

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

ALBURY PARK

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

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**ALBURY PARK**

Name: ALBURY PARK

County: Surrey

District: Guildford (District Authority)

Parish: Albury

County: Surrey

District: Guildford (District Authority)

Parish: Shere

label.localisation: Latitude: 51.218179  
Longitude: -0.47780566  
National Grid Reference: TQ 06407 47654  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: I  
List Entry Number: 1000299  
Date first listed: 01-Jun-1984

## Details

A mid C17 terrace, bath house, and tunnel surviving from a garden designed by John Evelyn, with mid C19 exotic tree planting by Henry Drummond set within a park of C17 origin.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1637/8 the manor of Albury passed to the trustees for Thomas Howard, second Earl of Arundel. After his death in 1646, the succession passed to his eldest grandson, Thomas, who in 1653 conveyed Albury to his brother Henry, later to be created sixth Duke of Norfolk. With the architect George Evelyn, Henry enlarged the manor house and made major alterations to the gardens with the assistance of John Evelyn, the diarist (1620-1706). Henry Howard died in 1684 and his son sold Albury to Heneage Finch, who became Earl of Aylesford in 1714. Albury remained in the possession of the Aylesfords until 1780, when the estate was sold to Captain (afterwards Admiral) Finch, a younger brother. A wealthy man, he closed the public roads across the estate, annexing several village properties. After his death in 1794 the estate passed to his son, and after passing through several ownerships it was acquired by Henry Drummond in 1819. He employed A W N Pugin (1812-52) to remodel the house, and planted exotic trees within the pleasure grounds. In the 1830s Drummond became an apostle of the so-called Catholic Apostolic Church and by 1835 Albury had become the spiritual centre of the sect. In 1840, having closed the parish church within the estate and built a replacement in nearby Weston Street, Drummond built a 'cathedral' for the sect. Through the marriage of Drummond's eldest daughter, the property eventually passed to the Percy family, the dukes of Northumberland. After the death of the Dowager Duchess Helen, widow of Alan, eighth Duke of Northumberland, in 1965, the property remained empty for four years until it was purchased, together with the gardens immediately to the north, by the Mutual Households Association

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**ALBURY PARK**

(now Country Houses Association) for conversion to private apartments. The parkland and woods surrounding the mansion and the formal gardens north of the Tilling Bourne remain (1999) in the ownership of the trustees of the Albury Estate.

**DESCRIPTION**

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Albury Park lies on the south side of the A25, some 7km south-east of Guildford and between the villages of Albury to the west and Shere to the east. The registered site comprises c 130ha, of which c 40ha are wooded. The site contains the valley of the Tilling Bourne stream which flows from east to west, the land rising to both south and north. Beyond the site to the north is the rising slope of the North Downs scarp. The park is bounded by New Road and Albury Street on the west, from which it is enclosed by a timber palisade fence which also encloses the southern boundary abutted by Park Road. Approximately 250m eastwards from the C20 South Lodge on Park Road the boundary leaves the road and follows a bridleway in a north-easterly direction, skirting pasture land fringed by mixed woodland. At Chantry Bridge the bridleway, from here called Chantry Lane, runs northwards to the Shere bypass, which runs east/west along the northern boundary of the site. The park is enclosed along this boundary by park railings.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The site is entered at the junction of Albury Street and New Road. The drive to the house, described by Loudon as like 'a common farm road' (Gardener's Mag 1831), passes a C19 lodge on its north side, built by Henry Drummond in c 1826. The drive runs due east for 300m before forking, the eastern arm continuing in a straight line towards the former parish church of St Peter and St Paul. This fork meets a drive running north-west from the house to the kitchen garden c 70m west of the church. The south-east fork leads towards the house to enter the courtyard on the north-west, principal front. The drive then skirts the south of the house and continues eastwards as a track, along the course of a former public road for which Captain Finch obtained a closure order in 1784. A track runs north from Park Road on the southern boundary of the site, providing access to the extensive woodlands.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Albury Park (listed grade II\*) stands in the centre of the park with views to the north and east. Its forecourt is enclosed by a c 2m high wall of galleted ironstone with brick dressings and tile coping which rises in three steps to c 4m to form an arched entranceway (walls and gateway listed grade II) opposite the main entrance. This is hung with large mid C20 oak gates. To the north, adjacent to the house, is a pair of C17 wrought-iron gates (listed grade II) installed by Henry Drummond. These are thought to be Flemish and were taken from an Hungarian convent. The house is rectangular, three storeys high and in the Tudor-Gothic style with galleted ironstone, brick dressings, and plain roof tiles; the most striking external features are the tall, ornate brick chimneys, each of them different. The present house has C16 origins but is built on older foundations; it is said (Pevsner et al 1971) to have been rebuilt by John and George Evelyn in the C17, the library on the north front surviving intact from this time. It was altered again c 1700 and extended by Sir John Soane (1753-1837) in 1800, who was responsible for the main staircase. It was further altered by Henry Hakewill (1771-1830) who added the gothic stone tower at the north-west corner of the house in 1815, and was remodelled by A W N and E W Pugin in 1846-52.

The now redundant parish church of St Peter and St Paul (listed grade I) lies c 150m north-west of the house. Of Saxon origins with a C12 Norman tower, the church has work of C13, C14, and C16 date. There is a fine C15 wall painting of St Christopher in church. The south transept was remodelled by A W N Pugin in the early 1840s. The church is built principally of rubble stone with plain tiled roofs, and the tower is topped with a wood-shingled dome. The chancel was a roofless ruin for a hundred years from 1875, but is now re-roofed. The church has been in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust since 1974. This building was replaced by a new church built by Henry Drummond in the village of Albury, formerly Weston Street, in 1842. Some 500m to the north-west of the house lies the Catholic Apostolic Church (listed grade II\*) built by Drummond in 1840. Designed by W M Brookes, assisted by A W N Pugin, in Perpendicular style, the church is cruciform in plan with a tower to the west end and an octagonal chapter house to the north-east. It is built of sandstone rubble with ironstone galleting and a slate roof. The last service was held in 1950.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** On the north side of the house, lawns with gravel paths run down to the Tilling Bourne. On the east side they are separated from the parkland by a brick ha-ha. A C20 timber bridge crosses a stream channel which is fringed with waterside plants. Between it and a second, more northerly stream channel, which runs in parallel, is an area of specimen trees planted by Henry Drummond in 1819 as a wilderness. This was the site of Evelyn's canal, now gone.

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**ALBURY PARK**

To the north of the second stream, crossed by another timber bridge, is a grassed area of rising ground, subdivided by hedges with some specimen trees. The OS 1st edition map published in 1872 shows the west side with meandering paths, the gardens being illustrated and described in a series of photographs taken for *Country Life* (1928).

Northwards, the grass slopes terminate in a row of yew trees described by William Cobbett in 1822 in his *Rural Rides* (Boas 1926), above which runs a double height terrace, 390m long, the upper terrace 11m deep and the lower 12m. Along the north side of the terrace, the hillside is retained behind a 3m brick wall, in the centre of which is a tunnel through the hillside, a pool, and the Bath House (terrace, Bath House, and tunnel entrance all listed grade II\*). John Evelyn designed the terrace, the crypta or tunnel, and the Bath House, as well as a canal which extended between the present streams and was narrowed by Henry Drummond in 1819. Evelyn also laid out a vineyard between the terrace and the canal. He recorded in his *Diary* for 21 September 1667 that 'I accompanied Mr Howard to his Villa at Alburie, where I designed for him the plat for his Canale and Garden with a Crypta thro the hill' (de Beer 1955). Some thirty years earlier, work had been carried out in the garden for the Earl of Arundel, which was recorded in a series of engravings by Hollar of 1645 (Harris 1979) and is mentioned in Lady Arundel's letters (J Garden Hist 1981).

In the centre of the lower grassed terrace, on an axis with the main house, is the Bath House set underneath the upper terrace. It consists of a brick-vaulted room with three round-headed niches on each of the north, east, and west walls with pipes to convey water from the pool above. The south-facing brick elevation has a date of 1676 and a three-bay front with square windows flanking a central door. On either side of the Bath House, stairways lead to the upper terrace, also grassed but edged with lavender and a line of ancient Judas trees. 'The long, green Terraces' are described as 'flanked by wide Herbaceous Borders' in 1906 (Gloag) but in the 1960s the gardens were simplified and the borders removed.

Above the Bath House on the upper terrace, the retaining wall encloses a semicircular pool, now (1999) empty, containing a fountain originally dated 1666. John Aubrey, the naturalist, in his book *The Natural History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey* (1718) describes the creation of the garden designed by Evelyn, and how Howard had negotiated with a neighbour to bring water to the highest part of the garden. The semicircular retaining wall behind the pool contains ten round-headed niches, built for statues but now (1999) holding conifers in tubs and two round-headed doorways, on each side of which the terrace and retaining wall continues. In the centre of the semicircular wall is a tunnel extending through the hillside, under Silver Wood, in imitation of the grotto of Sejanus at Posilippo near Naples.

South-east of the terraces and due east of the house is a lake which first appears on the OS map of 1872 and which has recently (1990s) been restored, after being drained in the 1920s (OS). To the south of the house is a bank of massed rhododendrons and azaleas, planted between the wars by the Percy family (CL 1950).

**PARK** The park surrounds the house at Albury Park although the main surviving areas of parkland lie to its west and east and to the south of the track following the former public road. The rising land behind (south of) the house is broken by a series of north to south dry valleys, in part planted in the C20 with woodland and with open grazed areas with mature specimen trees. In 1253 John D'Abernon obtained a grant of free warren at Albury (VCH); the warren survived until at least the mid C17 when it is shown to the west of the house in one of Hollar's engravings of 1645. The old park, which extended north to the downs, had been disimparked by 1638.

To the north-west of the park lies the site of the former village, annexed by Finch's closure of the public roads through the estate in 1784/5. The C16 former George Inn (listed grade II), which was converted to cottages in the C19, lies c 375m north-west of the house. Beyond this, immediately south of the Catholic Apostolic Church, is Cook's Place (listed grade II), a C15 hall house with later modifications.

A plan of the Albury estate surveyed by Abraham Walter in 1701 shows the park with blocks of trees and avenues which relate to the present ancient trees and avenue remnants within the park. The south-east area of the park has the appearance of old wood pasture and the perimeter is screened with a mixture of woodland and scrub. Within the park north of the terrace is a hillside covered by mature mixed woodland known as Silver Wood, under which Evelyn's tunnel runs. The 1701 survey shows this hillside as 'the Upper Orchard'. The parkland to the north, west, and east of Silver Wood is now (late 1990s) arable and grassland. Albury Home Farm (listed grade II), a model farm complex built in 1876, lies on the northern boundary of the site.

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**ALBURY PARK**

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The kitchen garden lies c 300m north-west of the house and is served by a drive running north from the main drive near to the church. The brick base of a greenhouse survives, to the north of which is the Peach House, restored 1995/6 to provide offices. Beyond are the bothy sheds, refurbished and converted to offices in 1989. Access to the pleasure grounds is to the south-east of the Peach House, under a row of brick arches erected by Lord Lovaine in 1862 to hide the new greenhouses and conservatories. These were included in a description of the gardens by William Keane in his *Beauties of Surrey* published in 1849.

#### REFERENCES

J Aubrey, *Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey* (1718) Rev O Manning and W Bray, *History and Antiquities of ... Surrey* 2, (1804-14), pp 122-6 *Gardener's Magazine* 5, (1829), pp 10-11; 7, (1831), pp 364-5 W Keane, *Beauties of Surrey* (1849), pp 138-42 *Gardeners' Chronicle*, ii (4 October 1879), p 788; i (30 January 1892), pp 137,145, 147 *Country Life*, 2 (11 December 1897), pp 656-8; 61 (4 June 1927), pp 898-902; (25 June 1927), pp 1016-20; 62 (10 September 1927), pp 374-7; (15 October 1927), pp 5347; 108 (25 August 1950), pp 598-602; (8 September 1950), p 764 *Victoria History of the County of Surrey* 3, (1902-12), pp 72-4 M R Gloag, *Book of English Gardens* (1906), pp 59-68 G Boas (ed), *Selections from Cobbett's Rural Rides* (1926) E S de Beer (ed), *The Diary of John Evelyn* (1955), 3, pp 154, 496, 561-2; 4, pp 111, 558 B Cherry and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Surrey* (1971), p 94 R C Warmesley, *A Description of the Mansion and Grounds of Albury Park, Albury Surrey, and of the old parish church of Albury*, guidebook, (1974) *Garden History* 4, (1976), pp 10-14 J Harris, *The Artist and the Country House* (1979) *J Garden History* 1, (1981), pp 37-54

Maps Abraham Walter, *Plan of the Albury Estate, 1701* (TG a & b), (Surrey County Record Office) J Rocque, *Map of Surrey*, surveyed c 1762, published 1768

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1875, published 1880 2nd edition published 1919 1934 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1870-4, published 1872/7 2nd edition published 1896 3rd edition published 1915 1933 edition

Illustrations Wencelaus Hollar, *Set of six engravings of the park, 1645* (reproduced in Harris 1979) J Evelyn, *This Designe of a Garden I made for the Duke of Norfolk at his home at Albury in Surrey ...*, c 1670s (Univ of Texas) [copy on EH file]

Description written: January 1999 Amended: May 2003 Register Inspector: BJL Edited: June 2002

## 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.