

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

EYTHROPE

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

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Name: EYTHROPE

District: Buckinghamshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Fleet Marston

District: Buckinghamshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Stone with Bishopstone and Hartwell

District: Buckinghamshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Waddesdon

label.localisation: Latitude: 51.814639
Longitude: -0.88922127
National Grid Reference: SP 76668 13473
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1001397
Date first listed: 27-Jul-1998

Details

A late C19 garden and park, surrounding a late C19 house (designed as a day pavilion), overlying an C18 landscape park.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Sir William Stanhope embellished Eythrope House c 1750, the estate having previously been owned by the Dynham family (C15-C16) and then the Dormers (C16-C18). Stanhope employed Isaac Ware to build new stables (now lost) and garden buildings within the garden and park, described by Lipscombe (1847) as 'sham ruins and turreted buildings'. Two of these buildings survive: the grotto by the lake, and the bridge over the River Thame. The house was demolished 1810-11 by the fifth Earl of Chesterfield. Alice de Rothschild (1847-1922) bought the Eythrope estate in 1875, a year after her brother acquired the adjacent Waddesdon Manor estate (qv), and built The Pavilion as a daytime retreat from her brother's house. Here Miss Alice (as she was known) developed 30ha of highly ornamental and innovative gardens, with a large kitchen garden, surrounded by the existing park. Other members of this international Jewish banking family had houses in the Vale of Aylesbury, which was sometimes known as 'Rothschildshire'. In 1898 Baron Ferdinand died, leaving Waddesdon to Miss Alice who ran the two estates in tandem, still maintaining Eythrope to a very high standard. Her nephew, James de Rothschild, inherited Eythrope and Waddesdon upon her death. Upon his death in 1957 his wife, Dorothy, extended The Pavilion into a larger, more substantial house which was partially remodelled internally by Jacob, Lord Rothschild in 1997-8. The estate remains (1997) in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Eythrope lies 4km west of Aylesbury in the Vale of Aylesbury. The c 200ha site is bounded to the south by the River Thame, to the north by Waddesdon Hill lane, and to the

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west and east by agricultural land. The house and gardens, sited on low-lying land adjacent to the river, lie at the bottom of the south side of Waddesdon Hill, on which much of the parkland is laid out. The setting is largely agricultural, with the adjacent ornamental parkland of Waddesdon Manor to the north and that of Hartwell House (qv) c 1km to the south-east, Aylesbury visible in the distance, and the Chiltern Hills beyond to the east and south.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The north drive enters 2km north-west of the house, at a high point on Waddesdon Hill lane, opposite the entrance to one of the south drives of Waddesdon Manor. The drive curves south-east, down the hillside through the park, flanked largely by avenue trees, through a belt of trees enclosing the house on the north, west and south sides, to arrive at the west front. The north drive was altered in the late C19 from its earlier course further to the north-east, from where it entered past North Lodge at the top of Coney Hill, running south down the park to pick up a point on the current drive 500m north-west of the house. The late C19 north drive intersects with two further drives 50m north-west of the house: a service drive, flanked by *Wellingtonias* and other conifers, running north-east from this point to provide access to the stables and kitchen gardens 500m to the north-east, and the south drive which intersects here with the north drive. The tree-lined north drive is a dominant feature, running close to the west boundary down to the park. The southern approach commences at the village of Stone 2km to the south-east, where it branches off the Aylesbury to Oxford road (A418), leading north-west across agricultural land to enter the park at the dressed-stone bridge (? Isaac Ware mid C18, listed grade II) which stands 200m south-west of the house, spanning with its wide single arch the River Thames. There is a small waterfall on the east side of the bridge. Continuing north the drive, flanked by horse chestnuts, passes Bridge Lodge (W Taylor of Berton 1880-90, listed grade II), before turning sharply eastwards to meet the intersection with the other drives. A spur off the south drive just south of the bridge runs east across water meadows to the stone and half-timbered Weir Lodge (W Taylor 1880-90, listed grade II) which stands isolated on the north bank of the river some 750m east of the house.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Eythrope Pavilion (George Devey 1876-9, enlarged 1950s, listed grade II), built for Alice de Rothschild, lies at the southern end of the park, c 100m north of the earlier house, demolished in 1810-11, which lay much closer to the river. It is built of red brick with stone dressings, combining French and English Renaissance features in a style similar to that of Waddesdon Manor. Because the proximity of the river was considered a health hazard for Miss Alice, especially at night, she would spend the night at Waddesdon Manor. The original building was designed as a day pavilion with living rooms, kitchen and housekeeper's rooms, but no other bedrooms. In the late 1950s Dorothy de Rothschild extended the building significantly to the north.

The stables (W Taylor 1880-90, listed grade II) lie 350m north-east of the house, now converted to residential use and known as Eythrope Yard. They are built of stone and half timbered, arranged around a courtyard entered through an archway in the south-west wing, with a further entrance through the opposite, north-east wing giving access from the kitchen gardens.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens and pleasure grounds surround the house which is largely enclosed by belts of ornamental trees, except for the open tree-studded lawn to the east across which there are views to the lake. The house stands, surrounded by a gravel path, on a terrace above the main, east lawn. On the south front a small parterre lies below the terrace, reached by a short flight of stone steps, with a pond at the centre and flanked by box-edged seasonal bedding beds. East of the house, below the top terrace, a large curved terrace was extended in 1957 from an earlier narrow straight terrace. In 1998 however it was reduced in size to approximately its late C19 dimensions.

A circular walk, based on the remains of a path beneath the turf, runs south from the house through the trees to the river. From here it returns east to the south end of the lake which forms the boundary between the garden and the low-lying park to the east. The lake was created by Sir William Stanhope by digging out and flooding a narrow field which ran north from the river feeding it (Birmingham map, 1737). A dam and waterfall, masked from the main east lawn by an island in the river, were created adjacent to the bridge further downstream, to raise the water level sufficiently to accomplish this. The circular walk continues along the west edge of the lake, forming the east boundary of the large, open, east lawn, past a mound with rockwork visible at the edges, with views west towards the house and east across the low east park towards what are now the industrial outskirts of Aylesbury. A mid C18 grotto, built of tufa with inset pieces of quartz and artificial stalactites, stalagmites and columns (? Isaac Ware, listed grade II), lies on the lake side, 250m north-east of the house, forming an arch over a small

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inlet of the lake. Further north, on the east bank of the lake, lie the remains of a C19 boathouse, originally thatched. The path continues north into a belt of trees with views to the north of a further, conifer-studded, lawn and the stables at the far end of it. A late C19 cascade and accompanying rockwork lies in woodland at the head of the lake, 250m north-east of the house, fed by a pond north of The Homestead. The path, underplanted with shrubs, curves south back to the house along the inner edge of a woodland belt north of the house.

Miss Alice laid out ornamental gardens to rival the opulence of those at Waddesdon, described as including sixty acres of garden, of which twenty acres formed an extensive lawn in front of The Pavilion, studded with flower beds, shrubberies and specimen trees, together with a 'wilderness' carpeted with primroses and bluebells and a 'wild garden' of shrubs and ivies (J Horticulture 1890). The formal features included an Italian garden, a Dutch garden, a Mexican garden devoted to succulents, and an extensive rose garden with over 300 varieties. Three-dimensional seasonal bedding in sculptural beds was also an innovative feature here. Most of the formal features have been removed, but the framework of lawn planted with specimen trees, belts and shrubs still remains.

PARK The park is sited largely on the slopes of Waddesdon Hill north and north-west of the house, and on level water meadows adjacent to the north bank of the river east of the house, the two parts being divided by the kitchen gardens and stables. The larger, northern section is mainly open arable and pasture, with long views south and east over the park and garden (concealed from the park by mature trees) into the Vale of Aylesbury and beyond to the Chiltern Hills. Sheepcote Wood lies on the north boundary on the spine of Sheepcote Hill, this being the site of a formal circular feature shown on Bermingham's map of 1737, together with a further formal circular feature shown to the south of Coney Hill Farm, possibly on the site of what is now Fox Covert. Two avenues are shown on this map, radiating out to the north and west from the earlier house. Eythrope Park Farm, lying immediately west of the north-west corner of the park, outside the registered park boundary and adjacent to Waddesdon Hill lane, had a castellated C18 facade overlooking the park to the south; this blew down in 1916 and was not rebuilt. This eyecatcher was part of Sir William Stanhope's works, together with a domed folly (Records of Bucks 17) which stood on a mound known as Finch Hill between the north drive and the west boundary, 500m north-west of the house.

The east park incorporates the site of the deserted medieval village of Eythrope with its extensive remaining earthworks, and is bounded to the south by the river. The remains of Miss Alice's Old English Tea House, intended for visitation by boat, consist only of a mosaic floor lying at the east end of the park, 1km east of the house, next to the river where it enters the park from the north.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden lies adjacent to the north-east wing of the stable courtyard. It contains several glasshouses including a restored C19 cherry house near the centre, a lean-to range on the inner side of the north-east wall and a range of five low, late C20 glasshouses between (replicas of the former C19 range). The cruciform path layout, bounded by low clipped yew hedges, divides ornamental and productive areas. The Homestead (W Taylor 1880-90, listed grade II) lies close to the west corner of the stable block, west of the kitchen garden. It was formerly the Head Gardener's house and is built in similar style to other estate buildings, in stone and half-timbered. Above it to the north lies a pond. The gardens around The Homestead, to the south-west overlooking the park, and to the north-east, were part of the formal late C19 scheme. That on the south-west, entrance front may have been either the Italian or Mexican Garden, and is shown on late C19/early C20 postcards with a formal layout, now grassed over, although three short flights of stone steps leading down from the higher ground to the north remain, together with several clipped golden yews. To the north-east of The Homestead is an iron rose pergola running north-west to south-east, entered from the drive adjacent to the stables to the east, surrounded by a lawn with the outline of beds visible, and to the north-west the bank of the irregular pond above the lawn.

REFERENCES

G Lipscombe, *History and Antiquities of the County of Buckinghamshire* (1847) J Horticulture and Cottage Gardener, (26 June 1890), p 530 Records of Bucks 17, part 4 (1964), pp 219-27 Waddesdon Parkland Restoration Plan, (Colson Stone Partnership 1992) N Pevsner and E Williamson, *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire* (1994), pp 321-2 B Elliott, *Waddesdon Manor, the Garden* (1994)

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Maps Jas Bermingham, A Survey of Etherup in the County of Bucks ... , 1737 (private collection) J Fellows, A Plan and survey of the Estates ... of George Duke of Marlborough ... , lying in the Parishes of Winchendon, Waddesdon and Cuddington, 1776 (private collection)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1880 2nd edition published 1900 3rd edition published 1926 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1880 2nd edition published 1900 3rd edition published 1926

Description written: July 1997 Amended: December 1998; April 1999 Register Inspector: SR Edited: June 1999

This list entry was subject to a Minor Enhancement on 26/04/2019

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.