

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

SHRUBLAND HALL

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Name: SHRUBLAND HALL

County: Suffolk

District: Mid Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Barham

County: Suffolk

District: Mid Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Coddenham

County: Suffolk

District: Mid Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Hemingstone

label.localisation: Latitude: 52.135569
Longitude: 1.0936437
National Grid Reference: TM1181653099
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: I
List Entry Number: 1000155
Date first listed: 01-Jun-1984

Details

An extensive mid C19 Italianate garden by Charles Barry with later alterations by William Robinson which sits in a C17 park, greatly expanded in the late C18 and early C19, for which Humphry Repton produced a Red Book in 1789 and William Woods prepared proposals in 1808.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Shrubland estate is thought to have originated with the building of the Old Hall by the Booth family in the early C16 (HLM 1996). By the early C17 it had passed by marriage into the Bacon family and a map dated 1668 by Edward Clarke shows the lands of the Old Hall, of which a pond and a section of wall remain. In the 1770s John Bacon commissioned the architect James Paine (1717-89) to design a new hall on a new site. The new Georgian building still forms the core of the present hall and occupies a dramatic site at the top of a steep escarpment. Sir William Middleton purchased Shrubland in 1788 and the same year commissioned Humphry Repton (1752-1818) to suggest improvements, some of which were carried out. In 1808 William Woods, a landscape designer, was asked to help modify the grounds although it remains unclear how many of his suggestions were implemented. Sir William Fowle Middleton inherited the estate from his father in 1830 and had the Hall extensively

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remodelled by the architect J P Gandy-Deering. In association with his nationally renowned head gardener Donald Beaton (who remained in charge at Shrubland until 1852), Sir William developed an elaborate and complex collection of gardens both by the Hall and at the foot of the escarpment. Many of these gardens were used as testing grounds for Beaton's theories on bedding out and colour work. In the late 1840s (possibly 1848) Sir William and Lady Middleton commissioned Charles Barry (1795-1860) to turn their ideas for an Italianate house and garden into reality. After his death in 1860, Sir William's cousin Sir George Nathaniel Broke Middleton took over the estate which in 1882 passed to his niece and her husband James St Vincent, fourth Baron de Saumarez. During their period William Robinson was consulted on modernising some of the planting, some of the results of which still survive. The Hall was used as a convalescent home during the First World War and the Old Hall as a brigade HQ during the Second World War. In 1965 a health clinic was established in the Hall by the sixth Baron and on his death the estate passed to the seventh Baron. The site remains (1998) in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Shrubland Park lies c 11km west of Ipswich on the north side of the Gipping valley. The 175ha registered park is triangular in shape: the old Norwich road runs north/south along the western boundary whilst Sandy Lane between Barham and Coddenham forms the eastern edge. The pleasure grounds cover c 25ha and lie to the west of the central part of the park. The Hall enjoys a dramatic position on top of a steep escarpment (for Suffolk) which runs south-east to north-west through the site, giving views south and west across the Gipping valley towards an undulating agricultural landscape of small fields, hedges and woodland. Landform and planting encloses the view east but to the north and north-west contrived views through woodland remain along The Vista and to a prospect tower in the northern plantations.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The Hall is served by three major drives and one minor one. To the south the Barham or South Lodge (listed grade II), designed by A Roos and built in 1841 in the Italianate style, marks the main drive which was moved eastwards to this position in the early C19 when the drive laid out by Repton was abandoned (Tithe map 1840). From the north-west the Needham Lodge (listed grade II) marks the beginning of the drive through the Long Covert, both lodge and drive being in place by 1820 (OS drawings). The Needham Lodge was extensively remodelled in the Italianate style by Barry in the 1860s. Coddenham Lodge at the north-east corner of the park was erected 1848-9 to mark a new drive through the park from Coddenham to the Hall. A minor drive from the Wheelwrights Lodge on the west boundary marks the position of an old lane which lay outside the park until it was extended in the early C19.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Shrubland Hall (listed grade II*) sits to the south-east of centre of the registered site on top of the escarpment. It is a three-storey, Italianate-style building of gault brick with limestone and stucco dressings. The west, garden front has a central five-bay block with giant Ionic pilasters, flanked on either side by three further bays. To the west is a service range (c 1851) and to the east a massive Italianate tower (c 1850). The whole is decorated with balustrading and urns. The east, entrance front has a great baroque entrance leading to the staircase hall, flanked by single-storey, three-bay wings attached to semi-elliptical screen walls with gateways at each end. To the south is a large conservatory, added c 1830. The Hall was originally designed in the Georgian style by the architect James Paine (1770-2) and was remodelled by J P Gandy-Deering (1830-2) who added the pilasters, the new entrance and the conservatory. Further remodelling in the Italianate style took place in the late 1840s and early 1850s at the hand of Sir Charles Barry who added balustrades and a belvedere on the south-west tower, although his proposals for a balancing north tower and a central bell tower were rejected by the Middletons.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS Shrubland Hall lies on high ground and its gardens fall away to the south and west of the house in a series of terraces. They retain much of the mid C19 Italianate layout in the form of the hard landscaping from the Barry period. Immediately on the west front lies the Gun Terrace. The Brownslow Terrace runs north in a wide arc from the Gun Terrace to the northern boundary of the gardens where it is terminated by a statue of Diana. It is lined by ancient sweet chestnuts which date from c 1600 and predate the building of the new Hall. They were retained and incorporated in the layout of the grounds and are now a particular feature of the garden. Below the Gun Terrace is the Balcony Terrace (both listed grade II*), linked by flights of steps and decorated with balustrading, basins and urns (listed grade II). The complex Victorian parterres laid out on this level have been replaced by grass and herbaceous planting around the perimeter. The Balcony Terrace and the gardens below it are linked by a Grand Descent (listed grade II*) of 115 ornamented and balustraded steps contained

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by box hedging, topped by a covered pavilion on the upper level and falling in five flights to the Panel Garden below. The final flight divides into two curved stairs with a rustic grotto and pool beneath. The vista from the Balcony Terrace is completed by a covered Italianate Loggia at the end of the Panel Garden (70m from the base of the Descent) overlooking woodland to the west. The escarpment either side of the Grand Descent is densely planted with evergreen trees and shrubs and contains paths which correlate closely with those proposed by Repton in his Red Book. This escarpment planting also contains the Bamboo Walk (100m north of the Descent), the planting of which was proposed by William Robinson and discussed in his book *The English Garden* (1906).

The Panel Garden retains a simplified parterre and scrolls of yew, together with a central circular fountain pond. To the west beside the Loggia, steps lead down into an area of wild garden, the framework of which existed before William Robinson proposed additions to its planting in the 1880s (Williamson 1997). As well as being on the principal axis from the Hall, the Panel Garden forms the focus of two cross axes made up by the Green Terrace to the south-east which crosses the Panel Garden and runs north-west along The Vista avenue out into the park for c 400m; and by a third vista which runs from the Balcony Seat in the south-west corner of the Panel Garden to the north-east.

The Green Terrace consists of a walk of some 250m terminated by mid C19 wrought-iron gates (listed grade II). Along the length of this Terrace, principally on the west side, a series of theme gardens were strung in the mid C19. Some of these remain, most notably the Fountain or Hot Wall Garden with its semicircular heated ornamental wall c 60m in length and its steps and balustrading (all listed grade II); a Rose Garden; the Witches Circle; and the box maze planted by Donald Beaton (40m west from the end of the Green Terrace). Along the east side of the Terrace the land rises up to rolling lawns which run up to the south front of the Hall. The lawns contain a modern (late C20) tennis court and a swimming pool. Beyond the lawns, near the southern end of the Green Terrace, lies the Swiss Cottage and Rock Garden, the former dating from the early C19 (Tithe map 1840) and the latter from the early years of the C20.

Beyond the Green Terrace gardens to the west lies open lawn dotted with mature trees and bounded by a perimeter tree belt, on the inner edge of which sits the Algerian Summer House (170m west of the Green Terrace), a rustic wooden building dating from the early C19. This originally stood elsewhere in the garden and was moved in 1852 to make way for the Grand Descent. PARK Shrubland Park extends to c 175ha. The eastern section of the landscape is predominantly open parkland laid out in the early C19, with a good spread of trees of mixed species and ages in clumps and as individuals. There are small areas of arable land in the north-east corner. The central part of the site contains the Old Hall and the new Hall; both sit on the high ground above the escarpment. The Old Hall (listed grade II) lies 500m north-north-east of the new Hall and is the home of the present owner. The oldest trees in the park are concentrated in this central section, which includes the site of the C17 deer park, and ancient trees survive particularly near the new Hall which was built around the C17 sweet chestnut grove known as The Warren. The long western arm of the park is covered with woodland plantations, cut through by drives which lead out to the Needham Lodge on the western tip. They pass Shrubland Vista, a mid C20 single-storey dwelling 350m west of the Old Hall, and the hexagonal Prospect Tower (listed grade II), erected in the 1770s some 700m north-west of the new Hall as an eyecatcher which at the time lay outside the park boundary. The planting of the escarpment and the western plantations was carried out between 1790 and 1840 when the park was greatly expanded to the north-west, south and east, following advice from Humphry Repton in 1789 and William Woods in 1808. Repton also proposed a new south drive which was laid out but later moved further east, and a broad walk to link the new Hall with the kitchen garden. This walk was partially carried out in the form of the Brownslow Terrace which incorporated some of The Warren's sweet chestnuts to line its eastern edge. There have been few significant changes to the park landscape since the late C19.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden, which has red-brick walls, lies 300m south-east of the Hall. It is attached to a coach-house range and gateway all of which was constructed during the 1830s (listed grade II). The coach house and workshops are mainly gault brick under tiled roofs and contain a wrought-iron gate with a fan design bearing the date 1841. Within the kitchen garden one glass range remains on the south wall. The coach house is presently let as a private dwelling (1998) and the kitchen garden used as a plant nursery.

REFERENCES

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Maps Edward Clarke, Estate plan, 1668 (private collection) J Pennington, A map shewing the extent of the parish of Coddenham with the hamlet of Crowfield, 1785 (private collection) Tithe map for Coddenham, 1839 (East Suffolk Record Office) Tithe map for Barham, 1840 (East Suffolk Record Office)

OS surveyor's draft drawings, c 1820 (British Library maps) OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1889 2nd edition published 1905 3rd edition published 1928 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1884 2nd edition published 1905 3rd edition published 1928

Archival items Humphry Repton, Red Book for Shrubland, 1789 (private collection) Account books, family papers, maps, plans and illustrations for Shrubland are held in a private collection.

Description written: August 1998 Amended: June 1999 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: December 1999

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.