

# Understanding Historic Parks and Gardens in Buckinghamshire

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research & Recording Project



## HAMPDEN HOUSE

September 2020

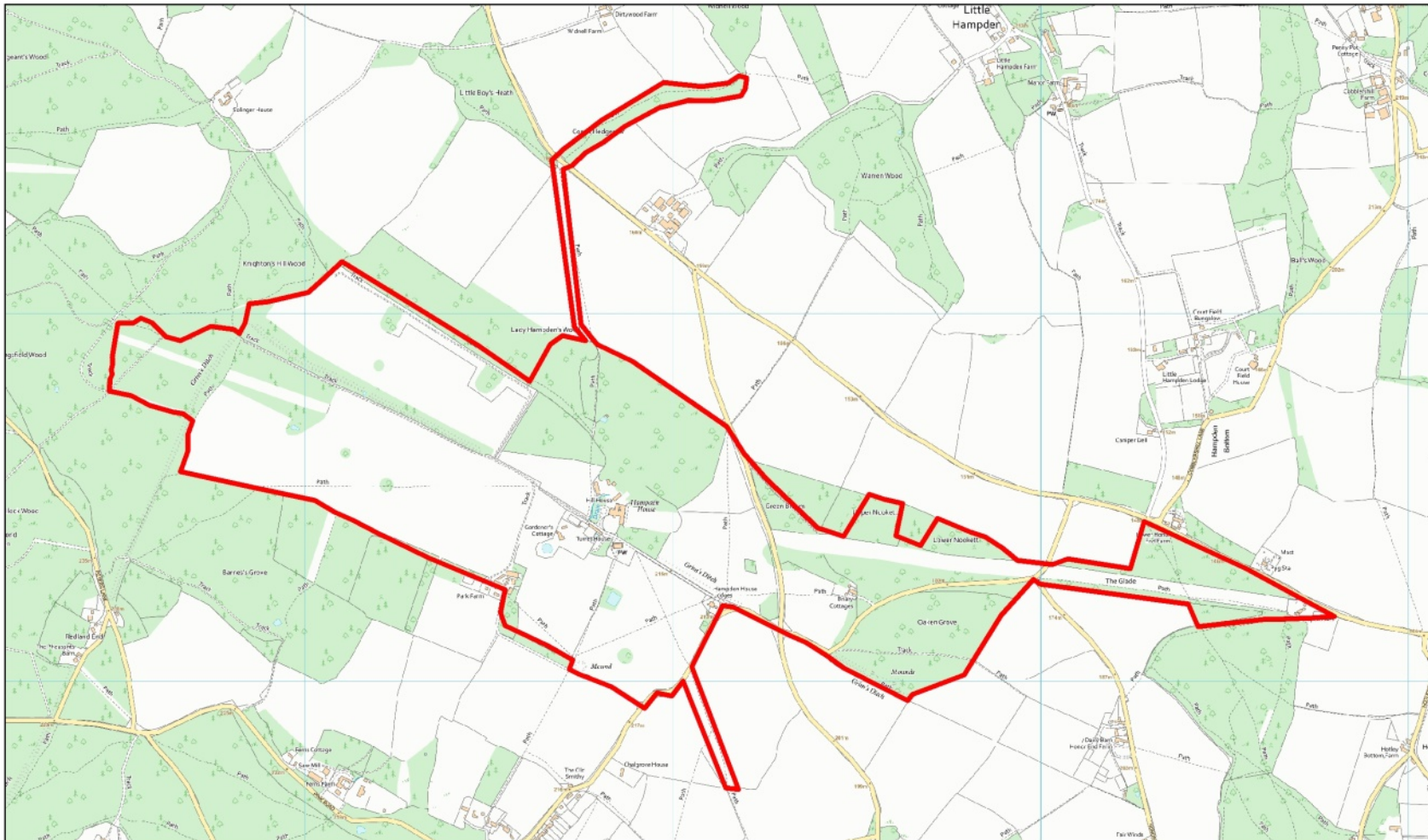


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# HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY



**Hampden House: boundary of historic designed landscape interest**

Produced by the Council Archaeology Service  
June 2020



Scale: 1:13,736 at A4

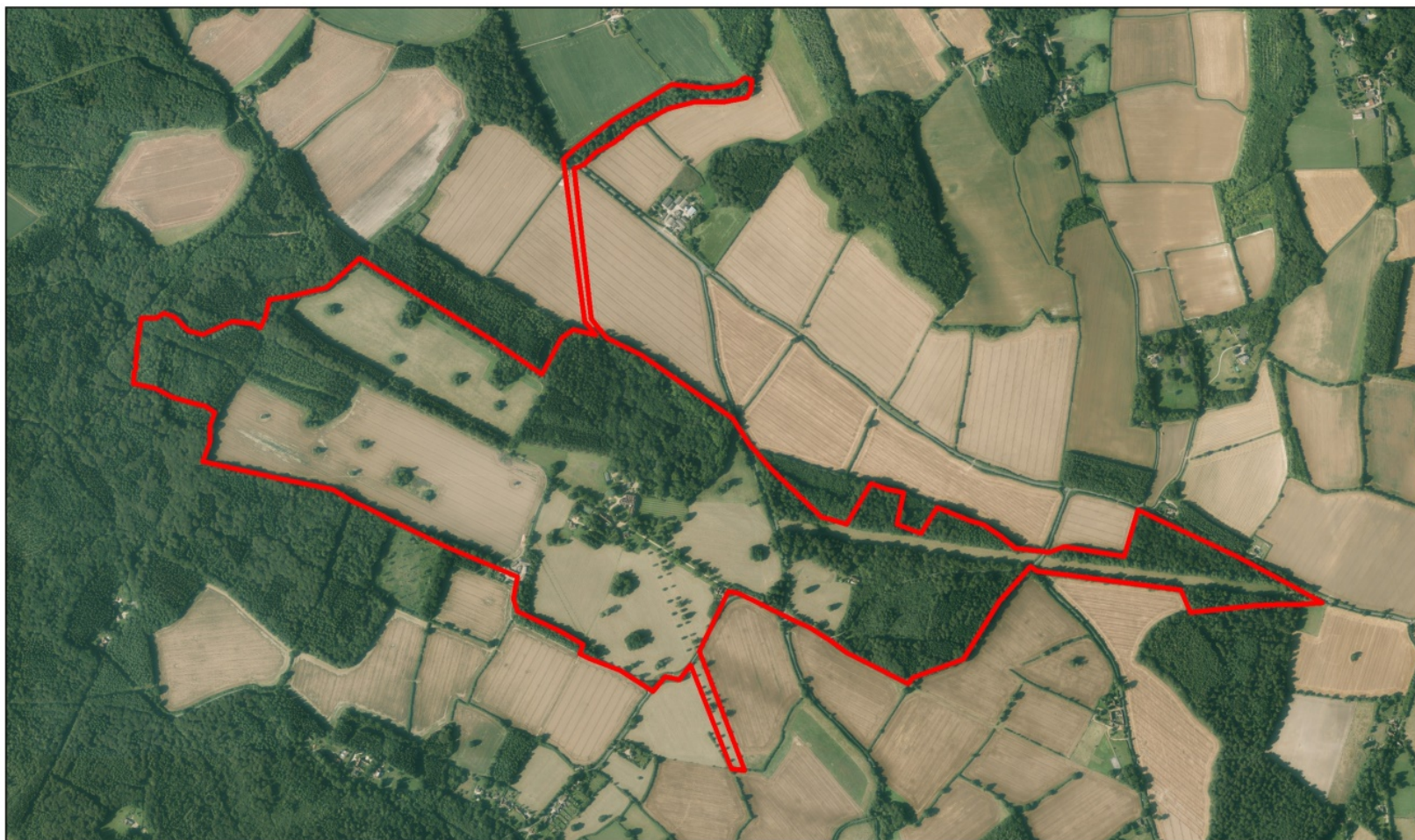


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**Buckinghamshire  
Gardens Trust**





Scale: 1:14,059 at A4



**Hampden House: 2016 aerial photograph**

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June 2020



## 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 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 by BGT in appraising designed landscapes.

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 Planning Policy Framework and including an overview.
- ☐ A written description, derived from documentary research and a site visit, based on the format of 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 funded by BGT, with significant grants from the Finnis Scott Foundation, the Roland Callingham Foundation, BCC (since April 2020 part of Buckinghamshire Council) and various private donors. Buckinghamshire Council also provided significant funding, and help in kind including current and historic mapping and access to the Historic Environment Record. The project is supported by The Gardens Trust.

The Trust thanks 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>SITE NAME: HAMPDEN HOUSE</b>	<b>HER NO: 0457804000</b>
<b>COUNTY: BUCKINGHAMSHIRE</b>	<b>GRID REF: SP 848 024</b>
<b>PARISH: GREAT HAMPDEN</b>	<b>POSTCODE: HP16 9RD</b>

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Overview

A medieval Chiltern manor house, extended and remodelled as a country house in the C16, and again in the 1740s in an early example of Gothick style, considerably predating Horace Walpole's extensive and influential use of it at Strawberry Hill from 1749. Hampden House also predates the use of Gothick elsewhere in Bucks including at Fawley Court (c.1730), West Wycombe (1750s-70s), Medmenham (1750s) and Nether Winchendon (c.1800).

The C18 formal and informal gardens and park overlie a medieval park and woodland with little alteration since then. The layout incorporates C16 and later avenues and vistas embracing the extensive rolling setting, including the impressive 1.5km long Glade, a ride initiated it is believed in 1562 for the visit of Queen Elizabeth in 1563. The designed landscape is one of the more important of its type in Bucks, carried out in successive phases for a family of ancient connection here, and is likely of national significance. The C18 layout survives with minor changes in the C19 and early C20.

### Archaeological interest

Little archaeological investigation has occurred. The potential exists for evidence related to the manor complex, country house and service buildings since the medieval period. Lost garden and ornamental park features may relate to paths, walls, beds, kitchen garden structures, garden buildings including the pinery, two small buildings formerly at the ends of the wing walls and the Hermitage, and other ornamental features evident on maps and images. Evidence may survive of former agricultural structures and practices, and of the medieval park. Grimm's Ditch (SM), a Middle Bronze Age earthwork boundary, has a strong influence on the layout, bisecting the site from west to east. Dane's Camp (SM), a medieval mound, is of high significance with potential for evidence and there are other mounds that may be windmill sites.

### Architectural interest

Hampden House is a fine example of a C16 manor house remodelled and extended in the 1740s to its present form as an impressive country house in romantic Gothick style redolent of the long influence of the family here. The forecourt elevation with its triumphal double height arch creates an impressive arrival opposite the stable block with its battlemented tower. The contemporary outbuildings include the stable block in similar style and attached kitchen garden walls and ice house. Edward Shepherd's brick and flint wing walls framing the great east terrace and lawn are the most important surviving ornamental garden feature. Shepherd was one of the most successful builder-architects of his time. More distantly the important Pepperpot Lodges (1744) frame the seminal view to the distant mansion along The Glade when it was extended in the 1740s, the mid-

C18 ice house, and the Tudor-style mid-C19 lodge at the park entrance. The nearby medieval parish church is prominent on the main drive and in the park.

### **Artistic interest**

The grounds of this major Chiltern country estate reflect the fashionable tastes of the owners, expressed when their wealth permitted, which survive intact. The current layout is based on a major phase in the 1740s when the house was remodelled for the last John Hampden, incorporating earlier formal features, particularly rides and avenues; this was continued by his successor Robert Trevor, and the park was landscaped later in the C18. Mature trees survive throughout including lime, sweet chestnut, plane, oak, an impressive Lebanon Cedar in the forecourt which may be part of the 1740s planting supplied by nurseryman Favin of Thame, and beech, which are particularly fine in Coach Hedgerow. The most important early feature is The Glade originating in 1562 for the visit of Queen Elizabeth, and extended in the 1740s when it was embellished with the Pepper Pot Lodges.

### **Historic interest**

The estate is redolent of the 900-year connection of the Hampdens until the late C20, a family which was influential at Court and in politics for many generations. Queen Elizabeth visited twice, most importantly for the grounds in 1562 when The Glade was initiated. The estate was owned in the mid-C17 by the public hero, the Patriot, John Hampden, who refused to pay Charles I's Ship Tax and died at the Battle of Chalgrove in 1643, but he does not seem to have affected the grounds. The exceptionally rich Hampden archive at the Centre for Bucks Studies (CBS) covers the period 1252-1931 and helps significantly to understand the significance of the designed landscape.

### **HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

The manor of Great Hampden belonged to the same family from before Domesday until its sale in 1982. A vellum roll of 1579 details, *The original begynninge and lynneall Petegree of the name and familie of Hampden and the severall descentes....Hampden being a Lordship and Mannoir scituat on Chiltern Hille, within the Hundred of Aylisbury hath contynned in the possession of one race of Gentleman, the space of six hundred years..takyng the name of the place whereof they were Lordes.* (VCH).

In the C11-13, 400m south of the later site of Hampden House a motte was built, now known as Dane's Camp (SM), overlooking lower ground to the north-west and Grimm's Ditch (SM), a linear earthwork boundary dating from the Middle Bronze Age (1500-1000BC) thought to denote territorial boundaries. Dane's Camp is served by a spring-fed pond and perhaps was later used as an ornamental prospect mound. To the south-east two medieval earthworks in the Oaken Grove on the line of Grimm's Ditch, were possibly windmill sites or C15 lookouts for the deer park.

In the C13/14 Hampden Manor estate expanded (Lipscombe & VCH) using a prominent site to develop the manorial complex including a manor house. This included St Mary Magdalene church overlying Grimm's Ditch and two miles away a rectory (originated in 1291) with access across the field via a footpath later marked by a Lime Avenue. With royal connections in the family, local tradition indicates that King John (reigned 1199-1216) visited, staying in the medieval tower with a bedroom overlooking the area now called King John's Garden, below the south front. The manorial complex boundary included a section of Grimm's ditch passing to the south with further ditches and a park pale, wells and two ponds (Cantor & Hatherly).

In 1446-7 lord of the manor John de Hampden (1420-1458) was granted a Charter to impark 500 acres of land and 100 acres of wood and granted free warren to hunt smaller game (VCH). This large park was probably never securely enclosed or embanked (Cantor). Its features are continually shown on maps from 1741 (Estate Map), with to the west three Park fields, separated by banks, and to the north-east beyond Rignall Road, Old Warren Wood, and Old Warren Close.

A rebuild started by Sir John Hampden V (c.1486-1553) was completed by 1563 by his son, Sir Griffith (1543-91). He completed a new mansion and garden, with brickwork in diaper patterns (Pevsner; Lyson), which formed the basis for the surviving gardens today. In 1562 Griffith ordered a "commodious access" to be cut from the Hampden coach road through the Oaken Grove Wood (Lyson) in preparation for Elizabeth I's visit. In early spring 1563 Elizabeth I was recovering from smallpox so that the length of her stay that year may have been extended to allow her to convalesce and to enjoy the view from her room before going to Bradenham Manor. The Queen also visited in 1592 (Nichols).

The C17 family involvement in politics threatened the house and estate (History of Parliament, 1604-1629). John Hampden VI (1594-1643) opposed the Ship Tax of Charles I and was found guilty. He became the public hero "The Patriot" and died in the Civil War battle of Chalgrove in 1643. John Hampden VII (1653-96) was involved in the "Rye House Plot" and committed suicide.

The family involvement in the 1720 South Sea Bubble crash meant large parts of the estate were sequestrated but Richard Hampden III (1674-1728) the first of the C18 owners, kept the core of the estate including the manor, advowson, capital messuage, park and other land nearby (VCH). Despite this, investment continued in the grounds and gardens: gravel was laid for roads and paths, fruit trees were planted, garden frames altered and mended and cauliflowers and quinsy bean seeds planted but building work was halted (Hampden Estate Wood Book, 1696-1706, D-MH/30/5).

In 1728 John Hampden VIII (1696-1754), MP, the second of the C18 owners and last of the direct line of Hampdens, inherited. He reversed the family's fortunes to some degree and had funds to improve the mansion and grounds, being one of those leading the fashionable Gothick taste in the 1740s.<sup>1</sup>

A storm of c.1730 extensively damaged the mansion and grounds (Pevsner), becoming the catalyst for a twenty year programme of building, refurbishment and improving the grounds. The expenditure from 1739-53 is recorded by the steward Henry Harding, with the most entries and a considerable sum relating to the grounds (CBS D-MH Day Books, ledgers and Bundles). After the storm remedial work included 686 trees planted; Edward Bifsill's bill for planting cost £31/8/0; in October 1740, 130 lime trees were bought at 1/3d a piece, paid to Mr Favin of Thame (D-MH/33/2).

In 1741, just after the outset of these works, Joseph Colbeck, surveyor, drew up *A Map of the Manor of Great Hampden in the County of Bucks: belonging to John Hampden Esq ... 1741* (private collection) with an accompanying *Hampden & Kimble Survey Book* (D-MH/28/4). The colour-washed estate map records the C15 park and warren, and the mansion complex and ornamental grounds including the east lawn, walks, rides and avenues, kitchen garden, bowling green and woodland. The

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<sup>1</sup> By the sale of outlying properties, he retained Great Hampden and Wendover, with its parliamentary interest; and, though he wrote to his steward in 1737 that he had 'been cheated out of a vast sum', his brother's debts to the Crown were cleared or written off by 1739. Returned as a Whig for Wendover in 1734 he was granted a lucrative place, but said little. He sold his Wendover manors and interest to Ralph, Lord Verney, with whom, at the cost of six guineas a vote, he was returned in 1741. Walpole wrote that Hampden hated the 'cousinhood', i.e. Pitt, Lyttelton, and the Grenvilles of Stowe and Wotton. At his death in 1754 he was receiving a secret service pension of £1,000 a year. History of Parliament online.



park was not yet landscaped. Five rides/avenues radiated from the mansion. These were dominated by the Glade to the east towards Great Missenden, with an extension sketched beyond Oaken Grove Wood from the Hampden Road to Rignall Road and the proposed Pepperpot Lodges (built 1744).

Between 1739-53 more than 3,000 trees were planted including fruit, lime, yew and other specimen trees sourced from Mr. Favin who was clearly a nurseryman of some standing, locally at least. In 1742 Favin supplied replacement lime, ash and fruit trees (D-MH 29/5).

Building work included the completion of projects started before 1739 in the Gothick style (Pevsner), predating Horace Walpole's celebrated Strawberry Hill, started in 1749. In 1740-41 (D-MH 33/7) bricks, tiles and scaffolding were ordered for the arcade/cloister at the back of the south-east wing, raising and reroofing the Old Porch and completing on the new west front a Gothick porch. A ha-ha was being dug in March 1743 (D-MH/29/4). In 1743-4 new work and additions included two *pepperpot* lodges and *Iron gates 10 foot 3 inches x 10 foot high and the width between the posts is 10 foot* (D-MH/29/6), a brewhouse, thatched hermitage and in May 1744 four statues. In January 1745 red and blue bricks, 12 loads of stone and 97 ft long coping were delivered for a new summerhouse but its location is unclear (D-MH/29/7). In May 1745 Edward Shepherd (d. 1747), while surveyor to the building works, supervised William Smith building the curved brick walls with 5 blind arches of bonded flint flanking the terrace walk (Colvin, 865; D-MH/33/7). This took 6 weeks. Shepherd was an architect and builder whose other projects included, in London, Shepherds Market, Grafton Street and the Grosvenor Estate.

In this period, the easterly Glade was extended and planted, the kitchen garden doubled in size, partly walled, and stocked with fruit trees, asparagus beds, cucumbers, strawberries. Regular hampers of garden produce were sent to London from 1748 via the coach from Wendover. Yew hedges and trees were planted, gravel paths and lawns laid, and the bowling green and ha-ha improved. In 1742 the Great Court (seemingly the area of King John's Garden) was levelled and re-laid. Home Grove Wood had a number of paths/rides and viewing areas with the north-west section referred to as Ladies' Grove (1741 Estate Map; Sale Catalogue 1847).

In 1748 Favin supplied 56 Scotch firs and 100 flowering shrubs and 2/6d was paid to mend the *spout* (fountain) in the garden (D-MH/29/8). In 1752 the Duke of Portland supplied pineapples, probably from Bulstrode Park near Beaconsfield, for a pinery hot house being erected costing £18/19/5 (D-MH/29/11). Fourteen loads of tan bark were acquired to 'fill up pitt' with a further supply from Wycombe in 1753.

In 1753 the third Georgian Hampden, Robert Trevor (cr. Viscount Hampden 1776, d.1783), inherited the estate and took the Hampden name & arms. He may have collaborated with his predecessor over the development of the estate and Robert continued with this. In 1755 a new garden with flowering shrubs and turfed shrubbery was developed. Exotic fruit and vegetables included cucumber, melons, and pineapples regularly sent to the London house (D-MH/39/53). The ha-ha was maintained, trees replaced and the bowling green kept in use. In 1757 he replaced the Head Gardner Tipson with Owen as he had found the gardens 'disappointing' (D-MH/39-64f, Letters to Harding). In 1760 a thatched icehouse was built north of the mansion (Beamon & Roaf).

In 1783 Thomas Hampden-Trevor 2<sup>nd</sup> Viscount Hampden (1746-1824) inherited the estate, his family home being Blickling Norfolk (VCH). He maintained the gardens, bowling green and grounds and repaired the ha-ha. By 1812 (OSD) much of the landscape remained as in 1741 (Estate Map) but the



park had been landscaped to the west, south and east, retaining three of the avenues. The line of the present Hampden to Rignall Road, across the Glade, was a track. West of this the north drive linked the west front of the mansion with Rignall Road and beyond was Coach Hedgerow plantation. By 1824 (CBS/L394.88 *The Mirror*), the mansion was occupied by the Land Steward.

In 1824 George Robert Hobart-Hampden, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl (1789-1849) inherited the estate (Sheahan). The Head Gardener 1824-1830, James Robertson won prizes at the Aylesbury Florist Horticultural Society (D-MH/41). By 1839 (Tithe Map) the landscape park was completed. The 'fine cedars' (Lipscombe), possibly included 8 Cedars of Lebanon planted in the 1740s-50s. In 1847, two years before the Earl died, the 4,130 acre estate was put up for sale, but failed to sell. It included the buildings, kitchen gardens and contents, hot house, green houses, melon ground, gardener's cottage and fruit trees, gardens and pleasure grounds, avenues, rides and walks and specimen trees (Sale catalogue D-MH/27/3). In 1849 the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl, the Rev. Augustus Edmund Hobart-Hampden inherited and this became his main residence (Kelly, 1854-83).

By the late C19 little had altered (OS). In 1885 the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl, Sidney Hobart-Hampden-Mercer-Henderson (1860-1930) inherited. The Hobart family featured in *Country Life* including photographs of the formal gardens (CBS L294.88 *Country Life* illu.p307). Around the end of World War I the Earl mounted a campaign of alterations in both mansion and garden. He had the render stripped from the south front, re-mullioned some windows, added Tudor-style panelling, and inserted a C15 great hall from Great Kimble into the medieval hall. North of the east lawn the wooded pleasure ground was laid out in former park beyond the ha-ha, leading seamlessly into Lady Hampden's Wood to the west. However, despite this minor renaissance, financial problems led to deterioration.

In 1939 the house was let to a boarding school, Hampden House School for Girls. Minor changes were made to fit the needs of the school including tennis courts. In 1978-82 the house was let to the Hammer Film Company which made 22 films here. In 1982 the family sold the estate and from 1986 new owners restored the house and grounds, which remain in private ownership.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

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

The 148ha. site is situated on chalk sub-soil overlain with clay and gravel, on a ridge deep in the Chiltern Hills at 218m AOD. The land drops steeply to the north to Rignall Road in the valley at 158m AOD and to 148m AOD at the east corner by the Pepperpot Lodges. Rignall Road connects Great Missenden, 5½km to the south-east, to Chequers 2½km to the north, along the dry valley linking Princes Risborough with Great Missenden. The land drops gradually to the south, being 74m AOD at High Wycombe 10km to the south.

The site lies 5.5km north-west of Great Missenden, and adjacent to the north of the village of Great Hampden. It is bounded to the north by agricultural land leading down to Rignall Road. From the Pepperpot Lodges in the east, running west for 550m to its junction with Cobblers Hill Road, the site boundary then turns south for 120m between woods and arable land, before turning west along the junction of woodland and arable land for 1.3km crossing Glade Road and the sunken Hampden Road. The west end is enclosed by the Ancient Woodland of Kingsfield Wood and Barnes Grove. The south boundary leads east to the Pepperpot Lodges, in part enclosing Oaken Grove, and is bordered by agricultural land. The former north drive leads as a footpath for 500m across a field to Rignall Road

in the valley. Beyond this the track continues for 500m through the belt plantation, Coach Hedgerow, past Warren Wood on the opposite side of the valley towards Little Hampden on the ridge.

The site is largely set in farmland, with Kingsfield Wood and Barnes's Grove woodland to the west and south-west, Keepershill Wood to the south beyond the village, and Lodge Wood south of the east end of The Glade and the Pepperpots. The east, garden front and lawn enjoy long views east framed by The Glade, terminating 5km away at woodland on the far side of the Misbourne Valley. Long views beyond the south park include that framed by the lime avenue to the south-east aligned on the rectory (originating in the C13, rebuilt 1930s). The north edge of the park and the former North Drive (now a footpath) enjoy long views north-west and south-east along Rignall Road valley. It is possible that formerly, the lower, south end of North Drive through Coach Hedgerow plantation (now a footpath) enjoyed a view of Chequers mansion 2km to the north.

### ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

Hampden House is approached from Great Missenden to the east and Princes Risborough/Aylesbury to the west from the Rignall Road via Hampden Road, or Glade Road to the east through Oaken Grove, which meet at the crossroads leading to Great Hampden village.

The main park entrance lies 400m south-east of the house through a wooden gate set in picket fencing. Adjacent to the south stands a mid-C19 2-storey brick and flint lodge with mullioned windows, built as one cottage but in the later C20 divided into two. It is in Old English Tudor style with ornamental brick chimneys, and timbered gables overlooking the drive.

The gravel south drive runs north-west through the park between an avenue of plane, lime and oak, following the line of Grimm's ditch which continues between the stable block and mansion north-west through the park. The drive passes between the church, St Mary Magdalene (listed Grade II), 50m south of the house, and the mansion. Beyond the church, south of the drive, stands the coach house and stables (listed Grade II), now a residence (Turret House). Here the drive turns north into the forecourt west of the house, bounded by a hedge of rhododendrons and picket fencing, then park railings and variegated holly and yews, with a double wooden gate.

The drive sweeps north past 3 cedar trees, two of which are probably C18 in origin. The northern one is a fine multi-stemmed Cedar of Lebanon which is the survivor of a number present in 1878 (OS) and perhaps dates from the mid-C18 plantings supplied by Favin. The drive leads through a lawn to a turning circle below the main, west entrance front of the Mansion which was present by the 1870s (OS). The view north-west over the ha-ha into the park overlooks the site of the former bowling green, now in the park, and alongside the line of the north-west, oak avenue towards Kingsfield Wood on the line of Grim's Ditch.

The forecourt originated with the impressive west front built by the last John Hampden in the 1740s. Accounts of 1742 record digging a ha-ha 'in the Court', presumably the forecourt (D-MH/29/5). Between at least 1860 (May & Rolls) and 1890 (BFP 07013) it contained a central rose bed and smaller satellite beds which had gone by 1900 (postcard); by 1939 (Aerofilms) it was laid out with a complex *broderie* pattern of seasonal bedding beds.

A former entrance lies 1km north of the house off Rignall Road, formerly called the 'Coach Road', at the south end of Little Boys Heath wood. From the road the former North Drive, now a footpath,

ascends the valley side through agricultural land to enter the park at Lady Hampden's Wood, leading as a sunken track up to the plateau and the north side of the forecourt. North of Rignall Road, west of Bottom Farm, the track continues through Coach Hedgerow plantation, a belt which contains many fine mature beech, towards Warren Wood. Coach Hedgerow plantation was not present by 1741 (Estate map) when the land belonged to Mr Blackwell. It was presumably planted in the 1740s and in any case was completed by 1770 (Jefferys).

A third approach for walkers or riders enters 2km east of the house at an entrance to the Glade at its junction with the Rignall Road, marked by two single-storey octagonal lodges known as 'the Pepper Pots' (listed Grade II). These, of red brick with old tile roofs, were built in 1743 and have C20 extensions. They are linked by wooden gates attached to wooden posts with banded ball finials. From here the 25m wide grassy ride, flanked by oak, sweet chestnut, hornbeam and mixed woodland, leads west up the hillside towards the mansion. The line crosses Glade Road and the sunken Hampden Road, leading across the park to the ha-ha east of the house. The Glade was it seems created from the house and cut as far as Glade Road by Griffith Hampden in the late C16. By 1741 (Estate map) the extension to the Pepperpots was planned. The west end was reputedly cut through Oaken Grove Wood for the visit of Queen Elizabeth 1 in 1563 (Nichols), either in 1562 in advance of her arrival or, according to local tradition, it was cut one night during her visit so that she had a lovely view when she awoke from her sickbed in the morning.

Two further avenues lead through the park. South-east of the mansion is the 1.5km long lime avenue aligned on the Rectory; the north-west avenue leads towards Green Hailey & Whiteleaf, following the line of Grimm's Ditch. Both were present by 1741 (Estate map).

## **PRINCIPAL BUILDING**

Hampden House (listed Grade I) stands centrally in the site, close to the medieval Church of St Mary Magdalene (grade II), 50m to the south. The E-shaped building has a large east wing as the main garden front. The principal entrance is now on the west side, having been moved from the south in the 1740s. The late medieval King John's Tower on the south front gives access to the rose garden.

The earliest part of the mansion is based on a late C16 hall range, incorporating a C14 arched doorway with C15-early C16 porch tower (King John's Tower) on the south front. The mansion was remodelled c.1740-46 for the last John Hampden in Gothick style with a west porch, extensions to the east, and kitchen ranges to the north. The C16 and C17 parts are faced in red brick with blue diaper-patterning; the porch tower is of flint and stone and the remainder is of brick. The house was rendered in the mid-C18, but this only remains on the north and east fronts, south-east end, porch tower and west porch. Tile roofs are hidden by C18 rendered battlements and a rendered Gothick frieze below.

The impressive rendered east, garden, front, has a 3 storey, 5 bay central section, flanking 2-storey bays with bowed projections, and 2 further bays at each end, also of 2 storeys. The central section has a parapet with stone coping and pair of heraldic griffins (1757). Flanking curved brick walls with 5 blind arches of bonded flint and 1 open arch in the south wall were designed in 1746 by Edward Shepherd. From the east front long views extend beyond the garden and ha-ha over the park, along the Glade and beyond to the far side of the Misbourne valley.

Shepherd also acted as surveyor to some of the 1740s building, and possibly designed other aspects but it has been suggested that John Hampden VIII was his own architect (Pevsner).

The asymmetrical south front has an off-centre 2-storey porch and 3 storey recessed wings. From the upper floors there are views of the rose garden and Church.

The 3-storey west, entrance, front was remodelled in 1742 with a striking double height Gothick arch framing the porch. The recessed centre bay has a battlemented gable over the tall pointed arch, and an arched inner doorway. From here views extend north-west over the turning circle and ha-ha, between the cedar trees, and over the parkland (including the former Bowling Green) to Knighton's Hill Wood. The rendered castellated 2 storey north service front has a Gothick doorcase.

The former stable block and coach house (listed Grade II, now Turret House) stands 50m south-west of the mansion entrance. The Gothick style echoes that of the mansion. The mid-C18 two-storey range of 9 bays has a hipped tiled roof and early C19 alterations. The red and vitreous brick elevations were formerly whitewashed. The main front faces the contemporary west front of the mansion across the forecourt. The prominent centre bay contains the Tudor-arched carriage entrance. It projects in the form of a tower, with a pyramid roof and wrought iron weathervane.

North of the mansion is the service yard with a group of C18-C19 service buildings around an irregular yard. This includes the L-shaped laundry/ brewhouse/ game larder built in 1745 (D-MH/33/7) and the early and deep well and pump house. South of the mansion, the medieval parish church of St Mary Magdalene (listed Grade I) forms a feature in the churchyard on the main approach from the south-east.

## **GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS**

The gardens enclose the mansion to the south and east, leading to informal pleasure grounds to the north in Lady Hampden's Wood (in 1741 known as Home Grove Wood). The gardens comprise the extensive east lawn, a wilderness to the south of that, and to the west (below the south front) is King John's Garden. The line of Grimms Ditch marks the south garden boundary, with a ha-ha to the east (a turf ditch) and north (a ditch with the remains of stonework).

The garden is entered via the central classical porch on the east front, and from garden doors in two turrets flanking the central range. These doors give on to a 60m long gravel terrace along the whole front, terminating at curved wing walls, each with five arches and ball finials (1746 by Edward Shepherd). By the 1870s (OS) two garden buildings terminated the east ends of the walls, now gone, possibly including the summerhouse being built in 1745 (D-MH/29/7).

Below the terrace a grassy slope planted with clipped specimen yew leads down to a large lawn, flanked by long clipped hedges. The lawn (c.50m wide x 150m long) drops at a small bank c.80m east of the mansion and terminates at the curved east ha-ha by the park boundary. The hedges frame the vista over the east park towards the Glade and beyond to the Misbourne valley. Beyond the north hedge is an area of grass and mature ornamental specimen trees, bounded to the north against Lady Hampden's Wood by the remains of this section of the ha-ha which in the later C19 (OS) overlooked open park, before this area was taken into the Wood in the early C20.

The east lawn was present by 1741 and may be considerably earlier, but at that point terminated to the east at a straight boundary (Estate map). A ha-ha was being dug in 1743 (D-MH/29/4), probably



at this straight boundary, as it is referred to again in 1748 as in Haydon furlong (D-MH/29/8) which is likely to be the same as Heaton Furlong to the east on the 1741 estate map. The work in 1748 may have been to extend or rebuild it. The curved ha-ha beyond that line is probably of the later C18 or early C19 (Tithe map, 1839). By the late C19 a circuit path led around the edge, overlooking the ha-ha, linking the two ends of the terrace (OS). A photo of 1858-60 shows the east front, terrace and lawn (May & Rolls).

South of the lawn is a hedged enclosure laid to lawn with ornamental specimen trees and shrubs, its hedged south boundary running alongside the main drive and east boundary against the park. It was present by 1741 (Estate map) in similar form, as an informal wilderness. By the later C19 (OS) it connected seamlessly with the east lawn and contained specimen conifers and deciduous trees.

An archway in the south wing wall leads from the terrace around the south side of the mansion to King John's Garden, an enclosed garden below the focal C15 porch on the south front. It is hedged and laid to lawn with a gravel path leading from the porch to the forecourt to the west. It is bounded to the south by the main drive and to the west by the forecourt. In the centre a circular rose bed is divided into a six point star with a central flowering ornamental cherry. This area, it seems, originated as the main approach to the late medieval house. By the later C19 it was surrounded by a clipped evergreen hedge and laid out with a complex pattern of beds in lawn. In 1895 the beds contained seasonal bedding and standard roses with a central pool and fountain, the beds being linked by slender rose arches (BFP 07014). This survived until at least 1930 (BCC postcard) but by 1939 remained only in outline in grass (Aerofilms).

North of the ha-ha is Lady Hampden's Wood pleasure ground. This late addition was taken in from the park in the early C20. In the informal woodland pleasure ground ornamental specimen trees are underplanted with flowering shrubs. In the mid-C18 it was the site of a vista north-east from the mansion through woodland (then called Home Grove Wood) over Rignall valley. In the west half of the wood is a restored ice house, c.170m north-west of the mansion in a former quarry. A 4m high domed brick chamber is reached via a tunnel c2.7m above the chamber floor, set in an elongated mound. When built (believed to be in 1760) it cost £32.1s.7d. and the dome was thatched (Beamon & Roaf; photographs in Hampden House photographs file CBS P10300394/96-98). It is marked on the 1839 Tithe Map (parcel 2), the apportionment noting it as 'Ice House and wood' of half an acre.

West of the forecourt is the site of the former rectangular bowling green, at the east end of the north-west avenue. A bowling green was present here in 1741, but was later abandoned and incorporated into the park. It may have been the 'Old Bowling Green' mentioned in 1750 when a payment was made for 'Taking up the Great limes in Old Bowling Green & transplanting into Great park' (D-MH/29/10). It is likely that the east lawn superseded it.

## **PARK**

The park occupies a plateau on the ridge and surrounds the mansion, church and gardens. It is laid to arable to the west and pasture to the south and east, with mature specimen trees and clumps. Surrounding blocks of woodland include Lady Hampden's Wood to the north, a large section of Oaken Grove south of The Glade and to the north Upper and Lower Nookets which are detached pockets of Oaken Grove. The park contains three avenues. Two are aligned on the east front of the mansion: the 1.5km long Glade east of Hampden Road, and the 680m long Rectory Avenue to the south-east which is partly replanted.

The third avenue, to the north-west, follows the line of Grim's Ditch from the stable block for 1.5km to the west park boundary at Kingsfield Wood. While not quite aligned on the mansion, the south-east end enjoys glimpses between fine mature oak of the forecourt and west entrance front. The avenue bounds the north side of the arable west park which contains the remains of several roundels of trees, one planted with a fine lime, and a specimen sweet chestnut. The medieval church and churchyard form a feature in the south park.

The avenues, originating in farmland by 1741, were incorporated into the informally landscaped park when it was laid out in the later C18/early C19, by 1812 (OSD).

## KITCHEN GARDEN

The 1ha. former kitchen garden lies 70m south-west of the mansion. It is roughly rectangular. Park House, incorporating the former gardener's house stands at the west corner and was greatly extended in the mid-1980s with a detached garage to the north. The inner, east section is enclosed by a mid-C18 red brick wall with the stable block forming the north boundary. The area is gardens for Park House and the stable block. The garden was created in 1742 when Mr Bifshill was paid for work (D-MH/29/4) and was still under cultivation in 1939 (Aerofilms).

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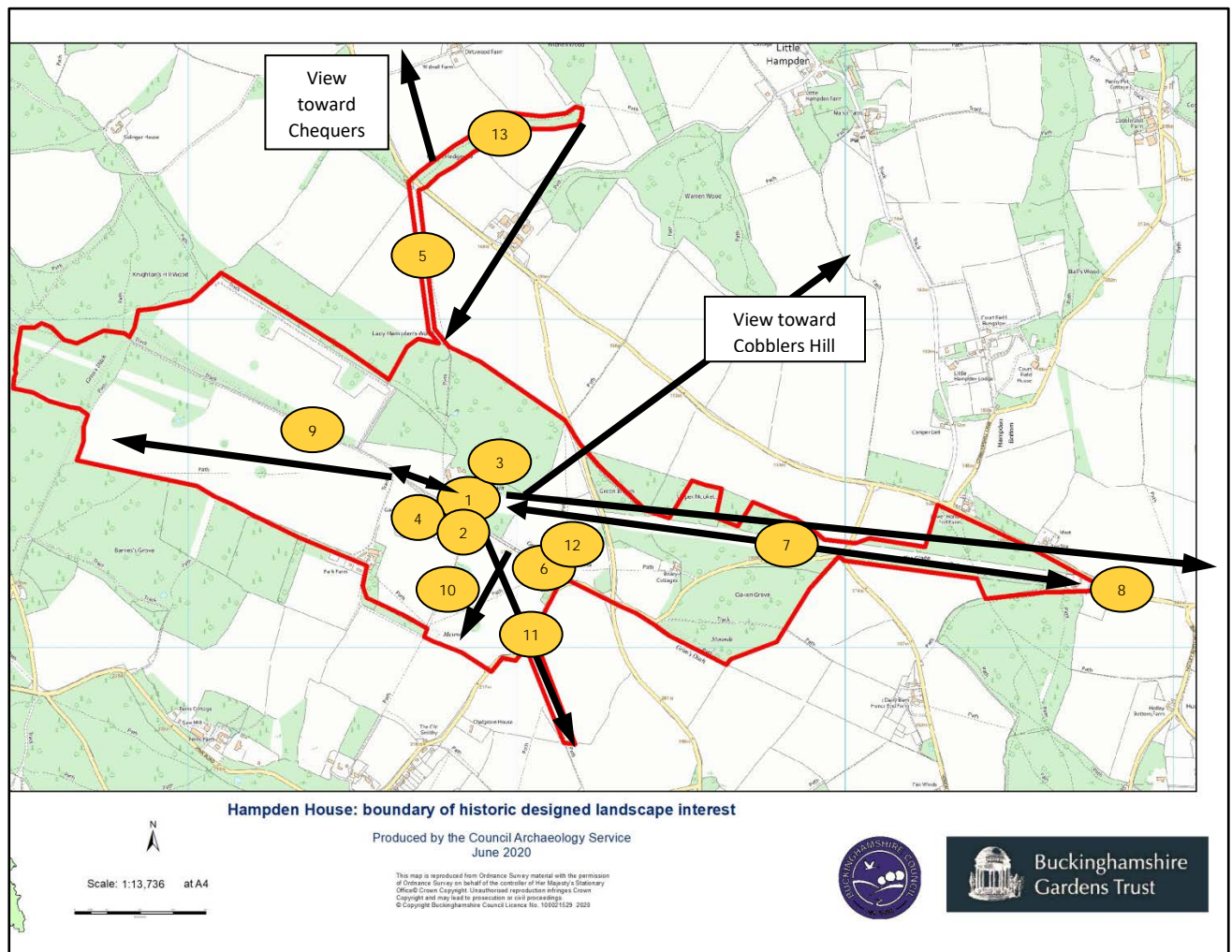
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Gwen Miles, June Timms, Sarah Rutherford

June 2020, edited Sept. 2020.

## KEY HISTORIC FEATURES & VIEWS



### Key to numbered features

1. House, service yard and gardens	2. Stable block and church
3. Pleasure Grounds & ice house	4. Kitchen garden
5. North drive	6. South-east drive & C19 lodge
7. The Glade (C16 & C18)	8. Pepper Pot Lodges (1740s)
9. West Park	10. South Park
11. South-east avenue towards rectory	12. East Park
13. Coach Hedgerow	

**APPENDIX 1 EXTRACTS FROM C18 HISTORIC ACCOUNTS**

Centre for Bucks Studies D-MH Archives of the Earls of Buckinghamshire and Hampden House,  
c.1252-1931

D-MH/29 Stewards Accounts 1737-79

D-MH/33 Day Books 1740-84

Date	Activity/event	Cost	CBS reference
1741	Paid Ann Wall for 8 days weeding Paid Benjamin Mason for 1 day mowing & boxing the apple trees	£0-4-0 £0-1-6	D-MH/33/1
31/1/1742	Poles for <b>espalier</b> , Catching 50 moles in Hampden garden	£0-8-6 £72-18-6	D-MH/29/4
10/5/1742	Working on garden, watering, spreading mold (compost?), <b>pruning fruit trees in old garden</b> Paid for work in Great Court Paid Mr Bifshill for planting trees, making Kitchen Garden, Bowling Green & much other work	£1-1-0 £1-0-10	
25/5/1742	Paid John Follow by a bill for boxing the trees Mr Bifshill planted		
1742	Kitchen Garden – digging, moving chalk, leaf mould, watering trees in Great Park, & mowing Bowling green	£14-7-11	D-MH /29/4
30/3/1743	At the Oval carrying mold Digging <b>the Haha</b>	£0-4-0 £0-10-0	D-MH /29/4
1743	Pair of shears for garden	£0-3-6	D-MH /29/6
October 1743	<b>“iron gates</b> 10foot 3 inches x 10 foot high and the width between the posts is 10 foot”		D-MH/29/6
5 Dec 1743	Paid Fra. Briant 6 days digging in my garden	£0-6-0	
1745	<b>Garden railings &amp; gates</b> Cutting & laying turf in Great Court by the circular wall For rolling the Long Walk in the park & the Walk to the Lodges with iron roller	£0-8-0	D-MH/33/7
1746	Garden expenses for 1746 Iron Roller from Missenden on wagon	£65-4-3 £0-5-0	D-MH/29/8
1746 or 1745 21 May	Memo of agreement with Edward Shepherd Esq Surveyor with William Smith ‘Complete walls each end of terrace walk in front of Hampden House’ in 6 weeks		D-MH/33/7
1748	Paid William Tipson for 1year wages 11 loads of dung for <b>cucumbers</b> Wheelbarrow wheel Paid Mr Favin of Thame for <b>fruit trees</b> Garden expenses A doz <b>brooms</b> for the garden Oils for the engine	£15-0-0 £0-2-0 £10-0-0 £72-11-4 £0-1-3 £0-1-0	D-MH/29/8
17 March 1748			
13/10/1748	Paid Bradley 2 days making up <b>asparagus</b>	£0-2-0	
21/10/1748	At Haha in Haydon furlong Fra. Briant ½day Robt. Ridals ½day	£0-0-6 £0-0-6	
22/10/1748	Fra. Briant 1-day laying turf Robt Ridals “ Abel Tyler helping lop <b>limes</b>	£0-1-0 £0-1-0 £0-1-0	

25 October	Wm Hinda “ In Haydon furlong Turfig, hedging, banking, grubbing, boxing Various men	£0-1-0  £1-6-0	
27 Oct 1748	Fetch from Mr Favins at Thame <b>56 Scotch firs &amp; 100 flowering shrubs</b>	£0-10-0	
31/10/1748	Various labourers. Planting	£0-10-6	
6/12/1748	Paid Jo Mason by a bill for the <b>wood gates</b> & boxing trees And his boy for a month weeding the pitch by the oval	£1-15-11	
	The hedge and ditch in the walk to the lodge was made in January 1744. 119 poles long	£0-12-0	
1750	William Tipson Wages Mending <b>cucumber</b> frame glass Taking up the Great limes in Old Bowling Green & transplanting into Great park Rolling Long Walk in Park	£25-0-0 £0-4-0	D-MH/29/10
1752	Mowing walk & coach Road, planting trees in the park William Tipson half year New <b>wheelbarrow</b> <b>The Pinery</b> Digging pit & foundation, carpenter, bricklayer, smith 14 loads of Tom (?) to fill up pitt. Earthen pots to plant <b>pineapples</b> . <b>Fetching plants from Duke Of Portland</b>	£12-10-0 £0-7-6  Total  £18-19-5	D-MH/29/11
1753	William Tipson 1½years Richard Mason, labourer, 51 weeks Garden expenses The Pinery – carrying Tom(?) from Wycombe Mowing Coach road & Walk	£37-10-0 £12-15-0 £60-4-10	D-MH/29/13
16/10/1742	Digging <b>HaHa</b> in the Court, planting trees in Old Kitchen Garden Planting <b>58 Ash trees , &amp;25 Limes</b> in old Kitchen Garden in place of those dead. Fetching the Limes & Fruit trees from Favins at Thame Boots for horses at Bowling green 6 loads of Dung Fetching oak for the stakes for <b>the Espalier</b> 13 loads of dung for the <b>Asparagus</b>	£6-13-10    £0-14-7 £0-15-0	D-MH/29/5



**APPENDIX 2 PRELIMINARY NOTES ON JOHN FAVIN, NURSERYMAN OF THAME (d. 1750)****Supplier of plants to Hampden House in the 1740s**

NB alternate spellings of name, also as Flavin.

1721 Married Mary Burg of unknown parish by license;<sup>2</sup> Oxfordshire Archdeacon's Marriage Bond

Index - [https://whipple.org/oxford/4\\_alpha\\_by\\_brides\\_names.pdf](https://whipple.org/oxford/4_alpha_by_brides_names.pdf)

1724 26 June, Jno Favin of Thame, Oxon, Gardner in 'Register of Duties Paid for Apprentices' Indentures' apprenticeship to him of Benj Crouche <https://bit.ly/2TqRn49> Ancestry.com

1746 Made will, still in Thame and 'Gardiner' (Will, TNA). Left £100 to Richard Beale, brother-in-law, Waterman of Isleworth. Indicates wife had died already.

Favin's property in Thame funded this (see details in marriage settlement below).

Servant Richard Clarke, former apprentice, executor and beneficiary of residue (freehold messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments).

1750 Died, will proved, probate granted 29 Dec. (Will, TNA).

1752 9 March. Marriage settlement Parties: 1) Richard Clark of Thame, nurseryman 2) Ann Moor of Ewelme, spinster 3a) Francis Moor 3b) John Hillier of Ewelme, gent. Property: 2 messuages in Thame, one of which is called The King's Head [now Old Nags Head pub] (currently liable to a mortgage for £200 and a charge of £100); another messuage in Thame (currently liable to a mortgage of £700).

Comments: 1 and 2 are to marry and 2's marriage portion is to be £200. 1 agrees that he will use this money to pay the above sums of £200, £100 and £300 and will then assign the premises to 3 to hold in trust for the marriage settlement. ORO [O12/93D/1](#)

[Ancestry shows they married at St Aldates, Oxford 16 Apr 1752](#)

1754 19-20 Feb. Marriage settlement by lease and release between Parties 1. Richard Clark of Thame, nurseryman, executor of John Flavin [sic] the Elder decd & Anne his wife. 2. Francis Moor of Ewelme, tailor & John Hillier of Ewelme, gent. Property : **Kings Head Inne**, High St, New Thame & **messuage adj, nursery or garden = 3 acres. Consideration : 700 [pds]**

<https://apps2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/srvheritage/recordSearch?offset=3> ORO [SL10/3D/01-02](#)

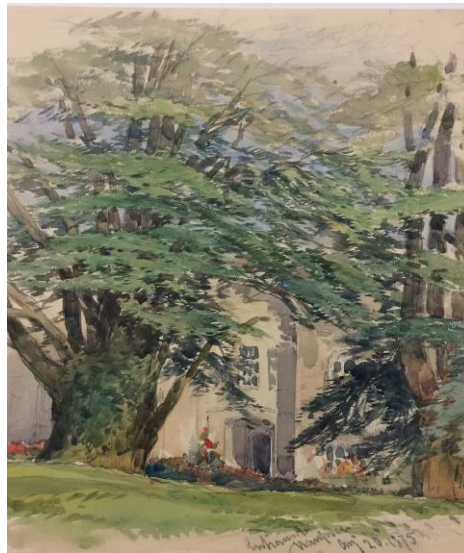
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<sup>2</sup> Labourers tended to be married by banns, those who had a little more money would get a license.

## HISTORIC IMAGES



William Callow, 1875: view north-east across park (left); east along The Glade (Bucks Museum Trust)



William Callow, 1875: C18 west entrance front with cedars (Bucks Museum Trust)



1890, entrance front.



1895, King John's Garden.



c.1900 Glade from the west end towards the Pepper Pot Lodges



1938, The Glade, view towards house from Pepper Pot Lodges on Rignall Road.



## 1741 Estate Map, Joseph Colbeck (private collection).

Hampden House ringed.



This map shows the estate before the improvements of the 1740s. Photographs June Timms.



# CURRENT IMAGES

Photographs June Timms & Sarah Rutherford.



Park lodge (left); main drive (centre); main drive and church (right).



Stable block (left); west, entrance front and ha-ha (centre); west, entrance front and turning circle (right).



Lebanon cedar, possibly mid-C18 (left); kitchen garden wall, 1740s (centre); west avenue with oak (right).



West park: view west to clumps (left); central lime clump (centre); specimen sweet chesnut west of clump (right).





Kitchen garden house (Park House) (left); The Glade from the east lawn (right).



East, garden front of house and east lawn (left); south wing wall, 1740s (right).



Lady Hampden's Wood: ice house (left & centre); north drive from Rignall Road (right).



View along line of former north drive from Lady Hampden's Wood across Rignall Road to Coach Hedgerow (left, ringed), Warren Wood (top right) and Bottom Farm.