

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

HOUGHTON LODGE

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

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**HOUGHTON LODGE**

Name:	HOUGHTON LODGE
County:	Hampshire
District:	Test Valley (District Authority)
Parish:	Houghton
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.095867 Longitude: -1.5102940 National Grid Reference: SU 34389 33065 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1000168 Date first listed: 31-May-1984

## Details

Landscaped pleasure grounds and a park laid out c 1800.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

A plan of the Fishery belonging to the Manors of Kings Sombourne and North Houghton dated 1776 shows the site before Houghton Lodge was built and the gardens and park were laid out. A road ran north to south through what became the pleasure grounds, the forecourt, and the stable court and then through open land down to the river. By 1800 Houghton Lodge had been built and the surrounding landscape laid out. Little is known of the early history of the house, which was built for the Pitt-Rivers family and probably served as a fishing lodge. The design has been attributed to John Plaw, a Southampton architect and author of several pattern books including *Rural Architecture* (1785) and *Ferme Ornée or Rural Improvements* (1795), subtitled 'a series of domestic and ornamental designs suited to parks, plantations, rides, walks, rivers, farms, etc, calculated for landscape and picturesque effects' (Jackson-Stops 1979). The property was put up for sale in November 1799 and the sales notice in the *Morning Chronicle* (27 November 1799) described it as 'a singularly beautiful Freehold Cottage ... commanding picturesque views of the River Tees [sic] and surrounding country'. The advertisement refers to two lodges, a handsome approach, paved coach yard with stables, outbuildings, brewhouse and cottages, a terrace, pleasure grounds, and kitchen garden. In 1800 the property was owned by a Mrs Bernard who owned another large property in the parish and let Houghton Lodge to Caleb Smith Esq (CL 1951). The landscape shown on the 1st edition OS map (1871) reveals that few changes were made in the C19 and the landscape has been little altered since.

The property changed hands many times during the C19, owners and residents including the Hon G Pitt in 1802, Donald Frail in 1803, John James Esq (d 1829) from 1804 to 1829 (with Lord Arundell of Wardour as tenant c 1808), Mrs Margaret James in 1831, John Mannington Morgan in 1842 (CL 1951), William Snow Clifton in the late C19, and Col E St John Daubeny in the early C20, who sold it to Admiral Sir Lionel Wells and Lady Wells (née Busk) in 1910. The family (as Wells, Parker and Busk) continued to own the property throughout the C20. Restoration of the gardens started in the 1970s and the gardens were simplified by the removal of later additions. The property remains (2000) in private ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**HOUGHTON LODGE**

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Houghton Lodge and its grounds of c 4ha are located in North Houghton, which is situated 2km south-west of Stockbridge, in the valley of the River Test. The property is bounded by the Test to the east, the Stockbridge to Houghton road to the west, the village of Houghton to the south, and a farm to the north, all set in open farmland. The ground slopes from west to east, with the house and gardens on a plateau and the ground falling steeply from there down to the river. There are good views from the higher ground, looking east and south-east over the pleasure grounds, river, and meadows beyond. The boundaries are marked by a mixture of walls, fences, and the river edge.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** Houghton Lodge is approached from the Stockbridge to Houghton road on the west side of the gardens. An early C19 drive leads through a pair of early C19 single-storey brick lodges (in Picturesque style with fish-scale roof tiles, gothic windows, and gabled porches, listed grade II with the cast-iron fences and gates) and then east for c 80m by a straight approach lined by beech trees and aligned on the centre of the house, to a gravel forecourt with central flower bed on the west side of the house. A late C20 drive starts c 20m north of the lodges on the Stockbridge to Houghton road and runs north-east for c 100m to a small visitor car park (outside the area here registered). From the car park the drive continues east to the south-west corner of the kitchen garden, from where it turns south through a courtyard of outbuildings to the entrance forecourt.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS** Houghton Lodge (c 1800, listed grade II\*) has a one and a half-storey main building in rendered yellow brick, with yellow brick additions and a plain tiled roof (originally thatched). A large bay with a beehive roof projects on the east or garden front of the house and a mid C19 cast-iron verandah (probably replacing a rustic wooden structure) runs around the length of the garden front, which has gothic windows and gabled dormers. A mid C19 conservatory on the east front was removed in the mid C20. The house was originally built as a free-standing symmetrical block but a wing was added c 1808 by Lord Arundell to link the house to kitchens converted from part of the stables. A courtyard of outbuildings, formerly the coach yard, lies to the north of the house. Further outbuildings, including an C18 timber-framed granary (listed grade II) on staddle stones, lie between the courtyard and the kitchen garden.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** From the south side of the entrance forecourt, a gateway leads to the start of the early C19 Serpentine Walk which runs south along the line of an C18 road (shown on plans of the area of 1776 and 1827). A gravel path leads through mature trees and shrubs, with views through to the small park to the west and to the Test and water meadows to the east. Only one walk now (2000) exists through the shrubbery but the OS map of 1871 shows two walks running parallel to each other, one forming an alternative return walk. An icehouse (OS 1871) lies to the west of the path and a monument, known as the Little Monument, forms a feature on the east side. The walk is terminated by an early C19 square-plan grotto (listed grade II). The grotto, in rustic flint with a vaulted roof and corner turrets, is attributed to John Plaw by Gervase Jackson-Stops (1979). It forms a doorway into the gardens from the south and has a pointed archway on the north and south sides, with a wooden door to the south. The interior is in brick with a tiled floor.

A path leads north-east from the Serpentine Walk into an area of open, sloping lawns running down to the River Test, flanked to the west by shrubs and trees and with scattered specimen trees on the lawns. On the eastern edge of the lawns, in a triangular area of land formed by a stream, known as the Spring Ditch, joining the Test, there is a small C20 wooden summerhouse and, to the north, a late C20 topiary dragon, surrounded by trees and shrubs. The lawns lead up to the house which has a paved terrace on the south side, enclosed to the west by the forecourt wall. To the north-east of the house is a small garden, known as the Peacock Garden, which was laid out in the late 1970s and replaced a rose garden planted by Lady Wells in the early C20. A gravel path runs north to south across the garden, with trees and shrubs on a bank beneath the range of outbuildings to the west and, at a lower level, a formal garden with clipped box hedges and beds surrounding a statue of a peacock, bordered to the south and east by hedges with topiary peacocks and to the north by a wall. The lower garden is reached by centrally placed steps down from the path. At the northern end of the path through the garden there is a gateway through the wall which leads onto a lawn linking the garden to a long herbaceous border which runs north to south along the east side of the kitchen garden.

**PARK** To the south of the entrance drive and west of the Serpentine Walk is a small area of parkland of c 0.75ha known as Icehouse Field. It has scattered mature trees and is grazed by cattle.

**KITCHEN GARDENS** The late C18 walled garden of c 0.5ha is situated 50m to the north of Houghton Lodge and is surrounded by rendered chalk cob walls (listed grade II) on flint plinths with a wide tiled coping. A range of glasshouses and a vinery run

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
*HOUGHTON LODGE*

along the 4m high west wall. The other three walls are 3m high and have large espaliered fruit trees growing on them. Wide grass paths run around the perimeter of the garden and the centre is laid out as a potage to a late C20 design, centred on a C19 well. The garden is entered through double timber gates on the south side, through two gateways with iron gates from the Long Border to the east, or from the glasshouse range to the west.

#### REFERENCES

The Times, 17 January 1801 J Plaw, *Ferme Ornée or Rural Improvements* (1795, reprinted Gregg Press 1971) *Victoria History of the County of Hampshire III*, (1908), p 413 *Country Life*, 109 (20 April 1951), pp 1190-3; (27 April 1951), pp 1280-3 N Pevsner and D Lloyd, *The Buildings of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (1967), pp 297-8 K Bilikowski, *Historic Parks and Gardens of Hampshire* (1983) *Houghton Lodge Gardens*, guidebook, (Anthea Busk, nd)  
Maps A Plan of the Fishery belonging to the Manors of Kings Somborne and North Houghton, 1776 (15MSO/706), (Hampshire Record Office) Plan of the River Test from Stockbridge to Bossington, 1827 (10M55/73), (Hampshire Record Office)  
OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1871 2nd edition published 1897 OS 25" to 1 mile: 3rd edition published 1909  
Description written: May 2000 Amended: July 2001 Register Inspector: CB Edited: January 2004

#### 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.