

# Understanding Historic Parks and Gardens in Buckinghamshire

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research & Recording Project



## Doddershall Park

July 2017



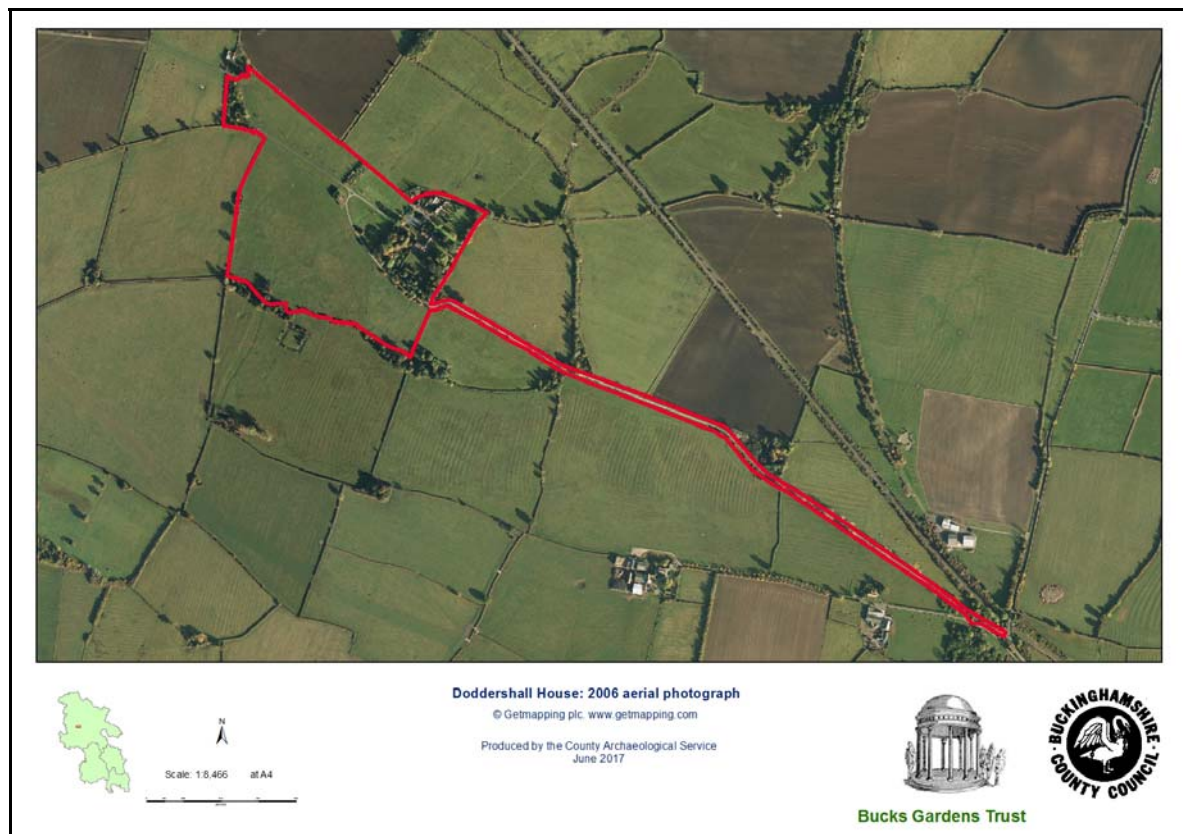
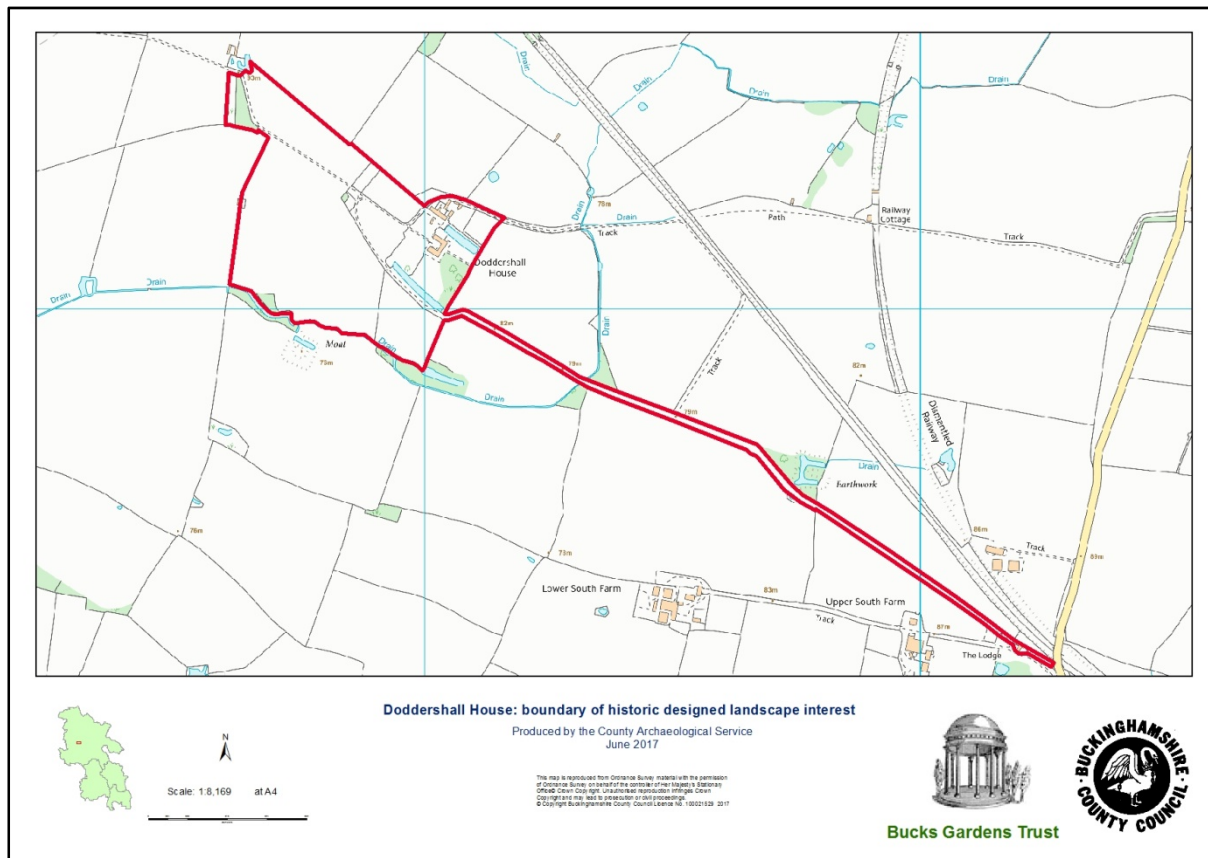
THE  
GARDENS  
TRUST



**Bucks Gardens Trust**

The Stanley Smith (UK)  
Horticultural Trust

## HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY



## 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 conclusive 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 (now 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/ 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>DODDERSHALL PARK</b> HER 0034305000
<b>DISTRICT:</b>	AYLESBURY VALE	
<b>PARISH:</b>	QUAINTON	
<b>OS REF:</b>	SP 720 201	

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Overview

A garden and small park, associated with a fine, partly moated, early C16 and later manor house. With Tudor origins, the present layout is mostly from later phases that survive largely intact. The formal and informal mid-C19 layout of the garden incorporates earlier elements including two arms of a moat, and is the essential setting for the notable house. The park has lost most of the mature trees it had by the early C20. The rural Vale of Aylesbury setting makes a strong contribution, including views towards the wooded Lodge Hill, Waddesdon. C19 railway developments necessitated the alteration of the main approach from the south-east, which included building a substantial Arts and Crafts-style lodge near the entrance c.1900.

### Archaeological interest

The potential exists for features related to the C16 and early C17 elements of the courtyard house and its service buildings, also lost sections of the moat and associated C16 and C17 garden and park features particularly associated with the moated enclosure around the house, and lost approaches. Evidence of lost C18 and C19 garden features may survive including paths, walls, other features described by Lipscomb (1847), and the layout of the kitchen garden. Nearby features beyond the historic site boundary include a possible Civil War battery, a further moated site south of the park and aspects of the lost medieval village of Doddershall.

### Architectural interest

Doddershall House is a fine example of an early Tudor manor house which was built as an unusually advanced courtyard house, and altered in the late C17 and C18. The central range and the north wing of the 1520s survive substantially intact with a south wing of the 1680s and these are still set within two arms of a moat. The attractive outbuildings stand in a long-established location and may include historic fabric. A substantial lodge in Arts and Crafts style incorporates ornamentation which refers back to some of the external decoration on the house.

### Artistic interest

A garden and small park of early Tudor origins, with later alterations. The garden reflects a largely mid-C19 layout and woody planting with recent additions, incorporating earlier elements, particularly two arms of a moat framing the garden which may be of early C16 origin or possibly earlier. The garden survives largely intact, with many mature trees including yew framing terraces and informal lawns, along with the approaches established by the early C20. These are set within a small park with early Tudor origins which contains few of the mature specimen trees present by the early C20. The late C19 avenue beyond the park framing the view south-west has gone, but the site enjoys broad views south-east towards the wooded Lodge Hill, Waddesdon, and the late C19

Waddesdon Manor, formerly the site of an earlier park. The kitchen garden survives but has lost its historic productive layout and structures, and is in part laid out with a recent formal design.

### **Historic interest**

The site is a typical mid-Bucks manor with an unbroken association since the medieval period with a notable local family.

### **HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

Doddershall village was recorded in The Domesday Book (*VCH*). Doddershall was held by the Cramford family and then by John Goldwell by marriage to the last Cramford widow (*VCH*). The manor passed to Thomas Piggott of Whaddon, sergeant-at-law c.1495. The village was depopulated over the next 50 years, leaving earthworks to the north and south-west of the house (the latter including a substantial square moat) [[www.Buckas.org.uk/hbgprojects/hs2doddershalldesertedvillage](http://www.Buckas.org.uk/hbgprojects/hs2doddershalldesertedvillage)].

Thomas' son, Thomas II, settled the manor on his widowed mother, Elizabeth Iwardby who had the north-east and south-east wings of the house built c.1520 (Pevsner). By 1587 the house had a U-shaped plan (open to the south-west) overlooking a semi-circular park with a pale to the south: the house was entered from the west with approaches from the west and north (map, private collection).

The southern end of the south-east range dates from c1610 (Pevsner). The then owner, Christopher Pigott, was MP for Buckinghamshire. Further generations of Whaddon Piggotts lived at Doddershall until 1735. Royalist sympathies at Doddershall may have led to a Civil War siege, and a moated enclosure 1km to the south-east is possibly a battery ([www.bucksas.org.uk/hbgprojects/hs2doddershallgunbattery](http://www.bucksas.org.uk/hbgprojects/hs2doddershallgunbattery)). The estate was at its largest extent c1660 (C. Prideaux). The south-west range was built for Thomas and Lettice Piggott in 1689 (dated lead rainwater hoppers). A staircase was added at the end of the C17 (Pevsner). In 1735 the house was taken by John Piggott of Chetwynd (Shropshire). His widow Christobella subsequently married the last Viscount Saye and Sele. By 1770 the house was the residence of 'Lord Say & Seale' within a circular garden at the north-east corner of a rectangular park (Jefferys).

The north-west wing of the courtyard house, including the entrance and a clock tower, was demolished after the death of Christobella in 1789. Doddershall reverted to her Pigott nephew (*VCH*). By 1813 (OSD) the house was open to the north-west with a detached outbuilding to the north-east. A rectangular garden extended south-east from the south-east corner of the house with a small building in its south-west corner. The north section of moat was present in its current length but that to the south was shorter than now (2017). A western section of the moat lay south of the approach to the House. The rectangular park contained scattered trees.

By 1847 the grounds included "a terrace walk on the south flanked at each end by a wall covered in fruit trees, the parterre sloping down from a bowling green to the gates of the park between small square fish ponds, apparently a portion of an old moat, and terminating in an avenue of elms, rectilinearly planted throughout the park. Close to and behind the mansion on the west, were many very lofty and spreading elms ..." (Lipscomb).



By 1859 the walled garden present in 1813 (OSD) had disappeared. The moat to the south was divided into two roughly equal sections (equating to the two fish ponds noted by Lipscomb) (Plan of the Manor of 'Doddershall ... belonging to G G Pigott', private collection).

By 1870 the south-east front of the house overlooked a simple arrangement of lawns with axial and perimeter paths, all fringed with trees (*Records of Bucks*). By 1885 (OS) the house continued to be reached round the north side of the building group but now approached more directly from the east. A square of trees lay in the field to the south with an axial avenue in the field beyond, with other clumps south-west of the house and also north of the north-east approach, lined by an avenue. The kitchen garden lay north of the north moat. A splayed wide lawn to the south-west was fringed with trees leading towards the south arm of the moat. A terrace lay below the south-west wing, with formal paths south-east of the house.

The Great Central Railway c.1885-1898 cut across the eastern approach and required its relocation further south. This apparently prompted the building of a lodge at the new entrance.

At the death of Vice-Admiral William Harvey Piggott in 1924 his widowed daughter, Lady Piggott-Brown, inherited the estate. The house received repairs at this time (pers. comm. D Prideaux). Her daughter Joan married Col. Sir John Prideaux. The Prideaux family have lived at Doddershall since then. The house remains in private family ownership.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

### **LOCATION, AREA, LANDFORM SETTING**

The 20 ha. Doddershall Park is located on at the south-east end of a slight ridge in the Vale of Aylesbury 2.5 miles north-west of Waddesdon, 7.5 miles north-west of Aylesbury and 15 miles east-south-east of Bicester. The secluded rural setting is dominated by the tree-clad Lodge Hill (Waddesdon Manor) 2 miles south-east and by Quainton Hill a similar distance to the north-east. Panoramic views are enjoyed from the western approach on the higher sections of the ridge. The soil is heavy clay which was the source for brick and tile works formerly in the area. The nearest public roads enclose a rough rectangle around the House, never less than ½ a mile from the house and form part of the network of unclassified roads between Quainton to the east and Grendon Underwood to the west.

The boundaries are generally marked by hedgerows or post-and-wire against fields.

The best view of the house in its setting is enjoyed from the western approach on the ridge as it enters the park. The slightly elevated location of the house gives it limited views over surrounding agricultural land, particularly to the south-west and south-east. The house is visible from the limited surrounding vantage points only by the tops of its chimneys as it is enclosed by mature trees surrounding it in the pleasure grounds.

### **ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES**

The principal approach is from the south-east. The drive enters 1 mile south-east of the house, off an unclassified road. Here the gateway is marked by plain timber piers with fencing either side and a lodge nearby to the North-west. The Lodge was apparently built c.1900 when the construction of

the Great Central Railway required the diversion of the south-east drive. It was probably built in two phases, with the south wing added in the first quarter of the C20. Various historic features may be of earlier origin than the building, using recycled Tudor features from the house possibly at the time of the Lodge's extension and of the repair work carried out on the House by Lady Piggott-Brown. The Lodge is in Arts-and-Crafts style with features taken from the main house. The original part of the Lodge comprises a square entrance aperture over the approach surmounted by a half-timbered gable room with herringbone brick nogging and decorative bargeboards. On the north side is a small lean-to. The main accommodation to the south is finished in rough render and with decorative brick chimneys to match the Tudor examples at the House. The later extension consists of a larger gabled wing half-timbered to match the earlier part over lower walls of rough render.

From here the drive passes under the north gable of the lodge and continues generally north-west towards the house except for a slight dog-leg, 760m from the south-east corner of the pleasure garden, near the reputed Civil War earthwork. The drive is bounded by a mixture of hedgerow, post-and-wire field boundaries and avenue trees. C.110m south-east of the house the drive swings south around the southern arm of the moat, turns north-west and then at the end of the moat it turns north to join the western approach avenue 175m north-west of the house. This route then leads to the forecourt, enclosed on three sides by the house, which contains a central well head (listed Grade II). It dates from the C18 and is circular with square ashlar piers with moulded cornices and ball finials originally to support the chain gear.

The west approach is an unfenced track leading off the road 0.5 mile west of the house. The drive leads north-east across fields for 500m to the highest point (92m OD). Here it enters the park and passes between agricultural buildings and a dense stand of mixed planting. Beyond the planting a short dogleg to the south aligns it with the principal axis of the approach to the House, passing then between a relatively recent small rectangular belt of planting and an older stand of evergreens to the south, 150m north-west of the entrance gates. It continues towards the house between C19 masonry gate piers (listed Grade II) standing c.50m north-west of the forecourt. In front of the gates, a service spur leads north to the outbuildings, kitchen garden and the north-east wing.

By 1813 (OSD) approaches from the west and east converged north-west of the house. That from the east approached on a sinuous route from the south-east before looping round the north side of the outbuildings to the north of the house. By 1825 (Bryant) the situation was similar. The main entrance remained from the lane from the east.

By 1898-99 (OS) the approach had been relocated to the present route, with clumps of trees to the south and south-west and to the north of the north-east approach; the axial avenue in the field beyond to the south-west and the axial path issued from the south-east wing of the House. A belt was added to the far side of the field to the east, possibly to screen the house.

The former approach from the east ran further to the north until the advent of the Great Central Railway c.1895, the embankment of which cut across this approach and necessitated its relocation to the present arrangement.

## PRINCIPAL BUILDING

Doddershall House (listed Grade II\*) is centrally located in c.2 ha. of gardens, this enclosure in turn occupying the east corner of the park. The entrance front in the central (south-east) wing faces north-west, overlooking a forecourt flanked by wings, with outer garden fronts to the north-east, south-east and south-west.

The house (c.1520) was built throughout of two stories instead of incorporating the more usual double height hall (Pevsner). The elevations are of red brick under steep pitched red-tiled roofs with tall brick chimneys with octagonal shafts. C16 timber framing is evident. The red tiles, red bricks (some in chequered pattern), timber and renders were probably locally sourced, there being formerly brickworks and clay and sand pits, as well as woods, close by.

The three wings in a U-shape enclose a courtyard open to the north-west. Thus the four corners of the house face the cardinal points of the compass. Gravel paths surround the external elevations. The kitchen and domestic offices formerly occupied the north-east wing. The front door in the centre of the south-east wing within the courtyard has a C19 front doorcase set within a triple gabled porch. A two-storey canted bay window with arched lights and Tudor hood moulds is situated north-east of the entrance porch. At the internal junction of the south-west and south-east wings is a rendered two-storey porch. The north-east wing is faced in C20 brickwork.

The outer side of the south-east wing has ornamental masonry and features and a 2 storey gabled porch with glazed doors giving a view of a path dividing the lawns leading south-east. The south-west wing has some chequered brickwork on the outer elevation.

The south-east block originally contained the hall of three bays, with a porch and small staircase facing the courtyard, and a room of two bays, formerly the kitchen, on the north-east side; both the hall and kitchen are now sub-divided.

The house was built as an unusually advanced courtyard house open to the south-west. In 1689 the south-west wing was constructed and there is a C20 extension along the courtyard side (*Records of Bucks*). The north-west wing was demolished c.1789 (*Records of Bucks & VCH*) when money was raised by sales of timber, and sufficient trees were removed to rebuild and alter the house. Some timber from Whaddon, part of the family estates, was carried to Doddershall for the construction.

A group of outbuildings stands c.40m north-east of the northern corner of the north-east wing of the House, just outside the line of the northern moat and sharing the alignment of both. The main range is of red brick under a gabled roof of red clay tiles and was present by 1813 (Ordnance Survey Draft). Before this, in the late C16 (1587 estate plan) additional buildings occupied this location, but their precise layout is unknown or if any fabric survives from this date. The range is arranged in five main bays each with a hipped dormer, the outer (north-west) pair having been refaced and renovated in modern times as a separate dwelling (with altered dormers and the addition of a prominent chimney in Tudor style). The remaining units have not been renovated. The centre unit in the unaltered group has two adjacent cart entries: by the late C19, divisions in the group included a thin element in the centre, which is presumably an entrance through the range to a courtyard behind, between the



range and the former main access (OS). The unit at the end nearest the House has a loading door at first floor level for a possible hay loft. Above a single-storey extension with a hipped roof, the gable at this end of the range is pierced for pigeons. The courtyard to the rear is surrounded by further buildings. The largest of these is a timber barn which has been moved recently and rotated to face the kitchen garden to overlook the Millenium Garden.

## **GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS**

The roughly square c.2ha pleasure grounds enclose the house with the House towards the centre and reflect a largely mid-C19 layout with recent additions, overlying a C16 site. They are flanked by two detached sections of an earlier moat, lining the north-east and south-west boundaries, which may be of early C16 origin, with the house, or perhaps even earlier surviving from a previous house. The two main lawns lie below the principal axes of the House, to the south-west and south-east, framed by wedges of woody planting.

The following describes a route anti-clockwise around the house starting at the lawn to the south.

The garden entrance is via a porch in the south-west wing close to its southern corner, reached from the main staircase hall. Here a wide gravel terrace overlooks the south lawn which runs gently south-west for c.70m down to the south moat, and a set of stone steps on the axis of the porch gives access to the lawn. A short recently-built brick wall projects from the south corner of the house marking the south-east end of the terrace and, with the end of the nearby yew hedge, viually separates the two lawns.

This south-west lawn is bounded on the north-west by a tall yew hedge screening an orchard. A wide flight of steps at the north-west end of the terrace next to the yew hedge leads down to a rectangular gravel area containing a modern circular decorative paved feature around a sundial and onto the lawn. The lawn is bounded to the south by a number of modern beds, including a horseshoe on the axis of the porch, within low hedges and including a rustic timber arch. Between these beds and the south moat is a wide strip of rough grass with incidental and informal mixed planting. A *Wellingtonia* stands close to the moat just to the north of the axis set up by the porch, steps and the horseshoe beds. Secondary growth flanking the moat screens views into the park.

On the east side of the lawn a yew hedge screens a wedge of shrubbery planting east of the house. The hedge links the south corner of the house and a substantial pair of timber gates at the south corner of the pleasure grounds leading to a path off the east drive. Close to these gates is an oval stone-lined depression always regarded by the family as a place to make and collect ice (pers. comm. D. Prideaux). Immediately to the south-east of the house is a small modern semi-circular paved area with statuary, fringed by evergreen planting. Another path leads from a wrought iron gate in the yew hedge with the initials of the owner's parents (pers. comm. D. Prideaux) north-east to the south-east lawn. At the far side of the south-east lawn the east boundary with farmland is marked by a low red-brick sunken wall with matching copings. The ground drops towards the wall so that the copings are hidden from the house. In the centre of the wall is a timber pedestrian gate aligned with the centre of the house reached by a short flight of steps, flanked by stubby brick piers probably of C19 date with stone ball finials on plain stone capitals. The wall north of the gatepiers has gone and

has been replaced by metal fencing. The lawn is crossed by a central gravel walk aligned with the porch.

North side of this planted area, a strip of mature mixed planting, containing a large cedar, separates it from the north section of moat, recently cleared. The moat is divided from the kitchen garden to the north by a wide grassed path and a substantial yew hedge.

Continuing anti-clockwise between the north-east wing and the main range of outbuildings a path connects back to the open north-west side of the forecourt, passing to the east of a tennis court north-east of the main approach inside the gate piers. With lawn verges, this approach is bounded on its south-western side by a further wedge of mixed planting which abuts the orchard to the north west of the tall yew hedge. This wedge includes a tall Douglas fir close to the west corner of the pleasure grounds.

The current framework is essentially of the mid-C19 incorporating the surviving moat arms from the earlier layout. There are no other earlier features extant. The planting has been modified in extent since then.

## **PARK**

The park lies west and south of the house and pleasure grounds. It contains the inner ends of both drives after they have crossed farmland respectively to the west and south-east.

The park is laid to pasture but has lost most of its trees (OS late C19, early C20 and APs). It descends gently to a small brook marking the south boundary. A line of poplars lines the north-east boundary of the park near the west drive as it starts to descend towards the house. A square of trees to the south, first evident on the 1859 map, survived at least until 1976 (AP). An avenue formerly aligned on the south-west side of the house was recorded in the C18-C20, but only a decayed tree stump survives, in the field south-west of the park. This outer field contains the rectangular moat associated with the southern portion of the lost village of Doddershall. Its gentle rising form away from the brook affords views back to the house, its fine south-west wing being prominent.

Much tree cover was lost in the later C20, significantly to Dutch Elm Disease (pers. comm. D. Prideaux. By 1947 (RAF AP) the square planting survived along with some trees to the north-west but the axial south-west avenue had almost gone. By 1976 (British Gas AP) trees to the south and to the north-west were much denuded, but a line of trees survived along on the north side of the west drive.

## **KITCHEN GARDEN**

The trapezoidal, 0.5ha. kitchen garden lies beyond the north-east boundary of the pleasure grounds marked by the moat. The kinked south-east boundary is the longest side of c.66m. It has no walls and does not appear to have had any.

The south-west boundary runs c.40m north-east of the house alongside the north moat, and the garden is hedged to the north-east and south-east against the field boundaries.

A grass path leads across the kitchen garden from south-west to north-east leading through a field gate in the north-east boundary to a grassed lane running alongside, forming part of the approach before the alterations c.1890. A grass path running north-east to south-west alongside the northern moat on the south side of the kitchen garden is flanked by mature planting on the outside of the south-west border separating the kitchen garden from the northern moat. Brick outbuildings stand adjacent to the north-west border; one has been rebuilt as a residence together and there is an early C20 greenhouse (disused).

Nearly half of the north-west of the kitchen garden, is now (2017) a domestic garden. It includes a Millennium Garden garden (2000) laid out with box and yew topiary interspersed with gravel paths, and having a tall central metal sculpture in a circular pond. The south-east boundary of this half is marked by a tall yew hedge and archway leading to the south-east half which is laid to lawn.

The garden shows minimal traces of its previous use as a kitchen garden. The first evidence of this area as a kitchen garden (OS 1880) shows paths around the four sides of the garden enclosing a cruciform pattern of inner paths, in total nine sections. An orchard occupied two of the north-east sections, with a row of trees along the south-east boundary path, with other scattered trees in other sections.

By 1947 (RAF AP) the garden was laid out with a central pathway separating flanking rectangles. By 1976 the garden retained some rectangles (AP). By 1995 (AP) the north-east part was cultivated and laid out with a central path.

## REFERENCES

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2012-04 *Doddershall gun battery (December 2012)*

2013-04 *Doddershall Lodge (December 2013)*

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Prideaux, C., *Guide to Doddershall* (n.d.).

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### Maps

1587 Map of Doddershall, from Waddesdon to Piddington (private collection)

1770 Jeffery's map of Buckinghamshire

1825 Bryant's map of Buckinghamshire

1859 Map of the Manor of 'Doddershall' (private collection)

Ordnance Survey

1813 Ordnance Surveyor's Draft (BL)

OS 25" to 1 mile:

1<sup>st</sup> Edition sheets XII.15 & 16 surveyed 1879 published 1880

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition sheets XII/15 & 16 revised 1898 published 1899

OS 6" to 1 mile 1<sup>st</sup> Edition published 1880

#### Photographs

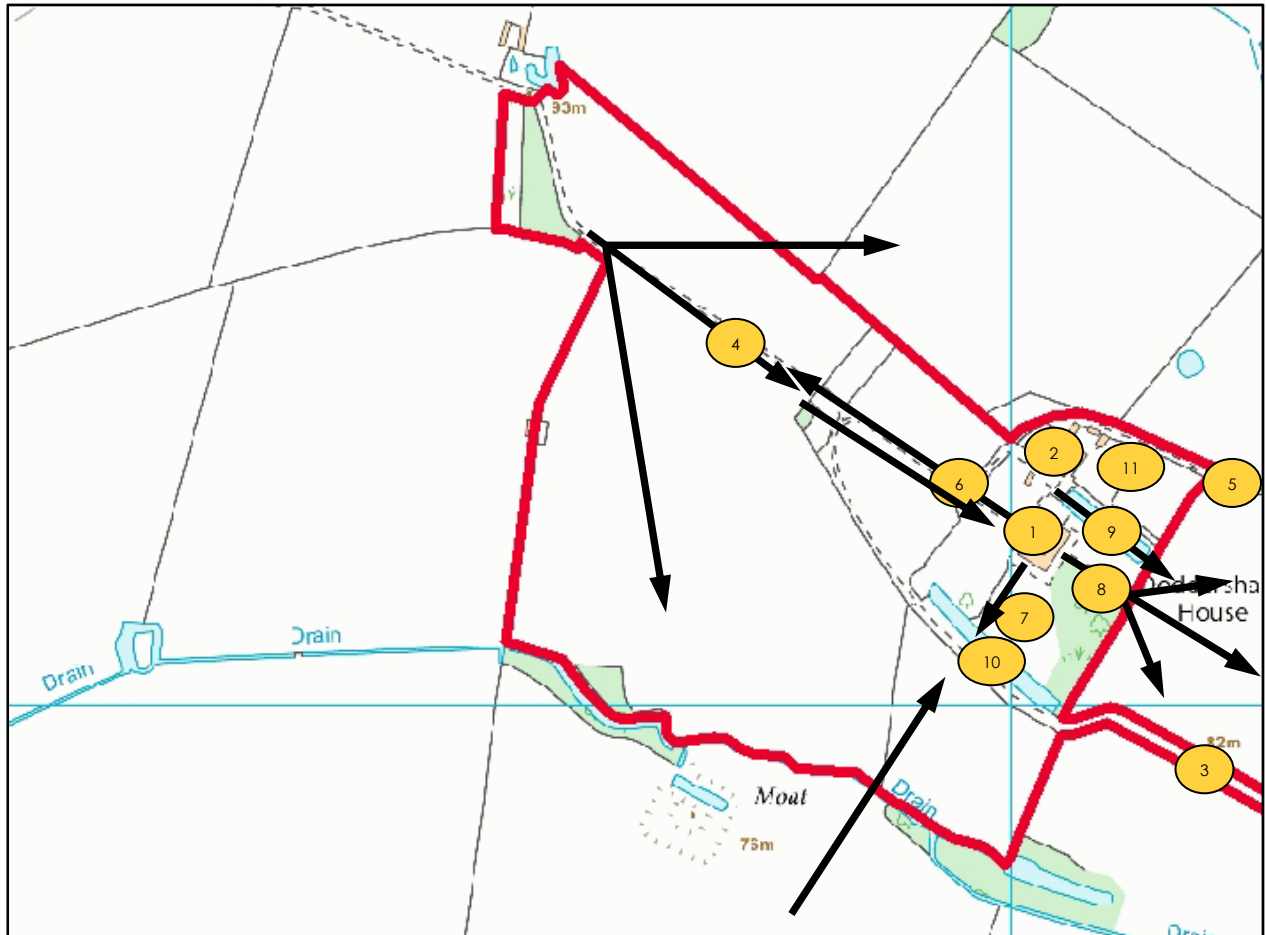
1947 Aerial photograph RAF 1947 (HER)

1976 Aerial photograph British Gas (HER)

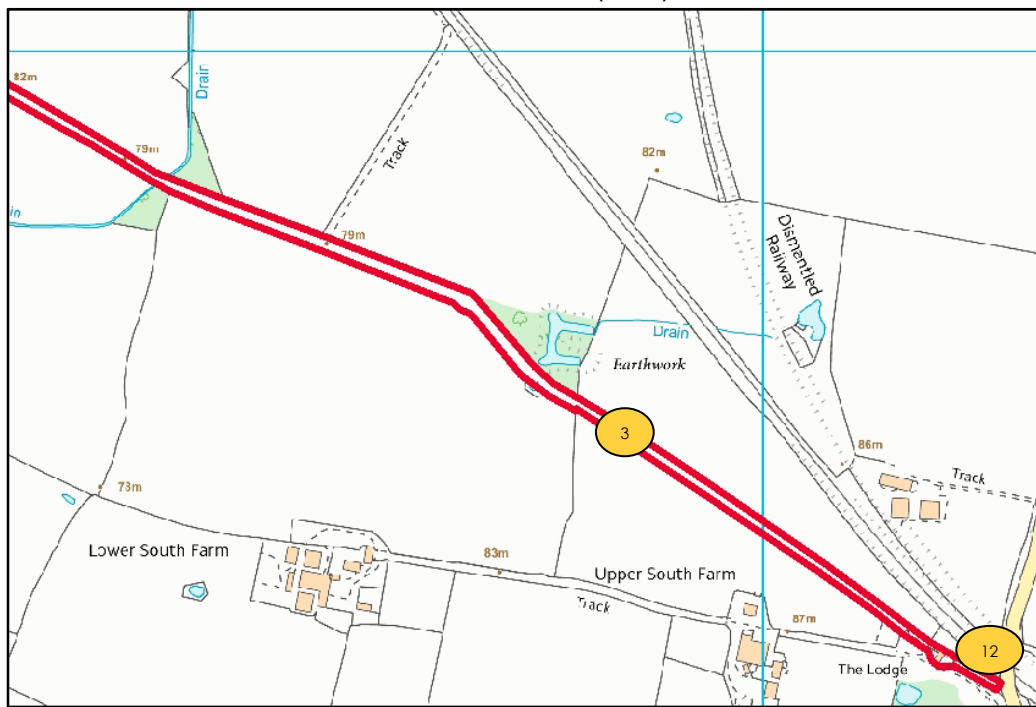
1995 Aerial photographs, Buckinghamshire CC, (HER)

GH, LC Edited SR June 2017

## KEY HISTORIC VIEWS & FEATURES



West half of site (core)



East half of site (main drive)

### Key to numbered features

1. Manor House & forecourt	2. Service yard and stables
3. Main, south-east drive	4. West drive
5. Former main approach (pre-1895)	6. Gate piers
7. South-west lawn	8. South-east lawn
9. North moat	10. South moat
11. Kitchen garden	12. Lodge and main, south-east gateway

## CURRENT IMAGES



Lodge on east drive (c.1900) (left); the entrance to the western drive (right).



Entrance along main east approach (left); west approach looking north-west (right).





View south across to Lodge Hill (Waddesdon Manor) from where the east and west drives meet (left);  
East drive, view north-west (right)



West entrance from park to forecourt (left); south-west lawn from porch (centre);  
Former kitchen garden from south east(right).



Millennium Garden in kitchen garden (left); north moat from north-west (centre);  
Tennis court and service buildings from west drive within pleasure grounds (right).



Recent horsehoe planting on the south west lawn (left);  
The south east lawn, view towards Lodge Hill, Waddesdon including the ball finials of the central gate in the sunken  
wall (right).



Service range and yard, present by 1813 (OSD).