

# Understanding Historic Parks and Gardens in Buckinghamshire

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research & Recording Project



(Mary Buckle)

## Wendover Manor

July 2016



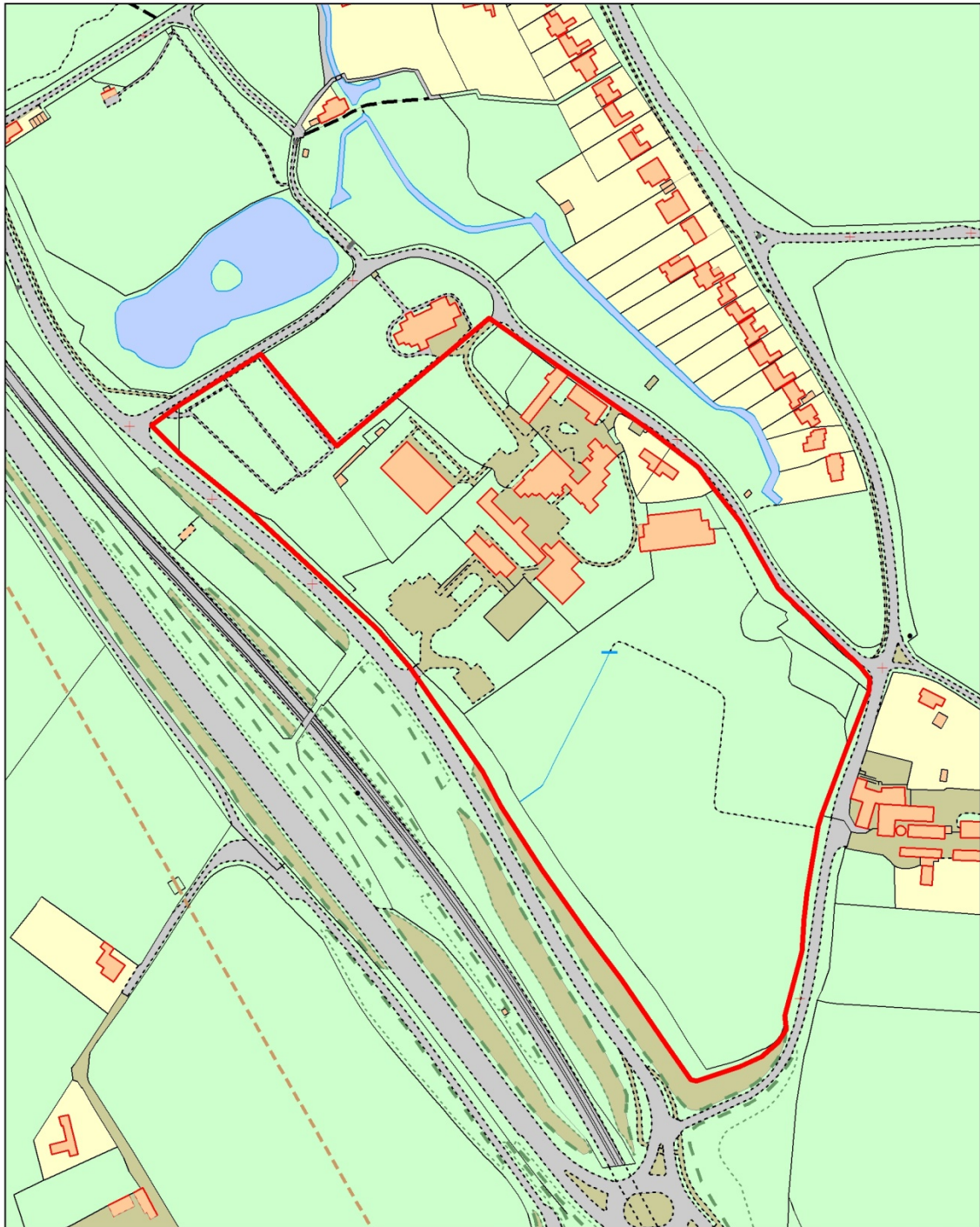
The Finnis Scott  
Foundation



**Bucks Gardens Trust**  
The Stanley Smith (UK)  
Horticultural Trust



# HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY



## Wendover House: boundary of historic designed landscape interest

Produced by the County Archaeological Service  
May 2016

Scale: 1:2,847 at A4



This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.  
© Copyright Buckinghamshire County Council Licence No. 100021529 2016



**Bucks Gardens Trust**







Scale: 1:2,847 at A4



## INTRODUCTION

### Background to the Project

This site dossier has been prepared as part of The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust (BGT) Research and Recording Project, begun in 2014. This site is one of several hundred designed landscapes county-wide identified by Bucks County Council (BCC) in 1998 (including Milton Keynes District) as potentially retaining evidence of historic interest, as part of the Historic Parks and Gardens Register Review project carried out for English Heritage (now Historic England) (BCC Report No. 508). The list is not definitive and further parks and gardens may be identified as research continues or further information comes to light.

### Content

BGT has taken the Register Review list as a sound basis from which to select sites for appraisal as part of its Research and Recording Project for designed landscapes in the historic county of Bucks (pre-1974 boundaries). For each site a dossier is prepared by volunteers trained on behalf of BGT by experts in appraising designed landscapes who have worked extensively for English Heritage/Historic England on its Register Upgrade Project.

Each dossier includes the following for the site:

- A site boundary mapped on the current Ordnance Survey to indicate the extent of the main part of the surviving designed landscape, also a current aerial photograph.
- A statement of historic significance based on the four Interests outlined in the National Policy Planning Framework and including an overview.
- A written description, derived from documentary research and a site visit, based on the format of the English Heritage (now Historic England) *Register of Parks & Gardens of special historic interest* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn.
- A map showing principal views and features.

The area within the site boundary represents the significant coherent remains of the designed landscape. It does not necessarily include all surviving elements of the historical landscape design, which may be fragmented. It takes no account of current ownership.

NOTE: Sites are not open to the public unless advertised elsewhere.

### Supporters and Acknowledgements

The project was supported by The Gardens Trust (formerly the Association of Gardens Trusts and the Garden History Society) and funded by BGT with significant grants from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust and the Finnis Scott Foundation. BCC generously provided current and historic mapping and access to the Historic Environment Record.

The Trust would like to thank the volunteers and owners who have participated in this project and given so much time and effort to complete this challenging and rewarding task.

Further information is available from: [www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk)

<b>COUNTY:</b>	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	<b>WENDOVER MANOR</b> <b>(WENDOVER HOUSE)</b>  BCC HER 0152804000
<b>DISTRICT:</b>	AYLESBURY VALE	
<b>PARISH:</b>	WENDOVER	
<b>OS REF.:</b>	SP872 072	

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Overview:** The remains of a typical garden, pleasure ground and small park for a Chiltern manor house rebuilt in the 1870s to a design by George Devey with associated gardens. The key surviving ornamental period is the late C19, including mature trees, a walled kitchen garden and modest parkland. Some features such as the C18 walled kitchen garden and stable block may have been incorporated from the former vicarage that stood adjacent until demolished in the mid-C19. The ensemble survives partly intact, although with the loss of some features particularly the garden features around the house since the site became a school in the mid-C20.

**Archaeological interest:** The site has the potential for evidence associated with a rural manor house site in occupation since the medieval period (at least the C14), and former structures related to the designed landscape such as paths, beds, terraces, boundaries, etc. It also has potential for evidence related to the former vicarage that stood adjacent until the mid-C19, and its structures and grounds.

**Architectural interest:** The remains of a typical group of garden structures related to the continuous development of a manor house rebuilt in the 1870s by notable architect George Devey who worked on a number of other projects in the county. The C18 walled kitchen garden and stable may have been incorporated from the former Vicarage ensemble. Beyond the historic boundary the parish church in its churchyard adjacent forms a strong element of the setting.

**Artistic interest:** The layout comprises the remains of a typical ensemble of garden, pleasure ground and small park for a rural manor house developed in successive landscape phases to the early C20. Elements survive but the core is fragmented, with the main loss being the 1870s terraced gardens around Devey's house, and part of the kitchen garden developed within the walls with a school building. The key surviving ornamental period is the late C19.

**Historic interest:** The site has strong associations with local notable families including the Lords of the Manor.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The manor of Wendover is first documented between 965 and 971 (*VCH*). However archaeological evidence points to occupation in the Bronze Age, Roman period and Medieval times (Muldowney). The settlement of Wendover occupied the site and adjacent church until C13 when it moved 625m to the north-north-east (Gosling). The church however remained a pilgrimage destination until 1842 when The Rood Cross was destroyed. The site or part thereof is first documented in 1607 as 'lying between the Parsonage on the south-east and the church on the North-West, the Vicarage contains 1a. 'Item within the saide bounds are conteyned a Lytle Garden Ground Walled Two Poles Square, and Two orchards, one having some eight oulde trees, And the other Within these eight years planted by the Minister present, by estimation one Roode.' (Buckinghamshire Glebe Terriers)



Three buildings on the Manor House site in 1620 (Dame Mary Wooley's Map) were named as the Parsonage, Vicarage and 'Wendover' which is likely to have been the Manor House (Semmelmann). However the strip of land south of the Manor House was titled Pasture, St John's More and Vicars Close, and the strip to the west and south as Parsonage Close.

The manor was held in the early-mid-C16 by four of Henry VIII's wives (*VCH*) and in the 1660s was sold to Richard Hampden of nearby Great Hampden. The Hampdens held the manor until 1798 when a life interest was sold to Lord Carrington. None of these was ever primarily resident in Wendover.

The stables and hayloft were it seems built in 1735 (brick inlay on the buildings). In 1768 there were two buildings on the site (Jefferys). By 1795 the site comprised the Vicar's Homestead and Glebe House Meadow belonging to the Rev Spencer Thornton (Enclosure Map).

The gardens, pond and modest park are first recorded in 1812 (*OSD*). This is the first map evidence of the walled kitchen garden and a park. Three buildings stood on the present Manor House site: the Vicarage and stable block, immediately south of the church, and the Manor house to its south-east. The rest of the site was parkland as it was in 1824 (Bryant).

By 1841 the stable block belonging to the Rev Spencer Thornton was part of a holding including the churchyard, part of the church close, a house and garden (Tithe map and award). The manor house to the south was not assigned but may have been exonerated from Tithes.

In 1801 Carrington assigned the manor to his brother, Samuel. The Manor House was in 1862 described as 'a handsome residence, pleasantly situated about a quarter of a mile from the town, near to the church. It stands in a regularly timbered lawn or small park' (Sheahan). It seems that it was leased and General Sir James Watson was resident from at least 1853-64.

Samuel's grandson, Philip Smith, employed the prolific architect George Devey to rebuild the Manor House c.1871-73. Elements of the earlier house were incorporated. Devey designed many estate buildings for the various Rothschild estates locally and built other houses in Bucks such as Lilies near Weedon. Philip's brother, the Rev Albert Smith, held the living of the church from 1867 and also asked Devey to design a new Vicarage (now called Winterton House), built 1873-77 (Allibone; Pevsner) on a new site in Hale Road, some distance north-east of the church. Around this time the old Vicarage was demolished and elements of its environs included in the Manor House grounds.

By 1876 the framework of the present layout was established (*OS*). The new formal gardens lay to the south-west and south-east of Devey's new house, with the C18 walled kitchen garden to the north-west. North of the house was a pinetum. Pleasure grounds lay west of the walled garden and churchyard, and also to the south, with formal avenues of trees along the boundaries. Beyond the gardens to the south-east was the small park.

Philip Smith does not appear to have lived in the Manor House, preferring Mayerton Manor to the south near Wendover Dean (Kelly) and the house was tenanted. The Rev Albert Smith occupied it 1869-81, and then moved to Devey's new Vicarage, now called Winterton House. The Manor House

was thereafter occupied by a number of tenants (Kelly). Philip Smith spent little time in Wendover. He died in 1894 and was succeeded as lord of the manor by his brother, Rev Albert (Gosling).

By 1948 the site had passed to Buckinghamshire County Council which converted it into a residential school, developing it as a special school, in which use it remains. Since then the 1870s garden around the house has been largely built upon. The north and west sections of the pleasure grounds became part of the churchyard.

#### **LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, AND SETTING**

The 8ha. triangular site lies on the southern edge of the Chiltern market town of Wendover, 8km south-east of Aylesbury, 8km south-west of Tring and 14km north-west of Amersham. The main road from London to Aylesbury (A413 built 1997) runs south to north parallel to the west edge of the site. Between this road and the west site boundary is London Road, which until 1997 was the main London Road, leading to the middle of the town, where it crosses the Icknield Way, an ancient route from Wiltshire to Norfolk. The west boundary against London Road consists of a bank covered in mature trees, mainly sycamore but also conifers towards the northern end.

Adjacent to the north of the site is the C13 parish church of St Mary. The site is bounded to the north-west and north-east by Church Lane with mature trees including sycamore and conifers, hedging such as elder and hawthorn and post and wire fencing with remnants of C19 iron railing. It is bounded to the south-east by Hale Road (no longer a public highway since 1997); this boundary is marked by recently planted trees and modern fencing.

The site lies on the plain immediately beneath the Chiltern Hills adjacent to the Vale of Aylesbury, at 115m AOD, forming one of a group of small Chiltern market towns at the foot of the Chilterns including Princes Risborough and Watlington (Oxon). The soil is shallow silty calcareous soil over a subsoil of chalk. The site is largely enclosed from wider views due to the topography.

#### **ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES**

The main entrance is from Church Lane, 20m east of the house adjacent to a car park, marked by a modern heavy metal gate. This entrance was in the late C19 a secondary entrance and is marked by two small, narrow C19 pillars and appears on a 1910 postcard (*Wendover in Old Postcards*).

By the late C19 (OS 1876) the primary entrance to the site was 150m north of this entrance, immediately south of the church, off Church Lane. This entrance is now used by both the church and the school. From Church Lane the drive leads 25m west, bounded on the north (church) side by park railings and then turns south through unornamented gates for 60m towards the north front of the house through a pinetum including mature Western red cedar, yew, Lawson cypress. A large area (now tarmaced) lies to the north and north-east of the house and the main entrance to the Manor House is at the west end of the north front. East of this area a low wall links the house with the stable block. 3m south of the stable block is a gateway marked by two small (1m high) square brick pillars ornamented by ball finials. The ornamentation matches that on a pillar on the kitchen garden wall. There is no evidence of park railings on the southern side of the entrance or towards the house but there are railings (including the gate hinges) past the turn to the house which continue for 40m before turning south to meet the north-east corner of the kitchen garden. The railings along the southern side of the entrance may have been removed.

Two further entrances lead east from London Road. One at the junction with Church Lane to the north-west of the kitchen garden consists of a C19 iron gate with park railing and provides access to what is now part of the churchyard but was until the 1930s, part of the site. No major changes occurred between 1900 and 1976 (OS). The second entrance, 250m south of this point and 90m south-west of the house, is a recent (2014) access to a car park immediately within.

Formerly, the Vicarage, before it was demolished (c.1873), stood 50m north-west of the Manor House, just south of the church and to the north of the present house and stable block (1812 map). The entrance to the former Vicarage was from London Road, 50m south of Church Lane. From here the drive ran north adjacent to the kitchen garden before reaching the Vicarage (OSD 1812; Gosling).

### **PRINCIPAL BUILDING**

Formerly the site incorporated several buildings, but only the Manor House (school) and its associated buildings remain.

The Manor House (listed grade II) stands towards the northern end of the site, 90m south of the church. It is built of patterned red brick, gabled, with large bay windows, and a service wing on the north-east side to match the stable block. The garden elevation to the south-east has a curved wall to an entrance veranda and a semi-circular arched garden doorway. It enjoys views over the park (filtered by security fencing), now framed by two large school buildings standing to the south-west and south-east of the house in the former gardens. The Manor House was largely rebuilt in Elizabethan style by George Devey between 1871-73 for Lt-General Philip Smith, with gardens laid out around it, these now largely gone.

The gardens have been largely covered by successive school buildings since 1948. A range attached to the east of the house was built in 1948 when the building was converted into a residential school by Buckinghamshire County Council and echoes the architectural details of the stable block (Toplis). A roadside school building 15m south-east of the stable block adjacent to Church Lane was erected in the 1950s (Sammelmann). The buildings were further extended in 1967 with a new block 10m south-west of the Manor House (Toplis). A pair of detached staff houses built in the 1960s stands 15m south-east of the house along Church Lane. A teaching block (1999) occupies 1/3 of the kitchen garden. A sports hall stands 20m south-east, and a two storey teaching block 30m south, respectively of the Manor House, both built in 2014.

The hayloft and stables (listed grade II) stands detached 20m north of the Manor House abutting Church Lane. It is a narrowly rectangular brick building, with initials (DIF) and date (1735) picked out in blue headers on the north-east, roadside elevation. It has an old tiled roof, a front of 9 bays with slightly projecting gabled centre and a formerly open central carriage way. The stable block is the earliest building on the site and apparently originated within the Vicarage grounds (Tithe Map 1841).

In 1841 the 3 buildings on the site included the Vicarage (demolished c.1873) south of the church, the stable block south of the Vicarage, and, south-east of the stable block, a rectangular building with projecting wings to the south (Tithe Map 1841). Remains of this building were incorporated within the current Manor House.



## **GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUND**

The remains of the gardens and pleasure grounds are situated to the west and south of the Manor House. The wider pleasure grounds to the north incorporated the site of the former Vicarage (demolished c.1873) and its own grounds. Little remains of the formal gardens associated with Devey's house, which were built over from the 1960s, with associated landscaping.

A late C20 courtyard lies between the house and the residential block with brick paved paths and larger areas. South of the east wing a line of older trees includes mature Corsican Pine, box and yew and more recent conifer planting.

By the late C19 the formal gardens enclosed the house to the south-east and south-west. They extended 30m south-east to a small bank 65m south west (OS 1876). The area to the south-east was bordered by paths and included a croquet lawn (Devey photograph 1878). Adjacent to the west of the end of the south-east (garden) front was a small border of low planting. To the west a hedge screened the walled garden, with an arched doorway in the forecourt (Devey photograph 1878).

By 1947 trees were planted, mainly conifers including Corsican Pine, Lawson Cypress and Norway Spruce by the south-eastern wall of the kitchen garden (Arboricultural Survey 2012). The area south-west of the Manor House was planted with specimen trees including conifers (OS 1876); a path ran parallel to the south-west front of the house, returning south-west alongside the south-east wall of the kitchen garden. By 1947 this area had become unkempt (Aerial photograph) but may have included apple, cherry, plum and a mulberry tree, i.e. an orchard. The trees stood in 2012 (Arboricultural Survey) but all but the mulberry have been felled for building works.

The remains of a line of specimen limes extends from the south corner of the formal garden, south-west to the boundary with London Road; from here it returns north-west to Church Lane. The remains of a further line of Limes (4 trees) runs north-west to south-east marking the north boundary of the site with the graveyard. The remains of a further line (5 trees) marks the northern edge of the site c.10m north of the kitchen garden. A single specimen survives from a small clump of trees planted between the north-west corner of the kitchen garden and the London Road, blocking a former entrance for the Vicarage. The northern part of the former garden abutting Church Lane forms part of the graveyard, incorporated by the 1930s (Gravestones); the area of the garden formerly immediately west of the kitchen garden is also part of the graveyard, incorporated by the 1970s (Gravestones).

The immediate environs of the Manor House and associated buildings are enclosed by a security fence some 30m to the south, running east to west across the site as are other areas to the north and west.

## **PARK**

The roughly triangular park occupies the south half of the site, with its narrow end to the south, bounded by London Road to the west and Church Lane and Hale Road to the east. The park contains scattered mature specimen trees, mainly limes (both *Tilia cordata* and *Tilia europaea*), sweet chestnut, copper beech, birches, and sycamore in similar pattern to the late C19 layout (OS 1876). There are gaps where some have been felled to provide playing fields towards the south but a substantial number remain, particularly those closer to the house.

## KITCHEN GARDEN

The trapezoidal brick-walled kitchen garden, measuring some 65m x 55m, lies 15m west of the house. It is dominated by a teaching block built in 1999 more or less centrally, occupying one third of the garden. In the remaining open areas paths were retained and to the east and west avenues of birches were planted. To the west are vegetable beds.

The walls (listed grade II) are of red brick with blue vitreous headers. The height varies from 2.5m on the north-west wall to 1.5m on the south-west wall. A gabled arch (rebuilt) gives access via the south-east wall with an iron gate and framework inscribed 1735 in the ironwork. The masonry indicates that it may indeed be of C18 origin but it is unclear whether it originated with the manor house or former vicarage that stood to the north until c.1873.

A late C19 curved wall links the south-east corner to the north-west corner of the house (OS 1897). A further entrance to the kitchen garden in the north-east wall, north-east of the arch, has a wooden door round the corner in the wall going towards the churchyard. The wall at this point is topped with a triangle ornamentation and this corner has a brick pillar topped with a plinth for a ball finial which matches (although is larger than) the finials on the gate openings in the wall between the stable block and the Manor House. The ball finial lies on the ground nearby. There may have been further entrances in the west and south corners but the wall at these points has been demolished. The site of a lost greenhouse in the north-west corner of the garden (OS 1876) retains a vine; formerly a range of service buildings along the north-west wall stretched for some 40m (also gone). The paint and whitewash is evident both internally and externally. Within the north-west wall are a series of raised beds.

By the late C19 (OS 1876) the garden was divided into rectangular areas of differing size by a series of paths running north-west/south-east. Along the south-east perimeter path ran a line of trees, with further trees within the south-west sector and four along the north-west wall (OS 1876).

## REFERENCES

### Books and articles

- Allibone, J., *George Devey: Architect, 1820-86* (1991), 95, 171.
- Clark, I., Philpott, L., 'Arboricultural Report Wendover School' RT-MME-111301-01 (2012).
- Gosling, M., *Our Place in History The Story of Wendover* (2010), 51, 71, 77-78.
- Kelly's *Directory* (1853; 1865, 1869; 1877; 1883; 1887; 1891; 1895; 1899; 1903; 1911; 1915; 1920; 1924; 1929; 1931; 1939).
- Muldowney, M., 'Archaeological Evaluation And Watching Brief, Wendover House School, Wendover Buckinghamshire' (2012).
- Page, W. (ed.), *A History of the County of Buckingham*, 3 (1925), 141-155 (Victoria County History).
- Pevsner, N., Williamson, E., *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 1994), 721-22.
- Reed, M., 'Buckinghamshire Glebe Terriers 1578-1640', *Recs of Bucks* 30 (1997), 80.
- Seabright, C., *Wendover in Old Postcards* (1984).
- Semmelmann, K., 'Heritage Impact Assessment: Wendover House School' (2012).
- Sheehan, J.J., *History & Topography of Buckinghamshire* (1862, 1971 edn), 209.
- Toplis, I., *The Buildings of Wendover* (1989), 2.

## Maps

*A Topographical description and particular mensuration of the Manor of Wendover Borough and Wendover Forrens . part of the possessions of Rt Worshipful Dame Mary Woolley, widow lady thereof 1620* (CBS MAR28)

Bryant, A., *Map of the County of Buckinghamshire from an actual survey in the year 1824* (1825)

Enclosure Map (1795) (CBS IR/26)

Tithe Map & Award Wendover Parish 1841 (CBS 414)

Jefferys, T., *Map of the County of Buckinghamshire surveyed in 1766-1768* (1770)

Ordnance Surveyor's Draft, 1812 (BL)

OS 25": 1 mile 1876

1923

OS 6": 1 mile 1st edition published 1884

2<sup>nd</sup> edition revised 1897-99 published 1900

Edition published 1961

National Grid: provisional edition 1950s

1971

1976

## Images

Colour aerial photographs 1947,1948,1950,1969,1976,1985,1988,1994, 1995,1999,2003,2006, (Buckinghamshire HER).

## Online sources

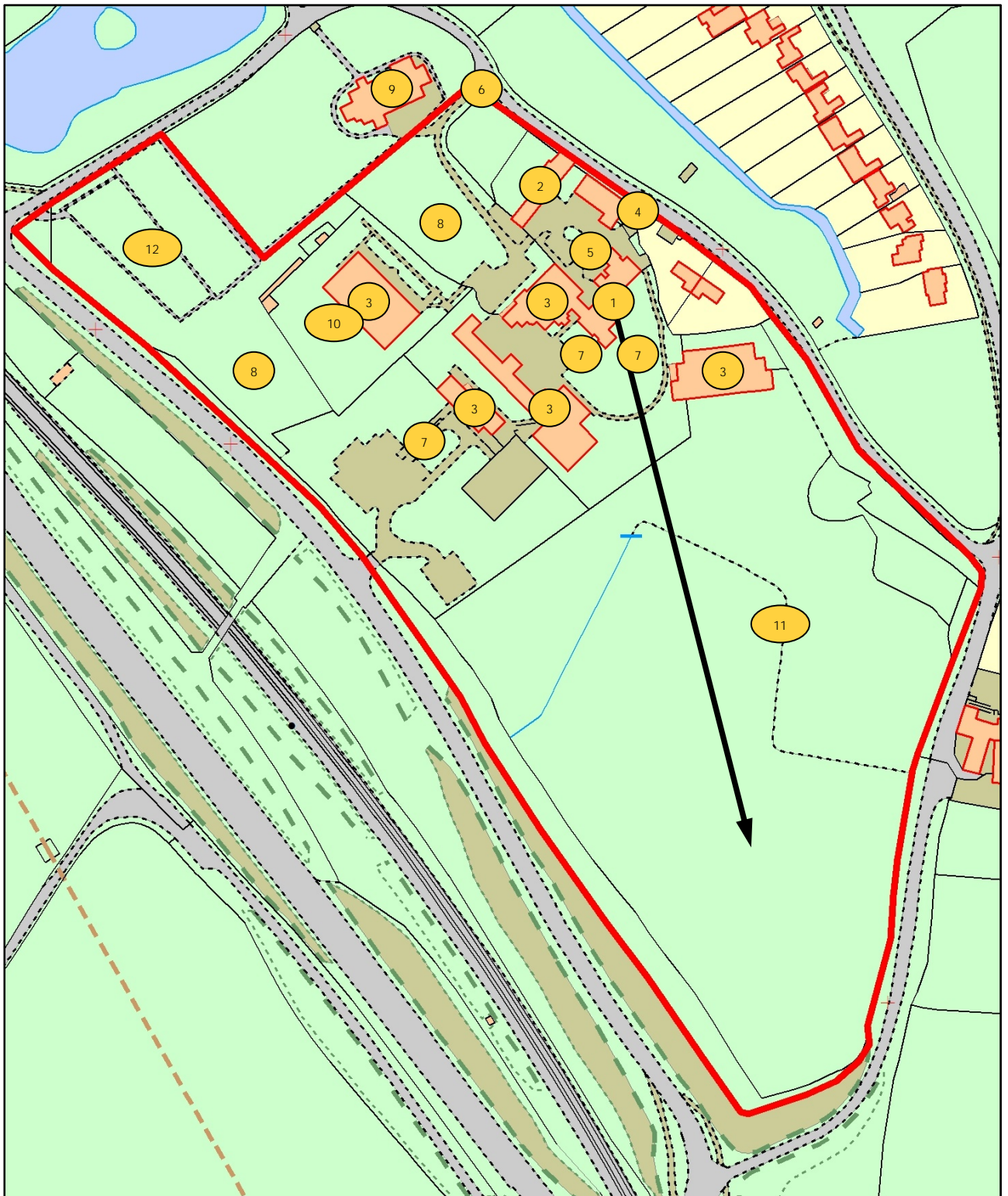
George Devey, Photograph of Wendover Manor

<http://cdm15847.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15847coll5/id/6685/rec/1>

Reproduced with permission of the University of Sheffield.

S Tricks 01 April 2016; edited SR May 2016

## KEY HISTORIC FEATURES & VIEWS





### Key to numbered features

1. Wendover Manor (mid-C19)	2. C18 Stable block
3. School buildings, later C20/C21	4. Main, east entrance
5. Forecourt	6. North entrance
7. Former gardens & pleasure grounds	8. Pleasure ground
9. Parish church	10. Kitchen Garden
11. Park	12. Part of pleasure grounds now cemetery

## KEY IMAGES

(Sarah Tricks unless otherwise stated)



Entrance Drive (left & centre); wall between house and stable block (right).



Gate into churchyard from London Road (left)  
Line of trees to south of eastern wing (right)



North elevation including main entrance (Mary Buckle) (left); main entrance (right);  
wall between house and kitchen garden (centre).



South (garden) elevation Mary Buckle (left); similar (centre);  
Avenue of limes in churchyard (formerly pleasure grounds) (right).





Park railing and wall of kitchen garden from Churchyard (left); park (right).



Kitchen garden seen from churchyard (left); kitchen garden gate from entrance drive (right).



Wall between house and kitchen garden from entrance drive (left);  
entrance to kitchen garden (right).