

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

SHAW HOUSE

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

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
Inventory of Great Britain
SHAW HOUSE

Name: SHAW HOUSE

District: West Berkshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Newbury

District: West Berkshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Shaw cum Donnington

label.localisation: Latitude: 51.411179
Longitude: -1.3179164
National Grid Reference: SU 47535 68238
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1001446
Date first listed: 04-Jan-2000

Details

Earthwork remains of a late C16 or early C17 garden for Shaw House laid out by the Dolman family and extended in the early C18 by the Duke of Chandos.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Shaw House was built in the late C16 by Thomas Dolman, a wealthy clothier of Newbury. The house replaced an earlier manor house at Shaw, which stood close to the present house and the church of St Mary (the latter was rebuilt in 1840). Shaw House remained in the ownership of the Dolman family until 1728, when the Duke of Chandos bought the estate.

From 1618 to 1666 Shaw House was owned by Humphrey Dolman, who possibly laid out the Great Garden with the raised walk to the east of the House. There may however have been a garden there already in the late C16 (WBC 1998). Under Humphrey Dolman's ownership, in October 1644, the Second Battle of Newbury took place partly in the grounds of Shaw House, and the raised walk is described in E Ludlow's memoirs of the battle (1696). Between 1666 and 1697 the House was owned by Thomas Dolman II, who improved both the House and garden between c 1690 and his death in 1711. After this date, possibly because of the Dolman family's financial problems, Shaw House stood empty for about seventeen years.

In 1728, the Duke of Chandos (James Brydges), who had recently bought Canons near Edgware (qv), purchased Shaw House. He improved the grounds between 1729 and 1737, keeping within the framework established by the Dolman family (estate map, c 1730). Improvements by Chandos included the building of a water house on a hill to the east of the House, the removal of two of the three parterres, and the making of the double canal into one, for which he commissioned the local canal engineer John Hore. After his third marriage, Chandos tried to sell Shaw House, but ended up letting it to his son, Lord Carnarvon. The latter made some alterations in the grounds, including the removal of the wall and gate to the south of the House which he replaced with a ha-ha (demolished after 1905). He also replaced the greenhouse to the north of the House with a stable block. In 1751 Shaw House was bought by Joseph Andrews from London. His son, also called Joseph, inherited Shaw shortly after the purchase, in 1753. The latter drew various measured plans of Shaw House and the garden in his notebook of c 1751(3 (BRO).

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
Inventory of Great Britain
SHAW HOUSE

The notebook also includes his sketch plans for their remodelling. Although most of Andrews' plans for the garden were never executed, he did succeed, unlike Chandos who had also hoped to do this, in constructing a new drive leading from the south of the House along the east side of the canal onto the London Road (Tithe map, 1838).

In the C19, Shaw House passed to the Rev Thomas Penrose, and subsequently to Henry Eyre, who lived at Shaw House from 1851 to 1876. In 1905 Shaw House was purchased by the Hon Mrs Catherine Farquhar. The latter undertook considerable restoration works to the House. The garden was laid out with rose beds and clipped yews, with the raised walk remaining intact (CL 1910, where it is described as the rampart).

During the Second World War, Shaw House was requisitioned and used by the British, and subsequently the American and Canadian armies. In 1946 the site was purchased by Berkshire County Council and Shaw House was converted to a school, in which use it remains. In 1963 a new school building, the Astley Building, was built on the site of the stable yard and garden to the north-west of the House. In the 1950s the canal to the south of the House was filled in, and the former parkland to the east, south, and west was built over. In the 1970s, the A34 was built which cut through the southern part of the garden and the southern tip of the canal.

In 1998 ownership of Shaw House passed to West Berkshire District Council. Currently (1999) there are proposals to build additional school buildings to the east of the House, and as part of this proposal an archaeological survey is being undertaken.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Shaw House, a site of c 15ha, is situated in the former village of Shaw, now a suburb on the north side of Newbury. The northern boundary is formed by Love Lane, and the western boundary by the A34 relief road. To the south the area is bounded by Spout Ditch (estate map, c 1730), with late C20 housing beyond. To the east the site is bounded by mid and late C20 housing, occupying part of the former garden (including the site of Chandos' water house) and parkland.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main entrance to the site is situated c 90m south of Shaw House, along the north side of Church Road, which runs east/west through the centre of the site. It is flanked by C20 gate piers and C20 wrought-iron gates with an C18 overthrow (listed grade II), introduced in the early C20 by the then owner Mrs Farquhar. Formerly Church Road ran to the north of St Mary's church; in the late C19 however it was diverted to run along the south side of the church.

The southern part of the site is accessed by a path situated opposite the main entrance on the south side of Church Road.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Shaw House (listed grade I) is situated in the northern part of the site. Its architect is unknown but Thomas Thorpe, a mason from Northamptonshire, has been suggested as a possible designer (WBC 1998). The two-storey house has an H-shaped ground plan, and is constructed of red brick with stone dressings. Its south front has five gables with projecting wings to the east and west. It has a central porch and six windows, with three larger windows to the hall on the ground floor to the east. From the windows on the south front there was an extensive view, now obscured by overgrown trees, to the double avenue and the canal to the south of the River Lambourn. The east elevation has three gables and a central doorway with a large C18 window above it which overlooks the Great Garden, and formerly the water house built by Chandos. The back of the House, overlooking the garden to the north, also has projecting wings and along it runs an arcade, added in the C18 (Pevsner 1966).

To the south-west of Shaw House stands the church of St Mary (listed grade II), which was rebuilt in 1840(2) by Joseph Hansom. To the north-west stands the Astley Building built in 1963.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS To the south of the House lies a square-shaped forecourt, approached by a straight drive flanked on either side by a lawn. The drive leads to the south front of the House, where there is a tarmacked car-parking area. To the south-west of the House is a lawn, with St Mary's church and the churchyard screened by mature trees and shrubs. To the east of the House lies the Great Garden, now (1999) partly covered with temporary school buildings and a tennis court. In the northern part of the Great Garden are also the remains of an early C20 formal garden, laid out by the then owner Mrs Farquhar. The Great Garden is surrounded to the north, south, and east by the late C16 or early C17 raised walk which is planted with a row of contemporary yew trees (formerly clipped). During the Second Battle of Newbury in 1644 the walk was possibly

strengthened and used as a rampart (WBC 1998). Under the ownership of Chandos, the Great Garden retained its formal layout with parterres (estate map, c 1730), then under the various subsequent owners its layout was simplified.

To the north-west of the House stands the Astley Building of 1963, bounded to its west by a raised terrace which slopes down in westerly direction to a rectangular lawn. To the west of the lawn runs Church Road, with a hockey ground beyond. The lawn and hockey ground were formerly part of the wider parkland, possibly enlarged by the Duke of Chandos in the early C18, that formerly stretched beyond the M4 motorway to the west (ibid).

The Astley Building covers the site of the former stable yard which had to its west an avenue of trees (ibid). This area became subsequently, in the late C19, part of the gardens (OS 1913).

To the south of Church Road lies a small public green space containing various archaeological remains of the former parkland. A footpath from Church Road leads to a small bridge over the River Lambourn. The path is flanked to the west by woodland and shrubs, with some mature trees, and to its east by the back gardens of two private dwellings. South of the River Lambourn, which was canalised by the early C18 (estate map, c 1730), lies a lawn with, in the centre, the footprint of the canal that ran in a southerly direction. The west side of the lawn is bounded by a belt of trees which were planted in the 1970s when the M4 motorway was constructed. The woodland in the far east corner of the site contains various mature trees which were possibly planted in the late C19 as part of a double avenue put in by the then owner, Joseph Andrews. Several small drains run through this woodland, which were all in place by the early C18 (ibid).

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden is situated to the north of the House and contains within its walls a swimming pool with ancillary buildings to the west, mostly built in the late C20.

REFERENCES

- E Ludlow, *Memoirs of the Second Battle of Newbury* (1696) W Money, *The First and Second Battles of Newbury* (1881) *Country Life*, 27 (3 September 1910), pp 328-38 Victoria History of the County of Berkshire 4, (1924), pp 87-90 N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Berkshire* (1966), pp 213-14 Garden History 5, no 3 (1977), pp 35-9 R Leamon, *Historic Landscape of Shaw, a West Berkshire Manor* (1992) J Cormier, *Historical and archaeological report on Shaw House, Newbury* (report for Berkshire County Council 1992) P Grover, *Register Review Programme (Berkshire* (report for English Heritage 1997) *Shaw House, Newbury (Conservation Plan, (West Berkshire Council 1998) Shaw House, Donnington, West Berkshire (Archaeological Evaluation, phases 1-2, (report by Northamptonshire Archaeology for West Berkshire Council 1999)*
- Maps Survey of Speen Manor for his Grace the Duke of Chandos, c 1730 (Berkshire Record Office) Plans from the notebook of Joseph Andrews, c 1750 (Berkshire Record Office) Tithe map for Shaw and Donnington, 1838 (Berkshire Record Office) OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1874, published 1878 2nd edition surveyed 1909, published 1913
- Illustrations Watercolour drawings of the south front of Shaw House, signe 'R J', 1831 (Shaw House School)
- Archival items Photograph of the south front of Shaw House, before 1905 (Berkshire Record Office) Photograph of the south front of Shaw House, before 1905 (National Monuments Record)
- Description written: July 1999 Amended: September 1999 Register Inspector: FDM Edited: November 2000

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.