

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

HONING HALL

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**HONING HALL**

Name: HONING HALL

County: Norfolk

District: North Norfolk (District Authority)

Parish: Honing

label.localisation: Latitude: 52.805500  
Longitude: 1.4499083  
National Grid Reference: TG3263028684  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: II\*  
List Entry Number: 1000362  
Date first listed: 18-Sep-1987

## Details

A late C18 landscape park for which Humphry Repton produced a Red Book in 1792.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The present Honing Hall, together with its walled garden, was built by the Chambers family in c 1748 and was acquired by Thomas Cubitt in 1784. It replaced an earlier modest house on a different site, immediately to the north of the present stable block, which itself replaced the medieval building within the moated enclosed inside the north boundary. Thomas Cubitt's son, another Thomas, moved in following his marriage in 1784 and in 1788 commissioned John Soane (1753-1837) to prepare plans for alterations, only some of which were executed. In 1792 Humphry Repton (1752-1818) visited Honing and produced a Red Book of proposals to lay out a landscape park. Repton's Book suggests that a small park already existed on the site because he advised against expanding. Many of his suggestions were adopted and Faden's map of 1797 records a small (c 13ha) park south of the Hall. The mid C19 Tithe map shows that the Cubitt family increased the park to c 24ha and extended the perimeter belts to completely encircle it. Since then there have been no significant changes to the landscape and the site remains (1999) in private ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Honing Hall lies c 4.5km inland from the north-east Norfolk coast and c 5km south-east of the market town of North Walsham. The park lies 1km outside the village of Honing in a rural setting surrounded by woodland and farmland. The eastern boundary is formed by Honing Long Lane which offers glimpses into the site between plantations. To the north, west, and south the park is entirely enclosed by perimeter woodlands backing onto farmland. These preclude most views out of the site but the Reed House located in the woodland on the southern tip faces south through a gap in the trees to a view focused on Honing church. The ground is virtually level with a slight fall in the centre of the south park, rising again to the southern boundary.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** There are two entrances to Honing park along the eastern boundary, one being approximately halfway along through wooden gates leading to a serpentine drive running north-west which arrives at the gravelled forecourt on the south front. The second enters at the northern end of the east boundary and runs west to the stables

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with an arm that turns south to the forecourt. A further entrance from the north-west corner leads to a drive running east to the stables. None of the entrances have lodges and all have simple wooden gates. The approach from the south-west corner, proposed by Repton, no longer survives.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** The present Honing Hall (listed grade II\*) is a brick and pantile country house sitting in the centre of the northern end of a small park. The double-pile plan Hall is of five bays in three storeys, with the entrance front facing south. On the west front is a full-height bowed extension looking over the gardens, while to the north is a two-storey, five-bay service range. The Hall was built for B W Chambers in 1748 and his son sold it to Thomas Cubitt, Lord of the Manor of Honing, in 1784. Cubitt commissioned John Soane in 1788(80 to make alterations, of which the western bow is the main one. Humphry Repton made further small embellishments in 1792 and the service range by R M Phipson of Norwich was added in 1868/70. The single-storey brick and pantile stable block (listed grade II) lies c 130m to the north of the Hall and is dated 1884. The U-shaped block has a central stepped-gable clock tower surmounted by a small cupola.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens lie on the west front. A lawn is divided by a central Irish yew-lined gravel path aligned on the bay which leads to a seat. The lawn is surrounded by the pleasure ground comprising mixed exotic trees and shrubberies which extend west, north-east, and north to the stables. A path leads south-west to the kitchen garden c 150m west-south-west of the Hall. The general layout of this area appears to have altered little since the late C18.

**PARK** Honing park covers c 35ha and lies mainly to the south of the Hall. It is all laid to grass, is well wooded and is enclosed by boundary plantations. The open centre is scattered with clumps and individual trees, predominantly of oak, most densely planted to the east of the Hall, and many dating from the late C18/early C19.

Within Moat Plantation on the northern boundary are the overgrown remains of a moated area, three arms of which retain water. The history of this area is not clear but may mark the site of the medieval house. There is also evidence of late C19/early C20 ornamental planting on both inner and outer banks of the water. The area is currently (1999) entirely enveloped by woodland. Within the woodland on the southern boundary is the thatched Reed House (listed grade II). This early C19 circular brick and Norfolk reed garden building, an example of the 'primitive' or 'rustic' garden architecture of the period, occupies a site where Repton proposed a pavilion and faces east across the adjoining farmland, suggesting that the position was approved by the family but the style of the building was altered.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The walled kitchen garden lies c 150m to the west-south-west of the Hall. It is enclosed on three sides and open to the south, an adaptation possibly made following Repton's advice to truncate the garden with the intention of improving the view of the park from the Hall. There are gothic arched gateways in the north, east, and west walls. The interior is laid partly to grass and partly to vegetable and fruit production in a modern layout with modern glasshouses (late C20). The early C19 glasshouses have not survived.

#### REFERENCES

J Grigor, *The Eastern Arboretum* (1841), pp 229/30 N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: North-east Norfolk and Norwich* (1962), p 170 D Stroud, Humphry Repton (1962), p 66 G Carter et al, Humphry Repton (1982), p 159 J Kenworthy-Browne et al, *Burke's and Savills Guide to Country Houses III*, (1981), pp 136/7 Honing Hall, (UEA report, 1980s) T Williamson, *The archaeology of the landscape park*, BAR Brit Ser 268 (1998), pp 247/8

Maps Untitled estate map, 1728 (private collection) W Faden, *A new topographical map of the county of Norfolk*, 1797 (Norfolk Record Office) A Bryant, *Map of the county of Norfolk*, 1826 (Norfolk Record Office) Tithe map for Honing parish, 1845 (Norfolk Record Office)

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1885 2nd edition published 1905

Archival items H Repton, *Red Book for Honing Hall*, 1792 (private collection)

Description written: July 1999 Amended: October 2000 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: March 2001

## Legal

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*HONING HALL*

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.