

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

PINBURY PARK

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Name:	PINBURY PARK
County:	Gloucestershire
District:	Cotswold (District Authority)
Parish:	Duntisbourne Rouse
County:	Gloucestershire
District:	Cotswold (District Authority)
Parish:	Edgeworth
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.742082 Longitude: -2.0669945 National Grid Reference: SO9547104822 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000778 Date first listed: 28-Feb-1986

Details

Wooded park enclosing early C20 terrace gardens of 1ha around C16 house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Pinbury Park was a medieval monastic possession until 1539, though it was probably not used as a monastery. The estate was then managed by agents until c 1575-85, when it was bought by the Poole family, who probably built the south front of the house. By 1677, Sir Robert Atkyns the elder had bought the Park. Sir Robert Atkyns the younger (d 1711), MP for Gloucester and author of *The Ancient and Present State of Glostershire* (1712), lived at Pinbury Park until his father's death in 1709 and made alterations to the house. He described Pinbury as 'a pleasant seat in the midst of a large park' (Atkyns 1712). Pinbury remained in the Atkyns family until 1788, when John Atkyns, grandson of Robert the younger, sold it to Henry, Lord Apsley. At around this time, Rudder (1779) described the state of Pinbury as follows: 'The park is converted to a coney warren, the house gone to decay and some of it taken down'.

Under the overlordship of the Bathurst family (of nearby Cirencester Park, qv), the estate and house were neglected in the later C18 and early C19. In 1892, by which time the house had been reduced to a farmhouse, Pinbury was leased to the architects and craftsmen Ernest and Sydney Barnsley and Ernest Gimson. Ernest Barnsley built up the house and incorporated and enlarged the cottage at the back, as the children's quarters. Gimson repaired and decorated the interior of the house. In the grounds they planted the yew hedges on the south front and used the outhouses as furniture-making workshops.

Lord and Lady Bathurst used Pinbury Park as a summer residence from 1902 to 1928. During that time they received such distinguished visitors as Queen Mary, Rudyard Kipling, and the writer and actress, Ruth Draper. The poet and author, John

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Masefield lived at Pinbury from 1932 to 1940. For the past forty years, it has been rented from the Bathurst estate by the present (2000) occupiers.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Pinbury Park stands at the centre of the north-west side of its roughly triangular wooded park, c 2km north of the village of Sapperton, 8km north-west of Cirencester and 12km south of Cheltenham. The park, of c 30ha, is mainly bounded by hedges and post and rail fences. To the north-west of the house, the boundary is a c 150m long ha-ha. The park encloses two valleys, the sides of the southern valley being densely wooded. There are exceptional views south-east from the house and south, to the valley of the Frome, which forms the western boundary of the park.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES From a minor road 900m north-east of the house, the park is entered via gates hung from c 1.5m high stone piers, set into a stone wall. From here, the drive, called the Dark Ride since at least 1882 (OS), winds south-west, through the park, with mature trees along its north-west side. It passes south of the cottages and outbuildings east of the house, then continues along the south side of the terraces south-east of the house, ending c 50m south-west of the house. Footpaths lead from the drive, north-west, then turning south-west, to the front door, in the south-east facade.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Pinbury Park (listed grade II*) is a large country house of two to two-and-a-half storeys, built of random rubble and coursed limestone, with stone slate roofs. The main, south-east-facing range has a central front door. A second range, to its north-west, is connected by single-storey gabled service rooms, spanning a sunken path, to the adjoining cottage (C18 or early C19, listed grade II) which was altered in the late C19 by Ernest Gimson. The two-storey cottage of random rubble limestone is built into the bank at its north corner. Pinbury Park is principally of the late C16, though it has some C15 remains. It was altered in the late C17 for Sir Robert Atkyns and the north wing was added c 1903 by Gimson and Ernest Barnsley.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS Pinbury Park house stands in the centre of a square of pleasure grounds, with terraces to its north and south and the Nun's Walk, an avenue of yews, to its west. A stone-flagged walk runs along the south-east front of the house and yard (a triangular area, enclosed by a drystone wall and set into the hillside at the east side of the house) for c 40m. To its south is the top terrace: a lawn, sloping slightly south-east, raised above the ground to the south and west by stone supporting walls. This terrace is divided into two unequal compartments. The west compartment runs the length of the house and has a yew hedge (planted by Gimson and Barnsley), with topiary, along its south-east edge and beds along its north-east and south-east sides. Previously, it was covered by many small beds but these were removed in the late C20.

To the north-east of the western compartment is the smaller Secret Garden, which is totally enclosed by 1.5m high yew hedges and contains five large box topiary shapes. Access to this compartment is through arches cut into the yew hedge at the centre of the north-east and south-west sides. East of the Secret Garden is another rectangle, of a similar size, consisting of a south-west-facing grass bank planted with spring bulbs. At the bottom of the bank, a C20 flagged path runs north-west, from a small gate in the south-east drystone wall of the compartment, towards the house. Drystone walls also enclose this compartment to the north-east and north-west. A large beech tree stands in the north corner, next to a flight of steps which lead to another entrance. At the southern corner of the house, the main flagged walk divides, one route going along the south-west face of the house and the other continuing on the original line, along the top (north-west) of the lower terrace, the wall here being topped by wrought-iron railings. The lower terrace, known as the Rose Garden, is a 50m long rectangle, up to 3m lower than the ground to its north-east and north-west but higher than that to its south-east and south-west, from which it is divided by a substantial buttressed stone wall. The garden is now (2000) laid down to lawn, with beds along its north-east and north-west sides, but was previously laid out with intricate geometrical beds, set in lawn and gravel paths. A statue stands in an alcove in the north-west wall, near the entrance. A mature deciduous tree stands towards the south-west end of the terrace. There are fine views to the south-east, south, and south-west, over the 1m high drystone walls. The top terrace and the Rose Garden terrace may have been constructed by Robert Atkyns the younger (owner pers comm, 2000) in the late C17/early C18 although the terraces depicted at Pinbury in Kip's engraving of Sapperton Park (Atkyns 1712) seem to bear little resemblance to today's gardens (2000). During the early C20, Lord and Lady Bathurst continued the work on the gardens here.

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From the entrance to the Rose Garden, the Nun's Walk leads north-west for 100m, to the northern boundary of the pleasure grounds. The Walk is a double line of around thirty gnarled old yews, thought to be several centuries old (guidebook). To the south-west of the Walk, a hawthorn hedge, with a low stone wall behind, divides the gardens from the grazing land, known as Anthill Bank, beyond. North-east of the Walk are open lawns, sloping south-westwards, at the north end of which are the remains of seven wych elms, only two of which are living (2000). North of the cottage a few large boulders set into the slope mark the remains of a rock garden, thought to have been built by John Masfield when he lived at Pinbury Park (owner pers comm, 2000).

A ha-ha forms the north-west boundary of the pleasure grounds and of the grassed tennis court: a 60m long rectangular compartment north of the house and the highest part of the gardens. Stone steps, flanked by yew hedges, lead up the centre of the bank which forms the south-west edge of the court, while a low stone wall runs around the north-west, south-west, and south-east sides. Two topiary birds flank steps leading up to the centre of the south-east side. At the western corner of the tennis court, stone steps lead up from the lawn to a small square gazebo (probably late Victorian) of coursed stone with a pyramidal stone slate roof. It has a doorway in its north-east side and its north-west side is open, giving a view, over wrought-iron railings, through the woods to a gate on the north-west boundary of the park. A massive grass bank extends along the north-east side of the tennis court and is thought to be one of the defensive earthworks of the Iron Age hillfort (Verey 1970) which encloses an area of 10ha, 150m north-east of the house. The earthwork bank was probably modified by C18 landscaping and has a grass walk along its summit. Stone steps at its south-east end lead up to a stone-walled paddock, north-east of the tennis court.

South-east of the tennis court is a tree-planted bank, below which are several outbuildings and cottages. A small, C20 swimming pool (c 8m long) lies south of the paddock, by one of the cottages and is screened by leylandii to the south and west. Stone stables and a workshop stand further east, with the kitchen garden to their east. A large stone barn, with a cottage beyond to the east, lies c 150m east of the house.

PARK The park has a linear shape, with a narrow branch extending c 700m north-east, along the Dark Ride. The southern part of the park is largely wooded but the eastern part is open, with only a belt of trees along its eastern edge, making it possible to see the many earthworks of field lynchets and trackways here. This part of the park is separated from the pleasure grounds by a drystone wall which runs along the south side of the drive. The bottom of the Frome valley, which forms the western boundary of the park, is kept clear of trees and is used for grazing. The course of the stream has been straightened here to provide more meadowland. A small lake lies south of the Dark Ride, c 350m east of the house. This was known as the fishpond in medieval times (guidebook).

KITCHEN GARDEN The 40m long, rectangular kitchen garden (probably of the C20) lies 100m east of the house and is enclosed by the stables and workshop block to the west, by the barn to the east, and by c 2m high drystone walls to the north and south. It is divided into two halves by a stone wall, with an orchard in the eastern half and fruit cages in the western half.

REFERENCES

R Atkyns, *The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire* (1712) S Rudder, *A New History of Gloucestershire* (1779) Country Life, 27 (30 April 1910), pp 630-6 D Verey, *The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire The Cotswolds* (1970), pp 224-5 Inspector's Report: Pinbury Park, (English Heritage 1988) *A History of Pinbury Park*, guidebook, (Gia Mullings nd)

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1874-82, published 1888 2nd edition published 1903 3rd edition published 1924 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1875-82, published 1885

Archival items Aerial photographs, 1999 (NMR, Swindon)

Description written: February 2000 Register Inspector: TVAC Edited: April 2003

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.