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Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

WEST VIEW PARK

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Name:	WEST VIEW PARK
District:	Calderdale (Metropolitan Authority)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 53.720473 Longitude: -1.8958102 National Grid Reference: SE 06973 24901 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001509 Date first listed: 02-Apr-2001

Details

A public park laid out in the mid 1890s and opened in 1896.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Two local businessmen, Mr H C McCrea (1810-1901) and Mr E Robinson (1835-1926), proposed the creation of a park on Highroad Well Moor in c 1894. They also offered to bear the costs of converting the derelict moorland quarry site into a public park, on the understanding that the subsequent maintenance would be born by the Council. The mineral rights, owned by the Lord of the Manor of Skircoat, Lord Savile, were surrendered so enabling the park plan to be implemented. Discussion ensued over the name, but Mr McCrea's wish to call it West View Park, reflecting its views over the Norland hillside and Pennine slopes, was granted.

The Parks Committee Minutes do not refer to the design of the park; it is implied that the benefactors, McCrea and Robinson, undertook responsibility for the park's layout. In June 1896 the two benefactors informed the Committee that 'the conversion of Highroad Well Moor into a Park is now completed, and the Lodge ready for occupation' (Parks Committee Minutes 15 June 1896). In July 1896 the park was opened. A granite slab commemorating the occasion was placed in the outer wall of the lodge at the principal entrance on the Warley Road.

The design of the park utilised the natural topography of the worked quarry to good effect. The high land in the north was levelled to form play areas and formal gardens and terrace, and paths, edged with large stones, were laid out to wind through the quarry.

A Soldiers Memorial was added to the formal terrace in 1904. After this addition the layout of the park appears to have changed little in the remainder of the C20 and it remains (2000) in use as a municipal park.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING The 3ha park lies immediately south-west of Warley Road and north of Trimmingham Road, north-west of Halifax town centre. The park occupies high ground looking south-west to the Pennines. Laid out on the site of a redundant quarry, the land falls steeply from north-east to south-west. The quarry face runs approximately parallel to the north-east boundary.

The park is enclosed on all sides. A 2m high dressed stone wall, of battered construction and with a substantial stone coping, runs for c 140m along the park's north-east boundary with Warley Road. On the park's east and south perimeter, a rough stone

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retaining wall marks the boundary with Spring Hall Lane and Gads Hill respectively. The south-west and west margins of the park lie against the grounds of private houses, and are again bounded by stone walls.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main carriage drive entrance is to the north-east of the park on Warley Road. It is marked by low dressed stone walls and stone piers; the original railings are missing (2000). A subsidiary pedestrian entrance is located immediately to the north. Both entrances were gated although the original gates are missing (2000). A two-storey stone lodge with a slate roof stands to the south-east of the carriage drive entrance. It was built in 1896 at the same time as the park was laid out.

In addition to the pedestrian entrance adjacent to the main entrance, two other entrances are provided to the park. One provides access from Warley Road and is situated c 110m north-west of the carriage drive entrance. Access on the park's south boundary is provided from Gads Hill.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The park is dominated by two distinctive features, the topography of the former quarry and the architectural terrace. Located in the north of the park the c 40m terrace runs from north-west to south-east. A stone balustrade, removed from the congested environs of Halifax Town Hall, was re-erected in the park to form the terrace's south-east boundary. The terrace provides fine Pennine views to the west.

Postcards dating from 1904 to 1910 (HCL) show the corner and end piers embellished with stone finials; all are now (2000) broken or missing. In 1904 the Soldiers Memorial (listed grade II) commemorating those who had fallen in the South African Wars was erected on the terrace. Four canons, placed at the memorial's corners, and railings shown on these postcards are gone (2000).

Between the terrace and Warley Road to the north the ground is generally flat, but the landform has been subtly modulated to create slightly sunken paths and raised shrubberies and trees.

A formal flight of stone steps leads south-west from approximately the centre of the terrace to the principal promenade. This runs in a straight line from north-west to south-east for c 170m. At the time of the park's opening in 1896, the promenade overlooked the park to the south-west; trees and shrubs now (2000) restrict the views.

To the south-west of the promenade is the site of the former quarry, and in places large, rough-hewn stones, standing on end, mark the lip of the worked face. One steep path paved with stone setts, and incorporating monumental stone steps, provides access down the rock face. Less steep paths, also paved with stone setts, are laid to the west and east of the quarry workings.

REFERENCES

'Highroad Well Park: Public Enquiry', *The Halifax Guardian*, 12 January 1895 'Today's Picture', *Halifax Evening Courier*, 10 January 1964 *Trans Halifax Antiq Soc* (1976), pp 29-31, 35-6 'Then and Now, Victorians' £3,000 Gift', *Halifax Evening Courier*, 23 January 1982 *Halifax in Old Picture Postcards* (1992) 'Park Stonework Defaced', *Halifax Evening Courier*, 3 September 1996 'Flashback - A Park Is Born', *Halifax Evening Courier*, 11 March 1997

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1894 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition revised 1905, published 1907

Archival items Parks Committee Minutes, 1893(6) (Halifax Central Library) Early to mid C20 postcards of West View Park, Halifax (Halifax Central Library)

Description written: December 2000 Registered Inspector: PV Edited: May 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.