

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

ROTHERFIELD PARK

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

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
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ROTHERFIELD PARK

Name: ROTHERFIELD PARK

County: Hampshire

District: East Hampshire (District Authority)

Parish: Colemore and Priors Dean

County: Hampshire

District: East Hampshire (District Authority)

Parish: East Tisted

County: Hampshire

District: East Hampshire (District Authority)

Parish: Newton Valence

National park: SOUTH DOWNS

label.localisation: Latitude: 51.089077
 Longitude: -1.0087089
 National Grid Reference: SU6952332663
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

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label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II*
List Entry Number: 1000163
Date first listed: 31-May-1984

Details

An early C19 walled pleasure ground set within a park of medieval origin which was developed in the mid C18 with formal avenues and allées within woodland and which was enlarged and laid out in a picturesque manner in the early C19.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The manor of Rotherfield dates back to the C12, when it was owned by Adam de Rotherfield. It passed through a number of ownerships from the C13 to the C15 until in 1495, an heiress of William Rytherfield, Elizabeth, married Richard Norton of East Tisted, so uniting the manors of Rotherfield and East Tisted. The manors remained in the Norton family throughout the C16 and C17, Rotherfield's park pale and 'great wood on the western side', being described in 1564 (CL 1948) and the Tudor house and Plash Wood being shown on an estate survey of 1635. John Norton died childless in 1686 and the manors passed to his eldest brother's daughter who married Francis Paulet of Amport (qv). He probably altered the house to a Georgian appearance before his death in 1729, after which he was succeeded by his son, Norton, and then by his grandson, Thomas Norton, during whose ownership some landscaping was carried out, including the planting of the beech allées in Plash Wood. Thomas Norton Paulet

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sold East Tisted manor to his uncle, George Paulet, later to become twelfth Marquess of Winchester, while Rotherfield was occupied by tenants throughout the late C18; on George Paulet's death in 1800, it too was in his possession. In 1808, Thomas Norton, who had succeeded to the title of thirteenth Marquess, sold Rotherfield to James Scott, the son of William Scott of the contracting firm of Scotts of Fulham, the builders of London's Bedford Square (qv) and possibly also, in 1811, of Montague and Bryanston Squares (ibid). James Scott rebuilt the house in 1815 and enlarged and laid out the park, incorporating the village of East Tisted into the designed landscape. His grandson, Arthur, married Lady Mary Wellesley, granddaughter of the first Duke of Wellington of Stratfield Saye (qv), and succeeded to the estate in 1873. Rotherfield descended within the Scott family, Jervoise Scott being created a baronet in 1962, and it remains (1998) in private hands.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Rotherfield Park lies on the north to south A32, Fareham to Alton road, the park straddling the road either side of the village of East Tisted. The 175ha registered site, which comprises 6ha of formal and informal gardens, 26ha of ornamental woodland, and 143ha of parkland, occupies the floor of the valley in which the A32 runs and extends up the eastern and western valley sides which, riven by east to west dry combes, rise to high crests. Apart from a short length of low boundary wall on the west side of the A32 in East Tisted village, the site is enclosed by agricultural fencing. On the east side, further village housing of East Tisted abuts the site and a minor road skirts the south-west boundary, but otherwise the undulating farmed parkland and woodland merge into similar surrounding topography and an agricultural landscape.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main entrance to Rotherfield Park is from the west side of the A32 in the centre of East Tisted, a drive entering beside Front Lodge (early C19, listed grade II) which is set back from the road and flanked by curved wing walls. The drive climbs for c 500m north-westwards along the north side of a west-running dry combe before turning sharply south-westwards to cross the steep-sided top of the combe on a bridge (listed grade II) designed as a gothic arch. This is of brick with a gothic pierced-work parapet. The drive climbs a further c 50m south-westwards to arrive on the gravelled forecourt on the north, entrance front of the house. Both this present main approach, and a further one from the north-east which enters the park from the A32 at Lower Lodge (early C19, listed grade II), were laid out in the early C19 as part of the design for the house and enlarged park. The earlier Tudor house was entered from a public road which crossed the park in a due westerly direction from the site of the present Front Lodge. This appears to have been closed c 1810 in favour of the present lane on the southern boundary, which was improved and widened (Plan of a new Public Highway ..., 1810).

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Rotherfield Park (listed grade I) stands centrally on the crest of the west edge of the park, its principal vista looking eastwards down the combe and focused on the tower of St James' church in East Tisted (largely rebuilt 1846, listed grade II*) and beyond it the wooded hangers of Noar Hill near Selbourne which form the horizon some 3km distant. The house is stone-faced with a slate roof, the main block being square in plan with three-storey towers with pepperpots and parapets at the corners and with an elaborate Doric order entrance porch. The southern elevation extends westwards as a lower range with an arcade of Tudor arches which opens onto the garden. The architect Joseph Parkinson (1783-1855) built the house between 1815 and 1821 in a Tudor Gothic style, on the site of a former house shown standing within a walled enclosure on an estate map of 1635. Considerable alterations and additions were made in the mid and late C19, those in the late C19 including the replacement of Parkinson's original stuccoed elevations with the present Bath stone facings, and the addition of full-height bow-shaped bays to the east front.

Further adjacent buildings, together with the house, form an ensemble of towers on the skyline when viewed from the east. To the immediate south-west are the brick and slate-roofed stables and coach house (now in use as garages and stores, listed grade II), built by Parkinson but with the central tower, topped by an octagonal cupola, raised in height in the late C19. To the north-west and approached through a gatehouse arch of 1891 is the Old Laundry Bungalow (mid C19, listed grade II), a brick and stone cottage range formerly housing a laundry, with a tall chimney shaft encased in flint-work and topped with a conical roof. To the west and on higher ground stands the Gardener's Cottage (late C19, listed grade II) which comprises a linked pair of flint-work towers with crenellated parapets, the tall circular tower (known as the Gardener's Tower) forming living accommodation and a lower, square tower built as a game store.

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GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens and pleasure grounds lie principally to the south and west of the house. The east side, overlooking the combe, is terraced, with two descending levels connected by a grassed bank and two flights of stone steps, the lower level of terrace being supported by a flint retaining wall with a stone parapet. A gravel path on the top level leads around to the south front and the arcade, which open onto lawns which rise 80m southwards to terminate at a flint and brick ha-ha (rebuilt 1990s) giving a view out into the park. The lawns extend c 200m westwards from the south front to the western site boundary and are bounded on the south side by a c 1.2m high flint and brick wall, this then turning northwards, eastwards, and finally south-eastwards back towards the house to enclose the whole of the pleasure grounds and the kitchen garden, the enclosed area being shown established on the Tithe map of 1842. The lawns are planted informally with individual and groups of trees of mixed ages and species, with a more dense cover and additionally with islands of shrubbery towards the western end. A boundary belt of holly and mixed trees and shrubbery planted along the inside of the wall encloses the pleasure ground visually from the park. Paths of grass and gravel encircle and cross the lawns, these laid out to a pattern shown on the OS 1st edition (1870) and on a garden plan (private collection), undated but prior to the late C19 additions to the house. Some 120m south-west of the house, and also shown on the above map and plan, is a rectangular pond, the planting around it probably influenced by the proposals made by Norah Lindsay (1866-1948) in 1928 (surviving letters and plant lists, private collection). North-east of the pond, a grassed path lined by an avenue of mature yew trees leads 80m north-eastwards, between the stables and the kitchen garden, to wrought-iron gates in the pleasure-ground wall. To the north-west of the avenue, on the west side of the kitchen garden, is an orchard while to the south-east and surrounded by shrubbery is a circular enclosure of battlemented yew hedge containing a circle of roses and climbers on timber supports. North of the pond, the approach to the walled kitchen garden is lined with a c 35m long avenue of buttressed yew hedges, to the east of which lies a tennis court and to the west, against the south face of the wall, a narrow, hedge-enclosed rose and herbaceous garden.

PARK The park extends north, east, and south of the gardens, the principal areas surviving as planted parkland lying to the north-east and immediate south of the main approach drive. To the north-east, Alton Park (west of the A32), largely under improved grassland, is furnished with a good scatter of individual trees and loose clumps. East of the A32, Rectory Park is largely open grazing with little tree cover although it is enclosed to the north-east by a broad boundary belt. South of the drive, the slopes of the combe are under permanent pasture with a scatter of clumps and individual trees, these diminishing to the south and south-west where the land is now under improved pasture or arable. An avenue of mature lime trees extends south for c 270m from the south-east corner of the pleasure grounds. West of the gothic bridge, below the north side of which is an icehouse, parkland planting in the upper end of the combe includes mature exotic conifers. The land south of the village and east of the main road is under open grazing and arable and is enclosed on the eastern boundary by tree belts.

The origin of Rotherfield's park is medieval. It is shown on John Speed's county map of 1610-11 while the line of the park pale shown on the estate map of 1635 indicates that at that date the park lay entirely to the west of the A32, with its boundaries extending considerably further than at present to the south-west (to Plain Farm) and to the west (to Winchester Wood). These boundaries had been drawn in closer to the present extent by the early C19 (OS 1810), by which time the southern part of the park had been planted with a number of formal clumps and lines of trees, including the lime avenue which is shown on the Plan of a new Public Highway ..., in 1810, and as mature trees in Prosser's view of c 1814 (Prosser 1833). By 1826 (Greenwood), James Scott had enlarged the park to include the Rectory Park east of the turnpike (A32) and the village of East Tisted. He demolished the former village buildings which stood on the west side of the road and rebuilt them during the mid and late C19 on the east side. The park was also extensively planted in the mid C19, the trees in the combe being illustrated in a contemporary watercolour (private collection). The pattern of planting over the whole park, including the area south of the village on the east side of the road (which was not imparked until the later C19), is shown established on the OS 1st edition surveyed in 1870. This pattern survived intact until the mid C20.

The park contains several areas of woodland, the principal one being Splash Wood which lies on the crest of downland north-west of the house. Shown established on the estate plan of 1635, it is planted with trees of mixed ages and species including mature oak and ornamental conifers. The wood is bisected by a broad north to south ride, aligned on the axis of the lime avenue and lined with an avenue of beech which was largely planted in the 1990s to replace the trees lost in the storms of 1987 and

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1990. Except for the surviving trees at the extreme northern end of the ride, which were planted in 1870, the avenue probably dates from the 1750s and may have been planted originally as a formal pleached alley which later developed into full-height trees (illustration in CL 1948) The centrepiece of the avenue is marked by the remaining trees of two semicircles of yew, also dating from the 1750s (ring counts) and from which lateral avenues, partly replanted in the 1990s, extend to east and west.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden lies to the west of the house within the walls of the pleasure grounds and is first shown on the Tithe map of 1842. The high red-brick walls form an almost square enclosure c 60m x c 70m with the principal entrance through wrought-iron gates in the south wall. These open onto a broad, axial grassed walk flanked by mixed borders and beech hedges which terminates at an open-fronted brick pavilion built against the north wall and dating from 1889. A cross-axial grassed path divides the garden into four quarters which are variously laid out to lawn with borders, fruit and vegetables beds edged with box and, along the east wall, a herb parterre. A swimming pool built in the 1970s occupies the site of a late C19 glasshouse.

REFERENCES

E F Prosser, *Selected Illustrations of Hampshire ...* (1833) *Victoria History of the County of Hampshire III*, (1908), pp 32-4 *Country Life*, 103 (23 April 1948), pp 826-9; (30 April 1948), pp 878-81; (7 May 1948), pp 926-9 N Pevsner and D Lloyd, *The Buildings of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (1967), pp 203-04 A Paterson, *The Gardens of Britain 2*, (1978), pp 137-8 *Rotherfield Park*, guidebook, (Rotherfield Park nd)

Maps Survey plan of Rotherfield Park, 1635 (private collection) Isaac Taylor, *A Map of Hampshire ...*, 1" to 1 mile, 1759 Thomas Milne, *Hampshire or the County of Southampton ...*, 1" to 1 mile, 1791 *Plan of a new public highway ... at East Tisted ...*, 1810 (private collection) C and J Greenwood, *A Map of the County of Southampton ...*, 1" to 1 mile, 1826 Tithe map for East Tisted parish, 1842 (Hampshire Record Office) Garden plan of the grounds of Rotherfield Park north of the house, nd (early-mid C19) (private collection)

OS Old Series 1" to 1 mile, published 1810 OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1870 2nd edition published 1897 3rd edition published 1910 OS 25" to 1 mile: 3rd edition published 1910

Description written: August 1998 Amended: June 2000 Register Inspector: VCH Edited: February 2004

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.