

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

HINWICK HALL

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**HINWICK HALL**

Name:	HINWICK HALL
District:	Bedford (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Podington
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.251251 Longitude: -0.63274326 National Grid Reference: SP 93434 62333 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000575 Date first listed: 30-Nov-1986

## Details

A C16/C17 country house with early C20 garden, incorporating early C18 formal elements, and a small park.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Tyringham family owned the manor of Hinwick during the C15, C16 and early C17 centuries, constructing the earliest parts of the current Hall c 1540. William Livesay acquired the property in 1679, and his family lived there until the late C18. William Orlebar of Hinwick House (qv) acquired the Hall in 1834, running the two estates in tandem until the Hall was sold at the end of the C19. Having passed through several ownerships during the C20, including that of Gilbert Robinson who restored and extended the Hall c 1910 and created various garden features, the estate is now (1997) largely owned by the Shaftesbury Society and used as a residential school with associated commercial horticultural facilities.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Hinwick Hall lies close to the west boundary of Bedfordshire with Northamptonshire, on the south-west edge of the village of Podington. The c 13ha site is bounded to the east and south by the Podington to Wollaston lane, beyond which lie the grounds of Hinwick House, and on the remaining sides by agricultural land. The land straddles a small valley which bisects the site, running from higher land to the south down to the north, with the Hall sited in a hollow on the lower slopes of the west bank of the valley.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main entrance lies 100m south of the house, set back off the lane from Podington to Wollaston. Several metres east of the entrance lies Hinwick Bridge (1769, listed grade II), built for Richard Orlebar, of coursed limestone rubble with three small arches and several carved human heads. The entrance is flanked by four rusticated limestone gate piers (c 1700, listed grade II) between low stone walls, the inner two with modillion cornices and ball finials, the outer piers being smaller. The straight tarmac drive runs north for 100m, flanked by a lime avenue (probably planted early C20) and two late C17 or early C18 canals, the area being surrounded by mature trees. The eastern canal, 150m long, has a raised bank along its east edge and, adjacent to the east, a path running alongside the bank. The western canal, 100m long and broader than the eastern one, has mature yew trees growing along its west edge. Both are fed from the south by the stream which, having left the grounds of Hinwick House to the south, emerges east of the main gateway through Hinwick Bridge and runs parallel with the canals at the bottom of the valley to the east. A brick-walled boathouse with a wooden superstructure (late C19/early C20) straddles a narrow feeder canal from the stream to the east canal. The drive opens into a tarmac car park at the north end of

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the west canal, possibly replacing a gravel area (CL 1911) running from the car park to the south-east corner of the Hall. From here the drive continues along the east front, past the main entrance with its short flight of curved stone steps, to the service buildings to the north. A raised terrace with a diamond pattern, stone-flagged pedestrian path links the car park and the main door on the east front. The path is flanked at the east end by C18 wrought-iron gates with supporting pilasters and side screens (listed grade II\*), approached from the east by a low flight of stone steps, and along its length by two panels of lawn separated from the car park by a low stone retaining wall.

The east canal can be viewed from the east front of the Hall, which lies on the slope above, 50m to the west. Country Life (1911) states that in 1712 'we find him [General Livesay] obtaining permission from his neighbour, Richard Orlebar, the builder of Hinwick House, to bring additional water for the supply of his new [eastern] canal'. The 1st edition OS map published in 1881 show the drive north of the west canal describing a square course, running west to a forecourt on the south front of the Hall, then north along the east front, curving east in front of the stables and then returning south across what is now tarmac car park, to rejoin the top of the entrance drive.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Hinwick Hall (listed grade II\*) lies at the centre of the estate, a small, C16 country house, remodelled in the early C18 and extended and altered in the early C20 by Maberly Smith for Gilbert Robinson. The Hall, of two storeys with attics, is built of coursed limestone rubble with ashlar dressings, and red tile and Collyweston slate roofs. It is of L-plan with a large early C20 wing at the north end. The Tudor entrance was on the west front, but in the C17 it seems to have been moved to the present, east, entrance front with its central projecting porch. The porch is ornamented with pilasters and an elaborate broken scroll pediment above the door, reminiscent of that on the east front of Hinwick House, the whole surmounted by a wooden clock turret, cupola and wrought-iron weather vane. This front overlooks the east terrace and the north end of the east canal, the view of the water obscured by late C20 tree planting on a bank which may be contemporary with the car park construction. The stable block (datestone 1908, listed grade II), now converted to residential use, lies 50m north-east of the Hall. Rebuilt in the early C20, probably on the site of earlier stables, it is of coursed limestone rubble with a tiled roof and stone gable coping.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens lie close to the south and west fronts of the Hall. Part of an open area of lawn or paddock south of the Hall (OS 1881) was developed c 1910, during Gilbert Robinson's extensive alterations to the Hall (CL 1911), to become the present formal, rectangular sunken area, surrounded by low stone walls and sections of formal hedging, and overlooked by the south front. A central square pond is flanked by two panels of lawn, separated by an axial red-brick path, overlooked by a raised terrace walk, now with a covered walkway (late C20) running along the west edge. Southwood House, a late C20, purpose-built student centre, lies 50m south of the Hall, adjacent to the south end of the sunken garden and partially screened from it by a formal yew hedge. The building covers much of the area between the sunken garden and the road, this having previously been lawn or paddock (OS 2nd edition published 1901).

West of the Hall, a straight raised terrace, planted with a line of mature conifers, runs north to south almost parallel with, and 30m from, the west front. Above it to the west is the west park, and below it, to the east, reached via two short sets of stone steps, is the level lawn adjacent to the Hall. Gilbert improved the west garden by cutting back the bank to create a paved court (now gone, replaced by the lawn), from which area flights of steps ascend to the upper terrace (CL 1911).

**PARK** The compact parkland, largely pasture, lies in two sections, flanking the Hall and garden to the west and east. The major feature in the west park is the 300m long lime avenue (replanted late C20) aligned on the west front of the Hall, stretching away from the west edge of the garden up the gentle hillside. A line of trees in a similar position is shown in the undated oil painting of the early to mid C18 attributed to van der Hagen (Harris 1979); the avenue itself is first depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 1" map surveyed between 1815 and its publication in 1835. The east park contains several clumps of mature limes, together with single specimens along the boundaries.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The kitchen garden lies north of the stables. Two red-brick walls remain, together with a range of potting sheds and early C20 glasshouses which retain their interior fittings but are in poor condition. The area is currently (1997) used as part of a horticultural therapy unit.

**REFERENCES**

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*Inventory of Great Britain*  
*HINWICK HALL*

Country Life, 30 (28 October 1911), pp 628-34; 61 (26 March 1927), p 492 J Harris, *The Artist and the Country House* (1979), pl 165

Maps T Jefferys, *The County of Bedford*, 1765 A Bryant, *Map of the County of Bedford*, 1826

OS 1" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1835 OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1881 2nd edition published 1901 3rd edition published 1926 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1880

Description written: September 1997 Amended: April 1999 Register Inspector: SR Edited: May 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.