

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

HEVENINGHAM HALL

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

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HEVENINGHAM HALL

Name: HEVENINGHAM HALL

County: Suffolk

District: East Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Cookley

County: Suffolk

District: East Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Heveningham

County: Suffolk

District: East Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Huntingfield

County: Suffolk

District: East Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Sibton

County: Suffolk

District: East Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Walpole

label.localisation: Latitude: 52.305779
Longitude: 1.4502442
National Grid Reference: TM3531273124
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II*
List Entry Number: 1000494
Date first listed: 01-Jun-1984

Details

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Late C18 century pleasure ground and landscape park for which Lancelot Brown prepared plans in 1782 and James Wyatt designed garden buildings.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Heveningham family held the manor of Heveningham from the early years of the C13 and in 1575 Saxton's map records that there was a park here. In 1653 William Heveningham built a new manor house on the site of the present Hall. The estate remained within the family until c 1700 when it was purchased by John Bence. Bence rebuilt the old manor house in 1714 and laid out a formal wilderness garden with allées and vistas. He died in 1719, the land passing through the hands of George Dashwood and Joseph Damer before being purchased by Sir Joshua Vanneck, the first Baron Huntingfield in 1752 (White 1844). Sir Joshua acquired further land, including Huntingfield park to the north-west, which was incorporated in the Heveningham parkland. Sir Joshua's son Gerald inherited the estate in 1777 and immediately commissioned Sir Robert Taylor to rebuild the Hall, followed by James Wyatt three years later to complete the east facade and to undertake the interiors. Lancelot Brown (1716-83) produced plans to embellish the landscape park in 1782. Although few of Brown's proposals were implemented he did, in addition to the park, provide plans for the design of the stable block, the pleasure grounds and part of the kitchen garden. During the same period Wyatt contributed the Orangery, the Temple and the south lodges. During the middle years of the C19, the garden on the south front was remodelled in contemporary style but the Hall and park remained unaltered. During the first half of the C20 the Hall fell into disrepair, made worse by a fire in 1947 and following her inheritance of the estate in 1965 Margite Wheeler offered the Hall to the nation. It was purchased in 1970 and managed by the National Trust for the DoE until sold to a private owner in 1981. A second fire in 1984 gutted the east wing and following the owner's death in 1991 the estate was left in the hands of the receiver. After three years of uncertainty the Hall and historic park were purchased by private owners and a programme of extensive restoration is now (1998) underway, including the completion of many of Brown's proposals and the addition of a new south garden to replace the formal Victorian terraces.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Heveningham Hall lies c 5km south-west of the Suffolk town of Halesworth on the B1117 and c 14km inland from the coast at Southwold, set in a very rural landscape of farmland and woodland. The registered site covers c 205ha and is bounded to the north by woodland, to the east and west by open agricultural land and to the south by a mix of plantation and farmland. The boundary to the south-east is marked by a minor county road. The village of Heveningham lies off the north-west boundary and Walpole off the north-east, the road between them running through a screened cutting in the north park. The landform both within the park and across the surrounding area is gently undulating. To the north of the Hall the land falls away to the valley of the River Blyth, dammed to form a lake, and then rises again to the southern edge of woodland on the north boundary. To the south, the steeply rising ground and pleasure grounds cut off any long views in this direction. On the high point lies the walled garden and pleasure grounds, beyond which the southern part of the park flattens out. Beyond the north-west corner of the park, part of Huntingfield Hall is just visible through the woodland. Heveningham Hall itself can be seen in glimpsed views from the minor public road in the north park.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main drive into Heveningham Park is from the south, close to the Dunwich Lane/Peasenhall Road cross-roads. The entrance is marked by double, single-storey square lodges beside brick gate piers (all listed grade II). The lodges are built of rendered brick under hipped slate roofs with a single central chimney stack and were designed in the 1780s either by James Wyatt (Wilkie 1995) or possibly Robert Adam. Doors open to face the drive and gateway which is marked by urn-topped brick gate piers and an ornamental wrought-iron gate. The drive runs north for c 1.6km through woodland (called The Avenue on Brown's survey) to emerge 500m south-east of the Hall. It then continues north and turns westwards along the north front, turning south after the Hall to enter the stable block. The drive itself was already in existence in 1781 when Brown became involved, although Brown proposed the extension from the Hall round to the stable block. A second entrance from the north-west corner, implemented between 1783 and 1825 (Hodkinson and Bryant maps) is now just a small farm track. The bridge over the Blyth, present by 1782, is planned for replacement (1998) to allow the lake to be created. A third, minor drive enters from the west to connect with the road to Heveningham village and runs south-east past the icehouse to the stable block.

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PRINCIPAL BUILDING Heveningham Hall (listed grade I) sits west of centre of the registered area, just below the highest point of the site, with fine views from the north front over the Blyth valley. It is an imposing two-and-a-half-storey mansion in the Palladian style. The main, north front is composed of a central block with arcaded ground floor and eight giant Corinthian columns above, topped by a sculpted parapet. Flanking wings to east and west also have arcaded ground floors. Each consists of a five-bay recessed section, finished with pedimented ends decorated with four giant columns each. The whole is constructed of brick and stucco with Coade stone details and a lead roof. The Hall was designed and built by Sir Robert Taylor in 1778, incorporating at its core part of the earlier house dating from 1714.

The interior of the Hall was completed by James Wyatt from 1780 onwards. Immediately to the west of the Hall, in an enclosed courtyard, sits the Game Larder (listed grade II), a mid C18 hexagonal brick and slate building. The horseshoe-shape stable courtyard, also mid C18 with mid C20 alterations, lies west of this, linked to the Hall by single-storey working ranges added during the early to mid C20. The stables (listed grade II) are single-storey, red-brick buildings with glazed pantile roofs. The entrance is from the north and archways lead east to the Game Larder and Hall and north towards the kitchen garden. The eastern arch has a clock face and the northern arch a sundial.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens and pleasure grounds cover c 6ha, lying to the east and principally south of the Hall, all enclosed by a sunk fence ha-ha as proposed by Brown but executed along a different line. The gardens on the south front are newly created (1998) on the site of the former mid to late C19 formal gardens. A flagstone terrace leads to a reflecting canal running the length of the Hall front. Beyond this, grass terraces arranged as a semicircular amphitheatre link the Hall to the pleasure ground at the top of the slope. Mature cedars and oak are retained on the terraces and the top is enclosed by a new *Quercus ilex* walk. To the east the Victorian balustrading has been removed and the view towards Walpole reopened. Above the new garden the pleasure ground runs southwards, enclosing the walled kitchen garden to the west. The lawns are planted with a range of evergreen and deciduous ornamental trees and shrubs, including large yew and beech near the top of the new garden. Some 200m south of the Hall sits the Orangery, facing south across the park towards the Temple. The Orangery (listed grade I) is built of brick and stucco with a symmetrical nine-bay facade and is decorated with a frieze, swags and a balustraded parapet. It dates from c 1790 and is attributed to Wyatt. The south lawn in front of the Orangery contains some very fine mature cedars and at its southern tip lies a small informal pool surrounded by large willow pollards.

PARK The majority of the park lies to the north of the Hall. The rolling north park with the river valley of the Blyth running through it is mainly laid to pasture, contained by a dense perimeter woodland belt. The parkland contains a scatter of mature oaks, with additional new planting and the newly expanded lake (1997) along the valley floor, following the unexecuted proposals by Brown. To the west the land is more undulating and a greater concentration of mature trees survive. The boundary to the west runs directly into farmland. The thatched brick icehouse (listed grade II) which was built in the early C19 is located some 350m south-west of the Hall.

The parkland east of the Hall is currently (1998) under arable cultivation and is devoid of trees, as is the park to the south of the pleasure grounds. On the northern boundary of Temple Covert, looking north over arable land back towards the Orangery, is the Temple (listed grade II). It lies c 900m south of the Hall and consists of a covered seat with two Ionic columns and two corner pilasters, designed by Wyatt as an eyecatcher. A woodland screen encloses the park to the south at this point.

The origins of the park as it is today date from the mid C18 and its character is partially the result of embellishments proposed by Brown and Wyatt and executed from the late C18 onwards.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden lies within the pleasure grounds 100m south of the west corner of the Hall. The high, red-brick walls enclose an area of c 1ha, divided into two compartments by a serpentine wall. The southern compartment is laid to grass with a grass tennis court and fruit trees, together with herbaceous borders around the walls. A small iron gate in the south wall joins a central gravel path which runs north through both compartments. The northern compartment contains vegetable areas, a circular dipping pool beside the gate which links the two compartments, some old espalier apple trees and several glass ranges. A single-storey brick and rendered bothy (listed grade II) lies in the north-west corner. It has a pantile roof and fluted boarding along the gutter line. The pool, the basic cruciform path layout, the bothy and some of the glass ranges all date from the early to mid C18 (shown as existing on Brown's survey drawing of the garden dated 1781). The outer walls (listed grade

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II) were built at the beginning of the C18 for John Bence and the dividing serpentine wall added by the time Brown completed his survey. A range of storage buildings have been added to the outside of the north-west and west walls in the late C20.

REFERENCES

J P Neale View of the seats of noblemen and gentlemen...6, (1821) W White, Directory of Suffolk (1844), p 378 Country Life, 23 (25 April 1908), p 594; 58 (19 September 1925), p 432; 77 (12 January 1935), p 50 D Stroud, Capability Brown (1975), p 198 N Pevsner and E Radcliffe, The Buildings of England: Suffolk (1975), p 269 Kim Wilkie, Heveningham Hall: A masterplan for the management and reinstatement of the house and park, (Preliminary draft 1995)

Maps [all held in East Suffolk Record Office] Saxton, Map of Suffolk divided by hundreds, 1575 (MC4/0) J Hodkinson, The County of Suffolk, 1783 A Bryant, The map of the County of Suffolk from actual survey, 1826 C & J Greenwood, Map of the County of Suffolk, 1825

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1884 2nd edition published 1905 1946 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1903

Archival items The Vanneck family manuscripts are held at Cambridge University Library and include maps and plans from the Brown period and after.

Brown's plans for Heveningham Hall in English Heritage collection at Audley End, reference number 81026008-14

Description written: October 1998 Amended: June 1999 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: December 1999 The entry was enhanced in 2016.

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.