFERENCES

W Keane, *Beauties of Middlesex* (1850), pp 120-2 G Beard, Thomas H Mawson (1976), pp 75-6 G Carter et al, Humphry Repton (1982), p 158 B Cherry and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London 4: North* (1998), pp 463-4

Maps Sale plan, 1834 (Enfield Local History Unit)

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1867 2nd edition published 1896 3rd edition published 1913

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Description written: December 1998 Register Inspector: CB Edited: May 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.