

Understanding Historic Parks and Gardens in Buckinghamshire

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research & Recording Project

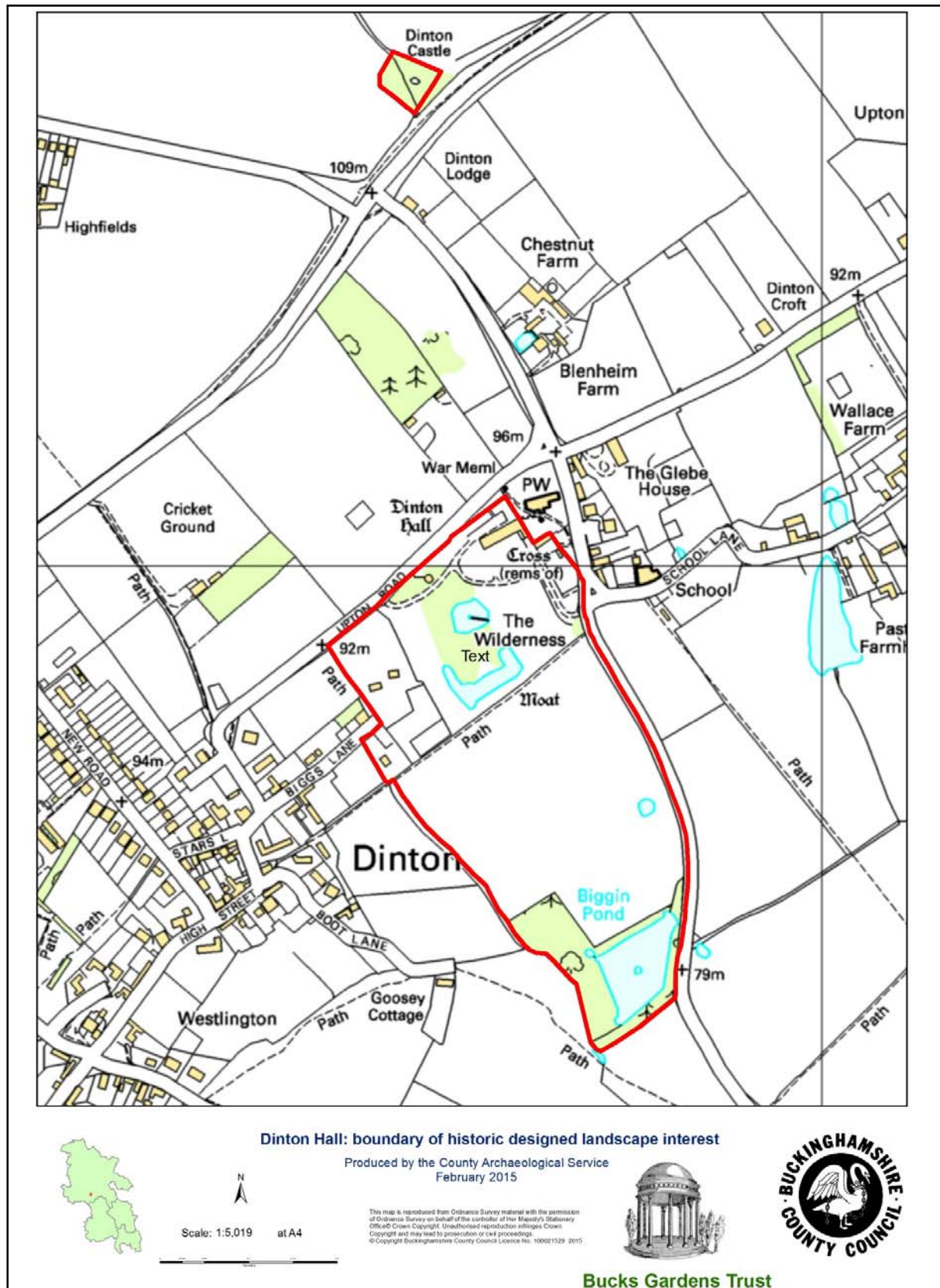


Dinton Hall June 2015



Bucks Gardens Trust Association of
Gardens
Trusts

HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY





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Scale: 1:5,163 at A4

Dinton Hall: 2006 aerial photograph

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February 2015



Bucks Gardens Trust



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 (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 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 *Register of Parks & Gardens of special historic interest* 2nd edn.
- A map showing principle 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 Association of Gardens Trusts and funded by BGT with a significant grant from The Heritage Lottery Fund. 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

COUNTY:	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	DINTON HALL BCC HER 0063602000
DISTRICT:	AYLESBURY VALE	
PARISH:	AYLESBURY	
OS REF.:	SP766 110	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Overview: A typical garden, pleasure ground and small park for a manor house with medieval origins and fabric from various phases, that survives largely intact. The key surviving ornamental period is the mid- and later C18 initiated by Sir John Vanhattem and developed by his successors into the C19, including garden buildings, and a complex wilderness retaining mature trees, water features and mounds. The ensemble includes a surprisingly substantial gothic folly (ruined) detached from the main site on the ridge to the north overlooking the River Thame valley and Eythrope Park to the north, and the Chilterns to the south. The documentary evidence for this activity in the form of the 'Occurrences' memorandum is of particular value in identifying the development and significance of the grounds during the C18 and C19. The ensemble survives largely intact, although with the loss of some features such as garden paths and the wilderness formal boundary.

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), including the lost stable block, former structures related to the garden and wilderness, and also lost and extant water features. Potential exists for other lost designed features such as paths in the wilderness shown on historic mapping and in the environs of Biggin Pond in the park.

Architectural interest: A largely intact and typical group of garden structures related to the continuous development of a manor house, including an C18 Garden Room, C16 stone dovecote, various garden walls and gateways, and mid-C19 fishing lodge. The most significant structure to the landscape design is Sir John Vanhattem's detached gothic folly with its visual relationship with the follies of Lord Stanhope's C18 Eythrope estate in the River Thame valley below. Beyond the historic boundary the parish church in its churchyard adjacent to the house is a strong element of the setting.

Artistic interest: The layout is a typical ensemble of garden, pleasure ground and small park for a rural manor house with medieval origins. The successive landscape phases to the early C20 survive largely intact with few losses. The key surviving ornamental period is the mid- and later C18 for Sir John Vanhattem and his C19 successors, including in the pleasure grounds garden buildings, a compact wilderness retaining mature trees, water features and mounds (but having lost paths and formal boundary), and at some distance the substantial and important detached gothic folly (ruined) set in its own landscaped grounds on the ridge to the north overlooking the River Thame valley, Eythrope Park and Nether Winchendon, and to the south the Chilterns over the Vale of Aylesbury.

The folly is unusually fine and large considering the nature of the rest of the landscape, perhaps designed to relate as much to the Eythrope Park eyecatchers as Dinton Hall. John Vanhattem II clearly valued the panoramic views from this site as two of Devis's portraits of him are apparently

taken from this spot before the folly was built. Further down the hillside the views south from the house, lawns below, wilderness and park to the Chilterns over the Vale of Aylesbury are particularly important, also the view north from the Garden Room on the north boundary over fields and formerly to the folly (now obscured by trees). The mature woody planting clothes the framework, including the folly grounds, using species typical for this purpose in the C18 and C19. The village and agricultural setting is largely unchanged since the C18 and C19, with the remains of avenues planted alongside the local roads.

Historic interest: The site has strong associations with local notable families including the C15-C16 Verneys and C17 Maynes, including the Regicide Simon Mayne, as well as in the C18 and C19 the Van Hattem family, largely responsible for the landscape today. The Occurrences memorandum book is a remarkable survival that documents the development of the site during the C18 and C19, helping to identify its landscape significance.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Manor of Dinton was mentioned in the Domesday Book, and was owned by William the Conqueror's brother, Lord Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. (Gibbs). Although there were multiple changes of ownership and the Hall is of medieval origin with some remnants of C14 work, it is recorded that Archbishop Warham c1532 rebuilt it and it was this building that was then altered (*VCH*).

The manor came into the possession of the aristocratic and politically active Verney family C15 & C16 (*VCH*). In 1604 it was sold to Simon Mayne, whose son, also called Simon, was the M.P. for Aylesbury and a Judge. He was very active in local and national politics in the Civil War. When King Charles I was executed, in 1649, supposedly by Johnny Bigg, a clerk from Dinton Hall, Simon Mayne was accused of regicide, and imprisoned in the Tower of London where he died in 1661 (Gibbs). His estates were forfeited to the crown; however his son and heir recovered possession of the manor of Dinton (*VCH*).

In 1727 the Hall was sold to Sir John Vanhattem who developed the gardens and parkland. The development and planting of the estate and landscape are recorded in "The Occurrences Memorandum" (1751 – 1908, CBS), beginning in 1751 when the Vanhattems owned the estate, and continued throughout the Goodall years of ownership (1788 – 1892). Dinton Castle was built as a gothic eyecatcher, 500m north of the Hall in 1769 overlooking Eythrope to the north by Sir John Vanhattem, to house his ammonite and fossil collection.

In 1789 Rebecca Vanhattem, the daughter of Sir John, married Rev. William Goodall, who took over the estate and made alterations to the buildings (Pevsner). The north front courtyard was "converted into a garden with a terrace walk close to a high wall, excluding the house from view, and building a flight of steps down into the house" (Lipscomb, 1847). A walled garden was established and a Wilderness garden area complete with serpentine paths.

The Inclosure map (1803) shows 'a mansion house and gardens, three lakes and Biggin Pond'. Bryant's map (1825) shows a house and garden but very little detail.

Rev. J.J. Goodall became the owner in 1846, and continued the development of the house, garden and parkland including building a fishing lodge west of the lower moat in 1853. By the late 1870s the layout of the estate and avenues was almost as it remains today (OS 1877).

Lieutenant Col. Leibert Goodall took over the ownership in 1886 and made considerable changes including a grass tennis court in the gravelled Court area below the north front of the house (as referred to in "Occurrences"). He relocated the stables to the east of the Ford Road, and built a new drive between the old stable road with a new entrance beyond the pigeon house. Alterations were also made to the living quarters in the Hall. (Occurrences; OS 1900 Land Values Map).

Goodall died in 1918, and Dinton Hall became tenanted initially by Colonel Stuart Hay. It was bought by Sir William Currie, and the land agents, Messrs. J. Carter Jonas & Sons, surveyed the estate for him in 1926. Sir William Currie died in 1961.

In 2004 Dinton Hall was bought by the present owners who have returned it to a single dwelling and renovated and refurbished the Hall and gardens for their own private use.

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, AND SETTING

Dinton Hall is situated 6 km south-west of Aylesbury and 9 km north-east of Thame, 400 m south of the A418 Oxford to Aylesbury Road. It is in the Vale of Aylesbury, and divides the villages of Dinton to the east from Westlington to the west. The 13 ha site is set in an area of gently south-sloping open farmland with views to the south of the distant Chiltern Hills.

Much of the site is hedged, with occasional mature deciduous trees, including yew and box, apart from the northern boundary which is formed by Upton Road linking Westlington and Dinton. The northern boundary is marked by a rubblestone wall and pedestrian gateway (listed grade II), which at the east end returns south alongside the churchyard of the C12 church of St Peter and St Paul. The wall of the eastern wing of the hall forms part of the western boundary of the churchyard. The wall continues south 1½-2 m high, to the south east gateway on the Ford Road.

A short length of C19 metal park fencing (erected by Lt L E Goodall in 1888 (Occurrences)) survives by Moat Cottage (formerly known as the Fishing Lodge) 280m south-west of the hall.

Formerly many roads in the locality were lined with avenues of trees by successive owners since at least the C18, particularly the Goodalls in the mid – late C19 (Occurrences). Some retain roadside trees, and this includes the Ford and Upton Roads along the eastern and northern boundaries of the Hall respectively.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

The main entrance to Dinton Hall estate is off the Upton Road 160m north-west of the Hall. The gateway is set back off the road flanked by two pairs of stone piers set into curved stone walls linked to the boundary wall. The outer C18 piers (listed grade II) are of ashlar stone with bonded ball finials on ogee plinths. It seems that the inner pair, in a similar style supporting the modern iron gates and adjacent curved walling is recent.

The C18 gate piers were moved from an earlier gateway (OS 1877) in the north boundary wall 90m metres to the east. Between 1890-93 the drives and entrances were altered by Lt. Col. L. Goodall when the “old stables and coach houses....full of rats” (Occurrences 1893) south-east of the Garden Room (north boundary wall, north east of the Hall, 80m from the pedestrian gate) were demolished and associated buildings built east of the Hall on a detached site between the Ford Road and the Vicarage Garden (OS 1900). A new “Drive between the old stable road and new entrance beyond Pigeon House” was built and on the north side of the Hall the “Court dug out from 4 to 5½ feet to make a new entrance to the North door”. On “the south side [he] turfed up the old drive and made new walks straight & regular” (Occurrences; OS 1900).

The main gravelled drive curves from the main gateway 60m south-east through mature trees, past shrubbery, the Wilderness and the C16 circular dovecot (listed grade II) to the north front of the Hall and the gravelled rectangular sunken “Court” (as referred to in Occurrences). A narrower gravel spur leads to the south east following the line of the ha-ha enclosing the garden. The 23mx5m Court is laid to gravel from which a lawn slopes steeply northwards up to a C17 terraced walk bordering the 2.5m boundary wall giving views of The Court, the church tower and the Wilderness. Steps from The Court lead up the slope to a C17 arched pedestrian gateway with crenellations and a late C16 door with oak battens (listed grade II) set into the boundary wall and aligned on the house entrance. The C17 flagged stone terrace walk below the north boundary wall links the Hall’s east wing colonnade and churchyard wall to the Garden Room (listed grade II) to the south-west past the pedestrian gateway. The C18 Garden Room, whose outer wall forms part of the boundary wall in the north-west corner of The Court is built on a high rubblestone plinth, the upper storey of C18 brick with a blocked opening on the west side and an opening to the east above steps down to The Court.

The south-east gravel spur drive sweeps past the south park side of its retaining wall of rubblestone with stone coping and enclosed garden (listed grade II), to join the south drive 20 metres south-east from the house taking in southerly views of the Wilderness, Long Close parkland and the distant Chilterns. In the west side of the enclosed garden, possibly marking the south end of the demolished stable block, is a step down leading to the Pleasure Garden and Wilderness. In the centre of the ha-ha is a pair of C17 brick gate piers with moulded cornice cups and ball finials (listed grade II), this being a former entrance from the semi-circular drive below the south front of the house (Inclosure map 1803; OS 1877). The south drive leads north-east to a range of garages and a service area following the line of the C19 drive. The drive turns south parallel with the kitchen garden wall opening onto the Ford Road via modern gate piers and gates.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING

Dinton Hall (listed grade II*) stands to the north-east corner of the site abutting the C12 church in the churchyard to the east. The Hall is half an H plan with wings extending to the south and a C19 service wing on the east; the majority is two storeys plus attics. The west wing and the main south and east elevation of the service wing fronting the churchyard are built of rubblestone with the remainder in late C16 brick. The roof is decorated in a zigzag design of red-brown and plain yellow clay tiles with many diagonally set chimneys. The north front of the Hall is the present entrance front and the front door is aligned on the central block of gabled bays and the arched gateway. The front is principally C17 in origin with later alterations and overlooks the Court (forecourt).

The south front is the present garden front. Most of this south front represents 1855-57 amendments to an earlier structure with C21 developments to the east wing facing the garden terrace. It is unclear whether the main entrance was at any point before the C19 on this south side but possible. The east service wing facing the church yard has a doorway directly into churchyard.

The Hall is of medieval origin with the earliest part possibly C14 when the building had a stone open hall aligned east-west. With successive owners there were many additions based upon the rebuild in C16 for the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham (*VCH*) including alterations in C17 by the Mayne family and the Vanhatterns in the C18 and Goodalls in the C19. Between 2004-10 the present owners restored and refurbished the Hall returning the building to a single house and an extension for a swimming pool and new conservatory on the south east wing.

The stables were resited in the late C19 detached from the main grounds, to the east of the Ford Road where they now stand near the detached kitchen garden area (outside historic boundary).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUND

The gardens and pleasure grounds are situated to the west and south of the Hall. The garden to the south is laid largely to informal lawn, enclosed to the south by the curved ha-ha (dated C17 by Pevsner) and drive, to an area formerly called "The Velvet Lawn" (R. Gibbs) leading south to the "ornamental mound to hide the footpath" (Occurrences 1888.) The south drive is screened by mature shrubbery and trees, including box near the south east gate. Against the south front of the Hall is a recent formal layout including a large terrace with a rectangular reflecting pool.

The rectangular Wilderness lies south-west of the Hall beyond the garden buildings. It is entered from the west side of the garden via a step in the ha-ha which leads to the east side of the Wilderness. The Wilderness survives as a planted area but has lost its formal boundaries. It is laid out informally with mixed ornamental mature deciduous trees, mature yews and Scots pine. It is bounded to the south by a U-shaped moat, which is linked to the north to an oval pond towards the centre of the Wilderness. The pond has an island with an ornamental summer house and bridge.

A raised earthwork, possibly a garden mount, stands adjacent to the south-west bank of the pond. It is apparently referred to in the Occurrences in the C18 and shown on the OS 1877 map and may have had a view to the south over the park to the Chilterns and north-east over the pond towards the Hall. Another mound viewpoint north of the moat was possibly screened by laurel (Occurrences). The path network as shown on C19 maps and noted in the Occurrences is no longer evident but may remain below ground level. The Wilderness in the C18 & C19 formerly contained a range of garden buildings including an alcove and Wilderness Summer House (Occurrences 1773, 1796 & 1815; OS 1877) but these have gone and their form is unclear. The Wilderness is bound to the west by a rectangular lawn, Calvis Close, which has been partially developed and formerly contained "a croquet lawn and timbered walks" (Carter Jonas – 1921 Report & Evaluation for Col. Stuart Hay for a lease. Includes plan CBS) and a tennis court (OS 1920 & Occurrences) This lawn was bounded to the south by an extension westward of the Lower Moat filled in 1890; the mid-C19 fishing lodge (now known as Moat Lodge) terminates its west end on the site of the Dinton hermit John Biggs' cave.

Adjacent to the north of the Wilderness is an area of former orchard (OS 1877) which contains a C16 circular stone dovecot (listed grade II) and since 1892 the “favourite animals cemetery”. The east side was until the 1890s bounded by the former stable block and associated buildings. At the north-east corner stands square-plan The Garden House (listed grade II) linking the area to The Court which formerly had views across this area to the Wilderness.

Entries concerning The Wilderness are numerous in the Occurrences Memorandum (1751-1908) with the first dated 1756 when Sir John Vanhattem moved “firs” to the Wilderness from the farmyard. Reference to its earlier history by the Reverend W Goodall as “formerly the Orchard” which had “become an impenetrable thicket” is noted in 1788 with the “first Serpentine Walk from the Garden Gates to the Wilderness” with more being added between 1789 -1796. Laurel was used for screen planting behind a bench, improvements were made to the Wilderness Wall and boundary, gates replaced from The Court and Long Close, a fir walk was planted plus apples and a Windsor pear. In the C19 The Wilderness entries show that large amounts of box was planted plus oak, poplar, beech, laurel, and almond, honeysuckle, ribes, laurel, winter aconites and throatwort and trees replaced after storms, new walks created, one through ‘Perrywinckle Bank’.

In 1901 Gibbs wrote, “The gardens and wilderness adjoining the Hall are notable as containing a remarkably fine collection of choice and out-of-the way shrubs and flowers, making it a place of great interest to the botanist...there are fishponds and low-lying meads.” The Wilderness continues to be the main feature of the garden and pleasure gardens. It is a good example of its type, a C18 ornamental woodland of mixed species formerly with paths cut through it, an attractive area in which to wander or pause and to take in designed views, as per the C18 purpose of such a garden feature.

PARK

The park, which in the C19 was called “Long Close” (1803 enclosure map), extends south of the Wilderness and garden for some 400m, from which it is separated by an ornamental mound and fenced public footpath.

The approximately rectangular park, which is mainly pasture, contains the sparse remains of scattered deciduous trees, in particular an old oak tree that stands at the south-east corner. A photograph taken in 1880 shows a mature tree in a similar position. (Buckinghamshire County Council Historic Photographs ref. ph Dinton 9). In the C19 the park was planted with scattered deciduous trees, most of which have gone (OS 1877).

At the southern boundary of the park is Biggin Pond, which was regularly well-stocked with fish (Occurrences 1803). It has four straight sides with enlarged corners for fishing purposes and has altered little since 1803. The shape of Biggin Pond is reminiscent of a duck decoy, although whether it was used as such is unclear. A path weaves around the pond through mature deciduous trees, yew trees and box which shelter the site on the east and south sides. A plantation of C20 poplars lines the west side, with a clump of mature trees on an island in the centre of the pond.

The pond is leased to a local fishing group (2014).

KITCHEN GARDEN

The walled kitchen garden (c50m x 26m) lies south-east of the east wing of the Hall, immediately south of the garage block. Its west wall bounds the garden. The rubblestone walls are lined with brick and vary between 1½ m at the southern end and 2½ m high at the north. The main entrance to the garden is in the north-west corner from the garage block. Another entrance, with brick built piers and ball finials (listed grade II), gives access along the west wall. Evidence on the exterior of the east wall indicates a previous entrance which gave access to a former detached section of the kitchen garden which was situated on the eastern side of Ford Road by the stables and coach house, developed after 1890.

At present (2015) there are three pathways radiating from a central water feature separating areas of lawn. There is a modern greenhouse, small building for storage, shrub borders, and fruit trees in the garden, this is a modern layout.

The kitchen garden is first mentioned in 1790 when Revd W Goodall “planted white Magnum Bonum Plums in the Kitchen garden”, and in 1793 he “Raised North East Corner of Kitchen Garden Wall” (Occurrences). Many other plantings, mainly trees, are mentioned. It is first shown on the 1803 Inclosure map. The 1926 plan (Carter Jonas) marks a well in the south east corner of the garden, which no longer exists.

Formerly a glass house stood against the western wall (image 1905). Sale particulars of 1920 state that there were 2 glasshouses, whilst in 1987 there were 4 greenhouses (sale particulars).

OTHER LAND

Dinton Castle (listed grade II) is a C18 gothic eye-catcher situated to the north of the A418, Oxford to Aylesbury Road, 500 m north of Dinton Hall. It stands in an enclosure within agricultural land surrounded by mature trees. Its position on the crest of an east-west ridge gives panoramic views to the north and west across the Thame valley towards Eythrope Park, Waddesdon and Aylesbury and south west towards Dinton Hall, though much of the view is now screened by trees. The Castle is linked to Dinton Hall by Ford Road which is lined by a 350m avenue of mature and recently planted trees.

Dinton Castle was built in 1769 by Sir John Vanhattem as an ‘Eye Catcher’ and to house his fossil and ammonite collection. The octagonal two storey building with three storey circular towers to east and west is built of limestone with a red brick lining. The building is now (2015) a shell, but there is evidence of fireplaces in the western tower and a staircase in the eastern, and many ammonites are set into the exterior walls. A full archaeological survey was carried out in 2009 by Northamptonshire Archaeology. [Addendum 2020: A Conservation Management Plan for Dinton Castle was prepared in 2016. This was done as part of the 'Grand Designs' restoration completed during 2017-18.]

The enclosure, of c.0.25 ha, is raised by about 1m above the field to the east. It is planted with several mature oak, beech, Scots pine and holly probably remaining from the C18 ornamental planting with which Sir J. Vanhattem surrounded his castle, in its own enclosure. It was prominent in views from various parts of the Eythrope estate adjacent, whose park was developed initially by Sir

William Stanhope in the early-mid-C18. He too built Gothic eye catchers which were inter-visible from the castle across the valley of the River Thame. However, its former prominence from both the north and south is somewhat obscured by the mature trees which surround it.

The genesis of the Castle is well recorded. In 1769 a note is made in the Occurrences that Vanhattem 'laid the Foundation Stone of Dinton Castle with Mr. Mrs Andrew and Mr Lovell'. In 1772 he "planted firs at Dinton Castle, and one Lacombe [Lucombe] Oak" (a recently introduced hybrid with the cork oak) and again "Planted Hollies round the Castle for a hedge." Further plantings are recorded, and also the finds showing that the site was a Saxon burial area of the C6 (Pevsner), when they "found in trenching the ground about the Castle a glass cup, a skeleton and many human bones, broken spears and bits of swords and other weapons" (The Occurrences). The building was occupied in the C18. In July 1786 Brother Barrett, who lived there, was told that he could not continue to hold Baptist meetings at the Castle. (HER)

WHO WAS JOHN VANHATTEM II?

Dinton Hall was sold in 1727 to John Vanhattem II (d. 1789) who it seems largely laid out the framework of the designed landscape as it survives. John II was of Dutch origin and settled into the life of his newly-adopted country. Locally in 1760 he became High Sherriff of Buckinghamshire, and was knighted for services to the king in 1765. He would have been acquainted with the County gentry and aristocracy and was something of an antiquarian and natural historian (housing his fossil and ammonite collection in Dinton Castle).

His ancestor, Liebert Vanhattem (1609-1661) an officer in the Dutch fleet of Admiral de Ruyter (1607-1676) married the Admirals' daughter (Lipscombe). Liebert's son John Vanhattem I (1645-1713) came to England it seems with William of Orange, King William III (1650-1702) and married Lydia Davall in 1693. In 1690 he commissioned from Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723) the court painter two half-length portraits of King William and Queen Mary for the Council Room at Greenwich Hospital for Seamen. The National Maritime Museum notes that the portrait of William III in its collection was given in 1774 by Sir John II.

John I had two children, John II (d 1789) and Lydia Catherine, later Duchess of Chandos (1692-1750). In 1736 Lydia became the third wife of James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos (1673-1744) who created the palatial Cannons and its gardens in Middlesex (demolished 1747). As a widow she moved to Shaw House near Newbury, Berkshire. The Duke is chiefly remembered on account of his close connections with the composer Handel, as a major patron.

John II commissioned three portraits of himself as conversation pieces by the leading painter of this genre, Arthur Devis. At least two of these were set at the heart of his Dinton estate. One, painted c.1760-61 is in the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley which notes that 'Van Hatten [sic] lounges against a tree on his lands in Dinton Park ...; he's the very image of a relaxed country squire. Devis devotes just as much time to the setting as to van Hatten, which the patron would doubtless have expected and approved, since the scene represented him as propertied and affluent. The small scale of conversation-pieces such as this one meant that viewers most often experienced them in living spaces within the very estates depicted on the canvas, which reinforced the connections between

the owners' painted and personal worlds. ... Devis painted John II twice in the 1750s and then again ten years later, in this work. According to his records he also executed a version of John II's sister, Lydia, which is unlocated today.' An earlier painting in the Fitzwilliam Museum, dated 1753, shows John II as a noticeably younger man. The third (also 1750s) has not been located.

The two known paintings of John II are of similar composition, designed to show off the extensive setting and Picturesque Chiltern backdrop of Dinton Hall. Both are taken with John II standing on a high point planted with mature trees, probably (if accurately represented) the later site of the Gothic Dinton Castle (1769). The c.1760 painting has an extensive backdrop over Dinton church tower south-east towards the Chiltern scarp in the direction of Chequers park and Cymbeline's Hill. The roofs of Dinton Hall nestle among trees next to the church. The 1753 view is somewhat more fanciful, taken in the more easterly direction towards Aylesbury with an imaginary fortification on what may be intended to be Coombe Hill, and a town or village below.

Clearly John II was a man of taste with many cultural connections who was probably influenced in his landscaping by those in his circle of family and acquaintance.

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Archival Items

Estate Inspection details January 1919. (CBS D63 5/2)

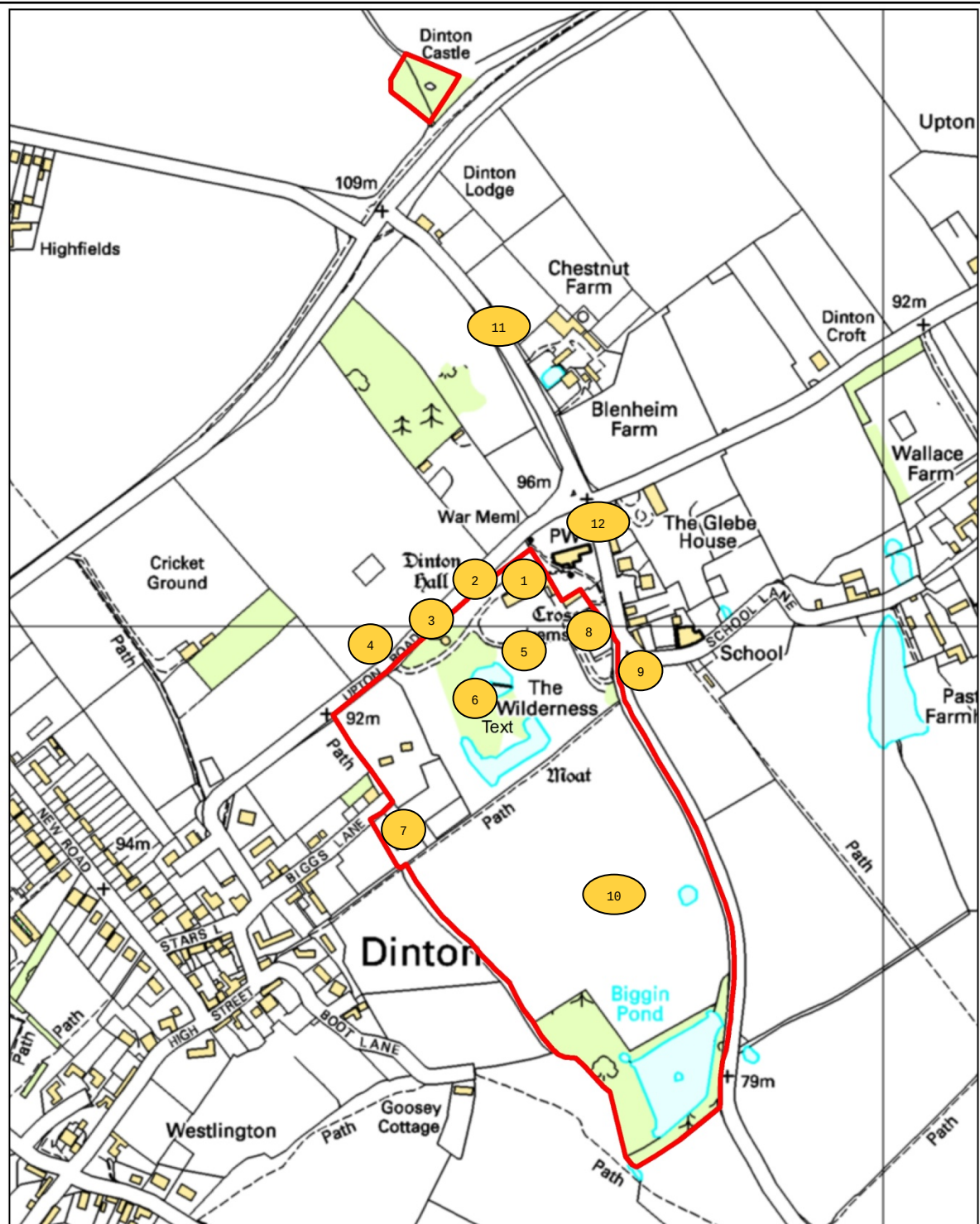
Letting Details February 1920. (CBS D63 5/30)

Dinton Hall report and valuations, Carter Jonas and Sons 1921. (CBS D63/5/3)

The Occurrences & Memorandum records. (CBS D63 5/1 –32)

G Miles, R Haigh, J Timms February 2015; edited SR 30 April 2015; amended CB August 2020

KEY HISTORIC FEATURES



Dinton Hall: boundary of historic designed landscape interest

Produced by the County Archaeological Service
February 2015



Scale: 1:5,019 at A4



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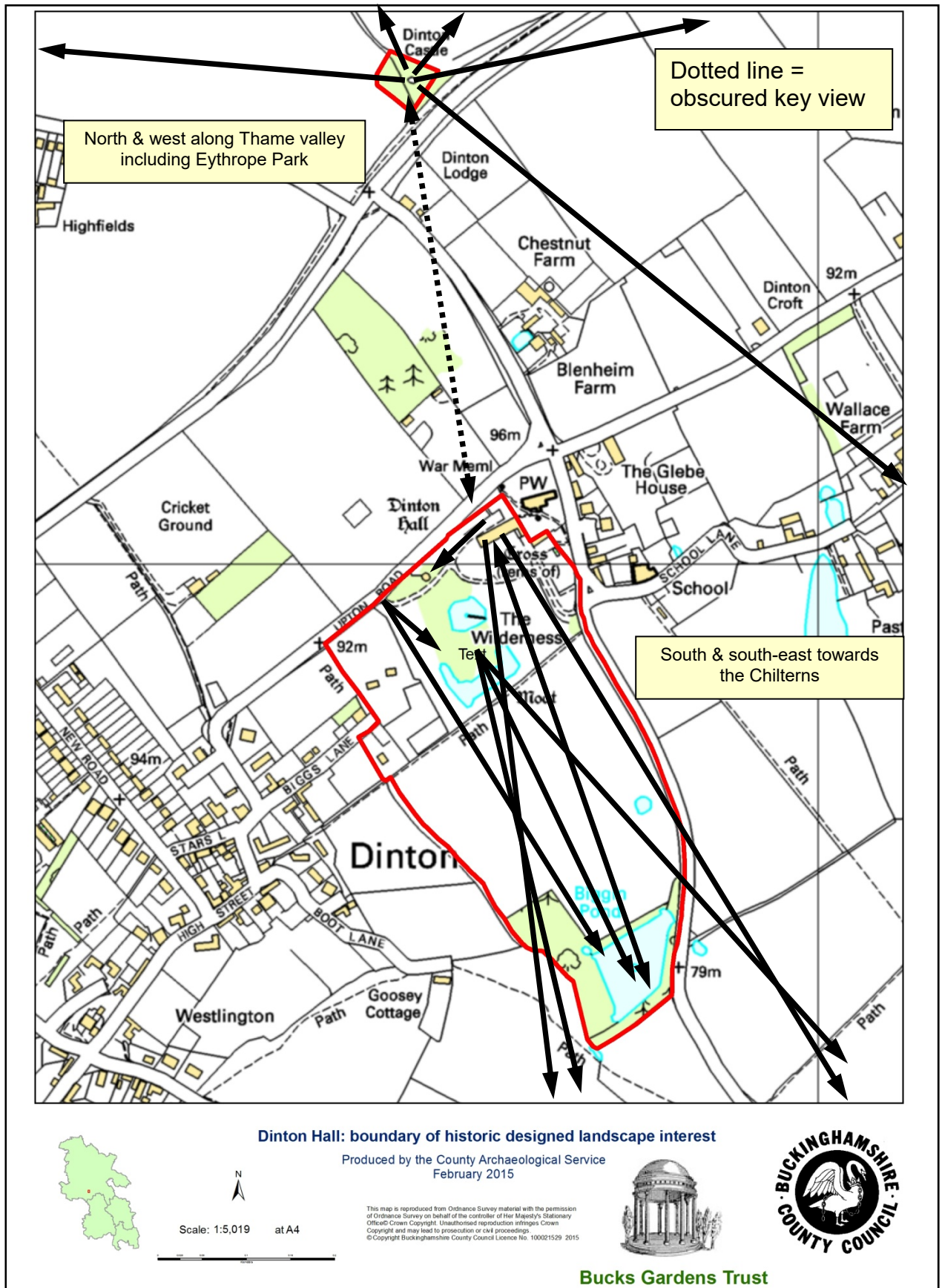


Bucks Gardens Trust

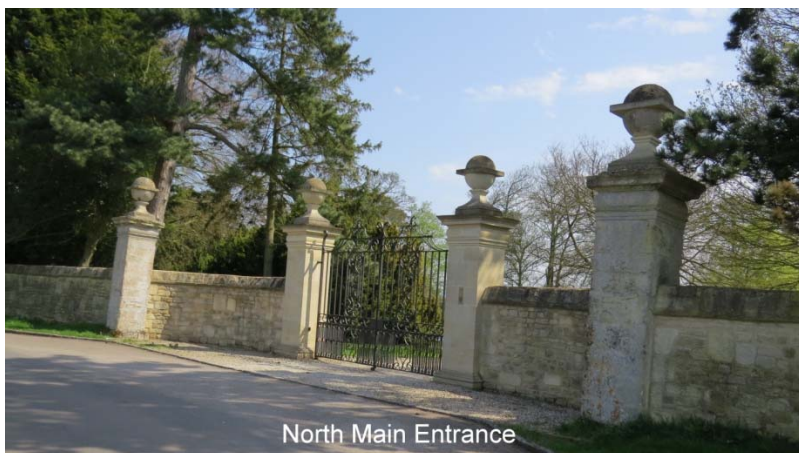
Key to numbered features

1. Dinton Hall and Court	2. Garden Room
3. Dovecote	4. North-west, main entrance
5. Ha-ha & enclosed garden gateway	6. Pleasure ground & wilderness
7. Moat Lodge/Dinton hermit site	8. Kitchen Garden
9. South-east entrance	10. Long Close parkland
11. Ford Road avenue	12. Parish church

KEY HISTORIC VIEWS



KEY IMAGES





View across Pond to Hall



Ancient Oak in Long Close



Biggin Pond



Gate Piers into Walled Kitchen Garden



Kitchen Garden



The South East Entrance



Moat Cottage (formerly The Fishing Lodge)



Dinton Castle