

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

Lamorbey Park

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

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
Inventory of Great Britain
Lamorbey Park

Name:	Lamorbey Park
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Bexley (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.439166 Longitude: 0.10926128 National Grid Reference: TQ4669873240 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000289 Date first listed: 07-Dec-1988 Date of most recent amendment: 08-Apr-2015 Location Description:Lamorbey Park

Historique de la conservation

The estate of Lamorbey (then known as Lamaby) was bought in 1744 by William Steele, a merchant and director of the East India Company. Steele rebuilt the centre of the C17 house and laid out the land to the north, east, and south of the mansion as a park. After William Steele's death in 1748 the estate of 286 acres (119ha) was sold and in 1761 was divided into two. In 1783 both parts were purchased by David Orme who made considerable additions and improvements to both house and grounds including re-routing the drive across the eastern parkland from Hurst Road. In the late 1830s, Neil Malcolm, Orme's eldest grandson, employed John Shaw to substantially alter the house; he also added an orangery. Neil Malcolm left Lamorbey in 1840 and it passed to his brother, John Neil Malcolm, who continued to make alterations. After John Neil returned to Scotland in the 1860s the estate was tenanted and in 1910 the house became a hotel; its grounds were leased to Sidcup Golf Club and a golf course, thought to have been designed by the Scottish golf course designer James Braid, was laid out. In 1926 the hotel was taken over by a consortium, the major shareholder being H J Shepherd, a director of the Greenwich company 'Johnson and Philips'. Shepherd personally supervised the planting of the Glade and the Pine Tree Walk. He encouraged bathing in the lakes, laid out a bowling green and tennis courts, and made a new entrance road from Burnt Oak Lane which terminated in a courtyard to the north of the house.

The north-east part of the estate, around Penhill, was sold as building land in 1933. In 1946 the house and surrounding grounds were bought by Kent Education Committee who, in 1947, opened an adult education centre. The Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama took over the house, offices, and its immediate garden in 1950, and remain (2015) in residence. At about the same time the size of the golf course was halved from 18 to 9 holes and two schools were built on the land, Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School and Hurstmere School. The land between the college, the golf club, and the schools (i.e. the Glade, the Dell, and the Pine Walk) stayed in public ownership. A primary school, Holy Trinity Primary School, now occupies land between the college and Halfway Street (B2214) in the south-west corner of the site.

Lamorbey Park was added to the Register of Parks and Gardens on 7th December 1988. The buildings and immediate grounds of the three schools were later excluded after re-assessments in 1997 and 2001. In 2001 planning permission was granted to Rose Bruford College for the construction of additional teaching accommodation, a new entrance and a car park (providing 84 spaces) on the western side of the site, with access from Burnt House Lane. In 2004 planning permission was given for the demolition of the circa 1910 golf club house and its replacement by a new single storey golf clubhouse, with associated landscaping and the provision of 75 car parking spaces, to be built on a section of Hurstmere School's land. Planning permission was also granted for the erection of a new leisure centre, with the provision of 156 car parking spaces, coach parking, landscaping and alterations to the existing access road. Both Sidcup Leisure Centre and the new Golf Clubhouse opened in 2008.

Details

Early C20 gardens and early C19 pleasure grounds set in a park dating from the mid C18.

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Lamorbey Park is situated in the south-west part of the London Borough of Bexley, in an area of residential development west of the commuter town of Sidcup and north-west of Foots Cray Place.

The back gardens of houses in Hurst Road, Sidcup (A222) provide a boundary to the east and south, and Burnt Oak Lane provides the boundary to the west. Residential buildings back onto the northern boundary.

The 57ha site is level except where it rises slightly to the north-west and slopes down slightly to the south in the region of the walled garden. Sidcup Golf Club occupies the northern part of the site; a large area to the east and south is occupied by the playing fields of two schools (the school buildings are excluded from the registered area), which includes an astroturf pitch to Hurstmere School.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main entrance to the mansion (Rose Bruford College) is from Burnt Oak Lane along the entrance drive made by the owner of the hotel in the mid 1920s. It passes a playing field shown on the First Edition OS map of 1860 as an orchard, now also containing a large modern building belonging to Sidcup Youth and Community Centre and a smaller one belonging to Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School, and the remaining offices of the mansion to the north. This entrance superseded David Orme's driveway which led from the Hurst Road entrance on the south-east boundary, over the dam of the central lake, and curved north around the mansion. To the north of the mansion, c150m from the dam, this main drive forked, part going south to the house, part continuing to the stables before exiting in Burnt Oak Lane. The entrance from Hurst Road is marked by a C19 lodge (listed Grade II) and the line of the drive from Hurst Road to the dam can still be traced as a footpath across the school playing fields. North-west of the dam the remains of the original drive are extant and used as access from Burnt Oak Lane to the golf course to the north, and the lake and Glade to the south.

There are two secondary pedestrian entrances to the Dell and the golf clubhouse; one from Hurst Road, to the east of Holy Trinity church, the second from Halfway Street (B2214) alongside Lamorbey Church of England Primary School.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The three-storey mansion (listed at Grade II) is said to have been remodelled c1750 replacing an older house. Modifications continued until c1840 when it was re-cased in Elizabethan style. Adjacent to the north-west service wing of the mansion is the C18 dairy (listed at Grade II as the 'Caretaker's House'), a low, square, brick-built, single-storey building with gothic windows. To the north of the mansion is the coach house/stable block of the 1750s, now in use for Student Services, and also a number of other outbuildings including the gardener's cottage and the estate barn, the latter converted for use as a theatre for the college. This now (2015) stands alongside an early C21 purpose-built theatre, the Rose Theatre, and further C21 college buildings and a car park. This area of the Rose Bruford Campus is excluded from the registered area.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The main entrance to the pleasure grounds from Burnt Oak Lane to the west leads around the perimeter of the college grounds where numerous modern auxiliary buildings (not included in the registered area) and recent plantings screen views of the mansion. A view does survive however from the dam between the surviving two lakes to the south-west back to the house, and to the north, across the northern lake and the former parkland, which retains some clumps of deciduous and coniferous trees but is now scattered with the bunkers and fairways of the golf course. The view to

the east is across former parkland, now playing fields, with occasional mature parkland trees, to the boundary plantings along Hurst Road. A plan of 1761 shows three lakes which were made by diverting a tributary of the River Shuttle. By the time of the 1844 tithe map these had been replaced by the two large lakes seen today (2015).

The banks of the northern end of the south lake are edged by meadows to the north-west, and shrubs and trees backed by playing fields to the south. A path leads along the south bank to the Glade, a collection of mainly coniferous but some deciduous trees and shrubs, most of which were planted by Shepherd in the mid 1920s on the site of the Wilderness (shown on the plan of 1761). Serpentine paths meander through the Glade and continue alongside the south bank of the southern lake providing shady walks and an interesting view of the south front of the mansion and the grassed terraces made by John Neil Malcolm between 1840 and 1860, which lie between the mansion and the lake.

Passing west through the Glade, the ground rises to the site of the walled garden, the path continuing to the north of a surviving wall; this area is now (2015) planted with roses. The path then divides into two: the eastern branch leads through a wrought-iron gate into the College grounds and the western branch continues around the Dell, a steep-sided oval planted with heathers and grass. The history of this area is rather obscure: the 1st edition OS map of 1860 shows the Dell as an open area surrounded by trees north of the kitchen garden; an aviary, now gone, is marked to the north, but the paths shown to the north and south of the Dell survive. The east/west path through, and the paths around the Dell, meet up on the west side and continue as a straight tarmac path lined with a variety of evergreens and known as the Pine Walk. The route of these paths has changed little since they were recorded on the OS 1st edition map (1860). Some 100m along from the Dell, the Pine Walk passes to the south of the clubhouse for Sidcup Golf Club and its car park (which are excluded from the registered area), and to the north the grounds of the Church of England Primary School. The path terminates at the Hurst Road entrance adjoining Holy Trinity Church to the south.

PARK The main area of parkland lies north, east, and south of the pleasure grounds. The 1761 sale plan marks 81 acres (c34ha) as 'The Park Pasture land'. Between 1840 and 1860 John Neil Malcolm surrounded the whole of the estate with a belt of woodland, remnants of which survive, especially to the north. The northern lake was adapted by 1844 from a mid C18 piece of water of similar form. Two icehouses are recorded on the OS 1st edition map (1860), one at the southern end of the northern lake adjacent to the dam, the second to the west of the northern end of the same lake.

An eighteen-hole golf course was laid out by Sidcup Golf Club in the parkland around the northern lake c1910; this was later reduced to nine holes. (The c2008 clubhouse and car park are excluded from the registered area.) The remainder of the parkland is used for school playing fields.

Housing development in c1933 encroached on the north-east boundary of the historic park (this is excluded from the registered area.)

KITCHEN GARDEN Between the Dell and the boundary fence for Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School a brick wall survives from the kitchen garden first recorded on the sale particulars of 1761. The main walled garden was, according to the OS (1860), slightly trapezoidal in shape and divided into four unequal plots, the two larger ones being situated to the west. A pair of drains or ponds, fed from the south lake, were set in the centre running east/west. Trees were planted around the plots and a green house or conservatory was built onto the north-west wall. This wall survives as a c 70m length, though the glasshouse has gone. A C19 bothy to the rear (north) of this wall, shown on the OS 1st edition map and still present in 1988, was subsequently destroyed by fire; the wall was subsequently repaired, planted with roses, and a raised bed constructed on its north side, and a shrubbery planted on its south side. None of the other three walls survive. The ground, which slopes slightly to the south-east, is now a lawn. Built on to the now demolished west wall of the main walled garden was a second walled area, the same length as the main one but a quarter of its width. To the north were a number of glasshouses and to the south an open area with trees at the south end. Nothing of this second walled area survives.

Summary

Early C20 gardens and early C19 pleasure grounds set in a park dating from the mid-C18.

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.

Reasons for Designation

Lamorbey Park is Registered at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Original landscape interest: the landscape was laid out in the mid-C18, surrounding a surviving Grade II-listed contemporary mansion with an C18 dairy (also listed Grade II); * Subsequent phases of development: the park was enhanced by early C19 pleasure grounds and also by early C20 planting - particularly the Glade and the Pine Tree Walk - which remain relatively intact.

Bibliographie

Other

B N Nunns, Lamorbey Park - A Provisional History, Bruford Club Newsletter (September 1959), pp 5-6; (March 1960), pp 9-10; (July 1960), pp 8-9

B N Nunns, Lamorbey Park (1979), [copy in Bexley Library]

B Sims, the Designed Landscape at Lamorbey Park Bexley. Prepared for English Heritage on behalf of the Garden History Society. December 2012.

Eyre, A Plan of Lamaby House, Park & Lands adjoining, 1761 [Sale map] (Bexley Local Studies Centre)

Sims, Barbara 'The designed Landscape at Lamorbey Park, Bexley' December 2012

Tithe map, 1842

U Bloom, A Roof and Four Walls (1967)