

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

BARNINGHAM HALL

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BARNINGHAM HALL

Name: BARNINGHAM HALL

County: Norfolk

District: North Norfolk (District Authority)

Parish: Matlask

County: Norfolk

District: North Norfolk (District Authority)

Parish: Plumstead

label.localisation: Latitude: 52.874376
Longitude: 1.1902017
National Grid Reference: TG 14790 35534
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1001002
Date first listed: 18-Sep-1987

Details

An early C19 park, garden and walled garden, probably laid out with advice from Humphry Repton, surrounding an early C17 hall.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Barningham Hall was built for Sir Edward Paston in 1612. It is said to have replaced an earlier hall, situated to the east between the present building and the lake (local memory of parchmarks in grass), which was the property of the Winter family. The Paston family sold the Hall to William Russell in c 1756 who made alterations but kept the property for only a few years, it being in the hands of Thomas Lane by 1780. Five years later, in 1785, Thomas Vertue Mott acquired the estate. There is no evidence that a park existed around the Hall at that time, although the west avenue had been planted and a small area of enclosed, ornamental grounds surrounded the building. In 1805 Thomas Thomas Mott commissioned Humphry and John Adey Repton to remodel the Hall and although no Red Book survives, a number of watercolours which derive from it do (private collection), suggesting that Repton was also involved in the design of the park and gardens. Following a Road Closure Order in 1815 the park was laid out and expanded to reach c 100ha by 1850. It has changed little since that time. During the early years of the C20 the Hall was let to tenants and the gardens to the south were remodelled, within the Reptonian boundaries. John Stanley Mott died in 1927 and the estate passed to his daughter who married into the Radclyffe family. Their son, Sir Charles Mott-Radclyffe inherited and took up residence on his marriage. The site remains (1999) in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Barningham Hall lies in a rural part of north Norfolk equidistant between the towns of Holt, Aylsham and Sheringham. The village of Matlaske adjoins the park to the south to form

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Inventory of Great Britain
BARNINGHAM HALL

the southern boundary, whilst minor country roads form the majority of the other boundaries. The park is densely treed to the east and has perimeter woodlands to the north-west and south-west, leaving open sections which offer views across the park towards the Hall. The ground at Barningham is mainly level with a slight overall slope from west to east, rising again eastwards beyond the lake. There are gentle undulations in the north-west section of the park.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES There are two lodged entrances into the park at Barningham. The main gates lie 600m south-south-east of the Hall, in Matlaske village on the southern boundary. On the west side of the drive sits Matlaske Lodge (listed grade II), an early C19 two-storey cottage of red brick with a thatched roof, in the Picturesque style. It was designed by Humphry Repton (1752-1818) in 1807 and his watercolour of it survives. The drive runs north in a single curving sweep to arrive at the west front. The Cromer Lodge (listed grade II) enters 600m north-north-west of the Hall, from the northern boundary. This one-storey, two-bay smaller lodge sits to the west of the drive and mirrors the style of the larger Matlaske Lodge, being built of the same materials at about the same time. The drive curves gently through the park, past the church of St Mary, to meet the south drive at the west front. The avenue which extends west from the Hall is grassed and has never been a drive.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Barningham Hall (listed grade I) is a large red-brick country house with stone dressings, a castellated brick cornice and a plain tile roof built, for Sir Edward Paston in 1612. It is a five-bay, two-storey building of double depth, with two attic floors contained within double dormer windows, crow-stepped gables and mullioned windows with stone surrounds. The entrance front to the west has a central doorway with semicircular porch arch in stone, bearing the date 1612. The garden front to the south has three symmetrical bays, added in 1805 by Humphry and John Adey Repton, who also added canted bay windows and a central oriel. The east front was also added by the Reptons in 1805.

Beyond the north front, and attached to it by brick walls, is the coach house and stables (listed grade II*), ranged to the north and east of a courtyard which is enclosed to the west by a high red-brick wall with central gateway (listed grade II). The north range is brick with decorated diaper work under a roof of plain and fish-scale tiles to the front, pantiles to the rear and crow-stepped gables. Formerly the coach house, it is now converted into three garages, a stable and a cottage. The east range, also brick, tile and pantile was formerly the stables and has a symmetrical facade with a projecting central bay rising to crow-stepped gables. Above is a wooden clock turret with bell under a leaded cupola. The stables are now (1999) used as outbuildings. The courtyard originates from the C17 and was altered in 1805 by the Reptons and further remodelled in 1864.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens at Barningham cover c 1ha and lie to the south and east of the Hall. The south front leads onto a raised terrace which extends from the low red-brick wall forming the western boundary of the garden, c 40m eastwards to a flight of urn-flanked steps (listed grade II) leading down to the east lawn. From the south terrace a further flight of steps leads down to a gravel path running through the south garden between an herbaceous border (replanted 1990s) to the west and a sunk lawn to the east. The southern boundary of the lawn is formed by a massive beech hedge with yew buttresses projecting south to create a further garden compartment beyond the hedge, laid out as a small formal rose garden (of late C19 origins but replanted late C20). Beyond the rose garden is an informal wooded pleasure ground including very mature cedar trees and Irish yews, cut through with a perimeter walk. The southern boundary of the pleasure ground is marked by a low brick wall overlooking the park, the perimeter walk running as far as this boundary before returning north along the eastern edge of the pleasure ground to emerge past the beech hedge onto the lower level lawn on the east front. The east lawn is cut with informal beds of shrubs, the grass leading down to a ha-ha which defines its eastern boundary, beyond which lies the park and lake. The east view from the lawn is defined by a yew hedge with central gap, planted parallel to the Hall front (late C20) along the line of the ha-ha. The perimeter walk from the pleasure ground continues as a gravel path across the east lawn, leading to the walled kitchen garden which lies to the east of the stable courtyard.

The gardens are largely late C19 and early C20 in their present form, although the terrace beside the Hall; the west wall; the wall on the southern boundary; and some of the Irish yew planting are probably all by Repton. The ha-ha was added in c 1970 by Sir Charles Mott-Radclyffe.

PARK Barningham Park covers c 100ha with dense woodlands dominating the eastern half and open parkland covering the western half. The Hall lies virtually in the centre of the site and a long sinuous lake runs north/south between it and the east woodlands, which are composed of Hammond's Wood, the Pinetum, Brickkiln Wood, and Matlaske Wood. These woods are

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shown on Faden's map of 1797 and have a ground flora which suggests they may in part have originated from ancient woodland. Within the woods, c 600m to the north-east of the Hall, lies the former gamekeeper's house known as Garibaldi Cottage (listed grade II). It is built of brick under a roof of plain and fish-scale tiles and was constructed by John Thomas Mott, with estate labourers, in 1860 as a tribute to Garibaldi whom he much admired. The Cottage incorporates a number of fine inscriptions and statues carved into the wood.

The west park is open with a good scatter of individual trees and clumps. The planting is predominantly oak, with horse chestnut and sycamore also present. A number of large, pre-park oaks survive, mainly as pollards. The west avenue, shown in existence in 1797 (Faden), survives although it was comprehensively replanted in 1850 with oak, lime, sycamore and horse chestnut (Williamson 1998). It serves to focus the view west from the Hall and to frame the view of the Hall from the western boundary. The woods and belts are varied in composition. Some 300m to the north of the Hall stands the church of St Mary (listed grade II*), partly a medieval ruin and partly a small flint and tile building added to by John Thurston Mott in 1830 incorporating part of the medieval structure. The mid C19 gate piers and overthrow (listed grade II) lie on the south side of the small churchyard and the whole is visually important to the landscape scheme. A further 300m to the north of the church, within the northern boundary of the park, lies the late C17 Dairy Farmhouse (listed grade II), surrounded by a mix of traditional and modern farm buildings. Although the west avenue existed in the C18, the landscape park at Barningham was only created following a Road Closure Order of 1815 which diverted a major north/south public road running c 300m west of the Hall, another immediately to the east of the Hall, and a number of minor footpaths and bridleways. This also coincided with the involvement of Humphry Repton whose watercolours showing his proposals survive, possibly derived from a Red Book, and who included views of the site in his *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* in 1816. It is probable therefore that he and his son were responsible for the design of the park and enlargement of the lake as well as the alterations to the Hall and stables of the same period.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden lies c 70m north-north-east of the Hall behind high red-brick walls (listed grade II) at the north-east corner of the stable courtyard. The garden is divided by paths into quarters, the paths aligned on an arched gateway entrance in the centre of each wall. The land continues to be cultivated for fruit and vegetables, maintained partly by the owners and partly by a group of local people who rent allotment ground within the garden (1999). The axial paths are planted ornamentally with flowers and are partly edged by very old espalier fruit trees, some of which date from the mid C19. The walled garden was laid out following the Road Closure Order in 1815 and is probably by H and J A Repton.

REFERENCES

Country Life, 27 (5 November 1910), pp 198-203 N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: North-east Norfolk and Norwich* (1962), p 83 D Stroud, Humphry Repton (1962), p 134 G Carter et al, Humphry Repton (1982), p 158 G Plumpton, *Collins Book of British Gardens* (1985), pp 35-6 Barningham (unpub UEA report c 1990) [copy on EH file] Tom Williamson, *The archaeology of the landscape park*, BAR Brit Ser 268 (1998), pp 217-18

Maps W Faden, *A new topographical map of the county of Norfolk, 1797* (Norfolk Record Office) A Bryant, *Map of the county of Norfolk, 1826* (Norfolk Record Office) Road Closure Order, 1815 (Norfolk Record Office) Tithe map for Barningham parish, 1842 (Norfolk Record Office)

OS Surveyor's drawings 1815-20 (British Library Maps) OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1890 2nd edition published 1907 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1906

Archival items J Thompson, watercolour of Barningham Hall, c 1780 (private collection) Humphry Repton, watercolours, 1816 (private collection)

Description written: September 1999 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: February 2001

Legal

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