

Historical Significance of Hampton Court Castle Gardens.

The latest proposals at Hampton Court Castle involve relatively minor alterations to areas of the east lawn to improve access to temporary events marquees, and also to the gravelled area to the north front to improve parking and accessibility. Since the gardens are listed as Grade II, it is important to assess the historical significance of the east and north garden areas adjacent to the house, and the affect any alterations might have on the gardens and the setting of the castle itself.

There is plenty of evidence that the gardens around Hampton Court Castle have changed in appearance several times over more than six hundred years of successive ownerships. From romanticised informal landscapes of 16th and 17th Centuries, through to rigid and formal Dutch and French style designs of the late 1600s, and then swept away and reverting back to spacious informal lawns by the early 19th Century

The map extracts above (figs 1-6) show no change visible to the east lawn bounded by the Humber Brook, and the north lawn edged by the A417 since 1886.

Historical Summary

Sir Rowland Leinthal was given licence to create 1000 acres of park around his house. Sir Thomas Coningsby (d. 1625), who visited Italy with Sir Philip Sidney in 1573 and was a noted Italophile, made a garden at Hampton Court, and a drawing of his fountain in the courtyard - presumably the central courtyard of the house - was published in 1684. A portrait of the 1st Lord Coningsby painted in 1692 has a romanticised view of the landscape at Hampton in the background and gives some impression of the appearance of the estate at that time (Fig 7)

In 1692 George London, the greatest landscape gardener of the years around 1700, was paid £80 for his designs for a much grander formal garden. His layout is recorded in the paintings by Knyff, 1699 (Figs 9 and 10) and Stevens, c.1705 (Fig 8), and in the garden plan published in Vitruvius Britannicus in 1725 (Fig 11). William Talman may also have played a role in the design, since he and London frequently worked together, and are both recorded as working for Lord Coningsby at Hampton Court. The Court is shown surrounded by a series of formal enclosures of different sizes, each treated in a different way, but displaying strong French influence in the elaborate parterres of topiary and coloured gravels.

The formal gardens were still intact in 1746, and the Neptune fountain in 1758, but they were apparently swept away after Lord Essex inherited the estate in the 1781. By the time Lord Torrington visited in 1784 the gardens had been cleared and timber trees in the park were being felled and sold.

To accompany the remodelling of the house in 1791-95, a new landscaped layout and two walled gardens were created. Humphry Repton supplied designs before 1795, but in a letter to Uvedale Price he regretted that they were likely to be spoilt in execution by Lord Essex's gardener. An account book of 1801 refers to improvements being carried out in the park and elsewhere, but it is not known if this represents the delayed execution of Repton's designs. In the early 19th century the house rose out of a 'spacious lawn of nearly 100 acres', and there was an ornamental conservatory attached to the west side of the house.

The present modern formal gardens were designed by Simon Dorrell and David Wheeler with Chedburn Ltd. in 1996-98 within the framework of the old walled gardens to the west of the castle. A new north gateway to the estate was built by Chedburn Ltd. in 1996-98, in keeping with the style of

the house. The gardens were opened to the public in 2000, and the house has also been open since 2008.

Conclusion

The alterations proposed are not considered harmful to the existing east gardens or north gravelled and lawned area. Works proposed are to the superficial landscape finishes only to avoid disturbance to any archaeological garden remains which may be present under the surface, and where ornamental trees are to be relocated, due care will be taken to minimise harm and protect both the lawns and the trees themselves. Refer to Figs 12-14 for views of the east lawn as existing and Figs 15-16 show the north lawn as existing. Fig 17 shows the south lawn and orangery with existing ornamental trees, as an ideal location to relocated any trees from the east lawn which will be moved to allow access for marquees.

Historic Map Excerpts of Hampton Court Castle, Hope-Under-Dinmore, Herefordshire



Fig 1. Map Extract c1816 with red circle around east lawn and north front of castle. The formal gardens from the 1992 George London designs have long since disappeared.

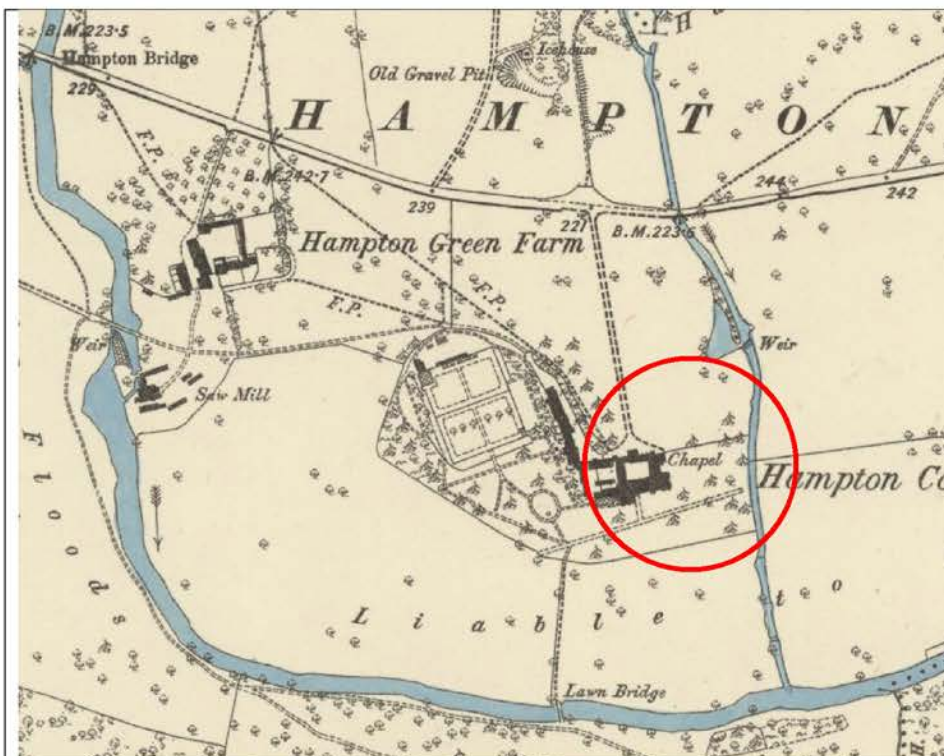


Fig 2. Map extract c1886

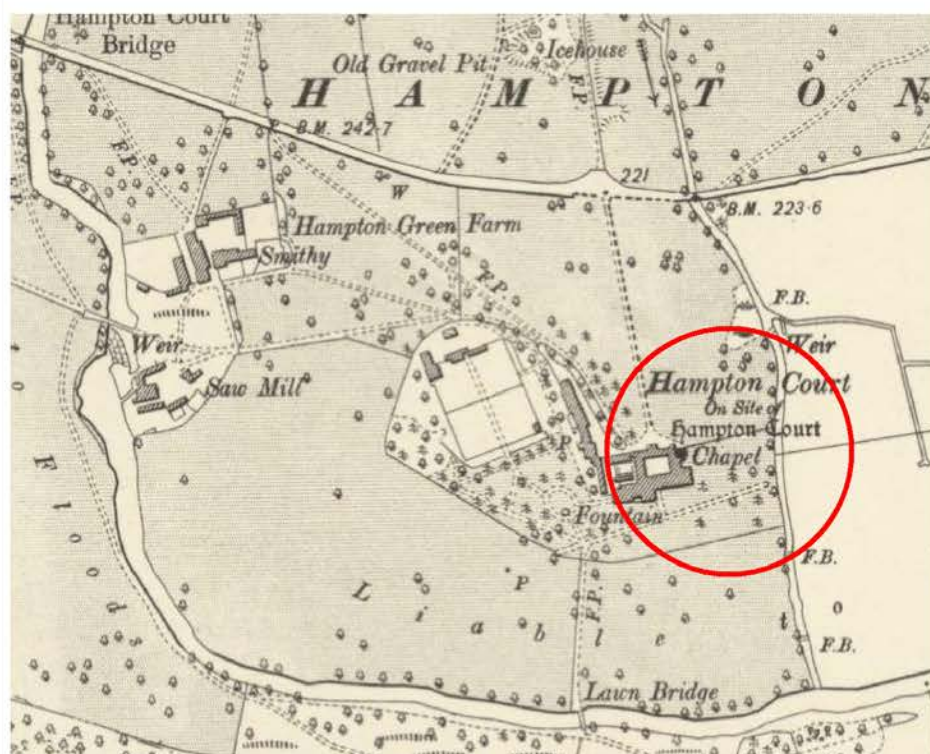


Fig 3. Map extract c1902

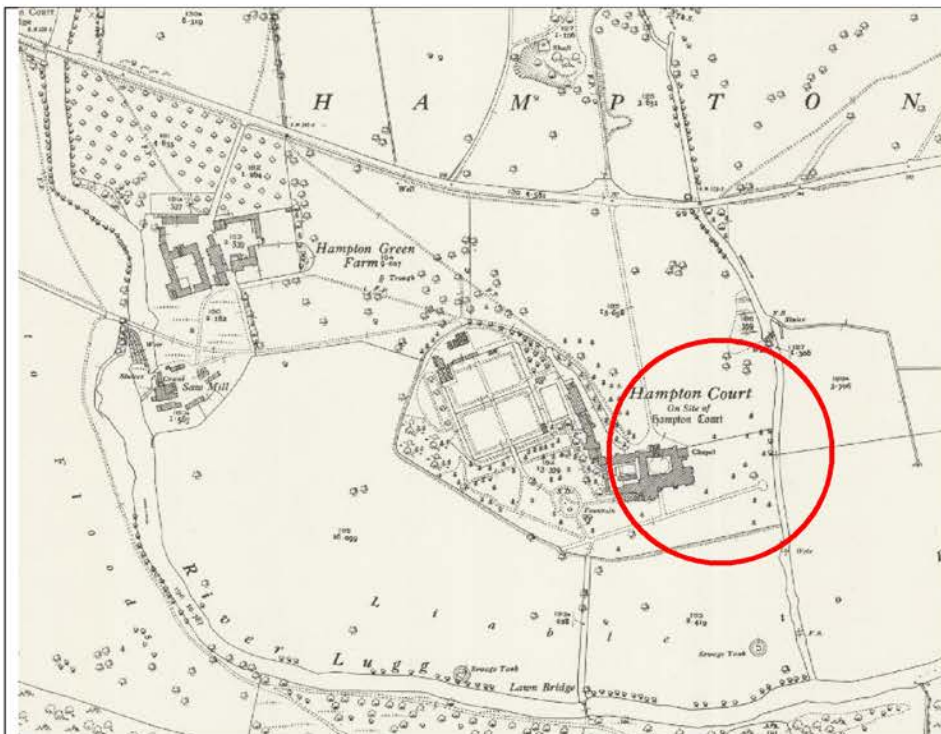


Fig 4. Map extract c1928

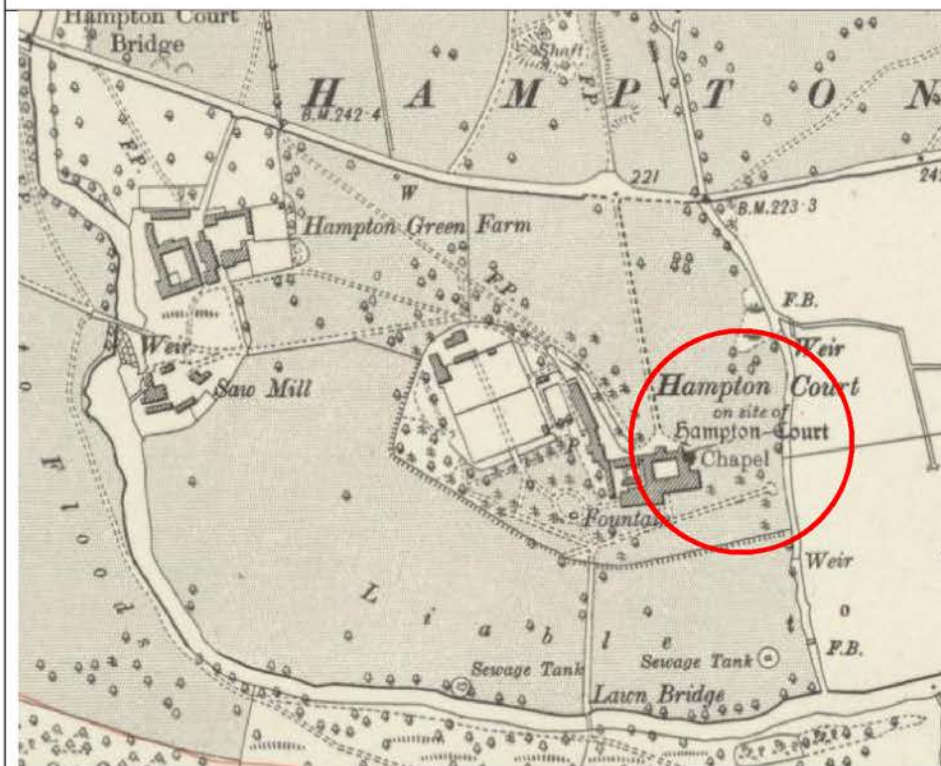


Fig 5. Map extract c1930

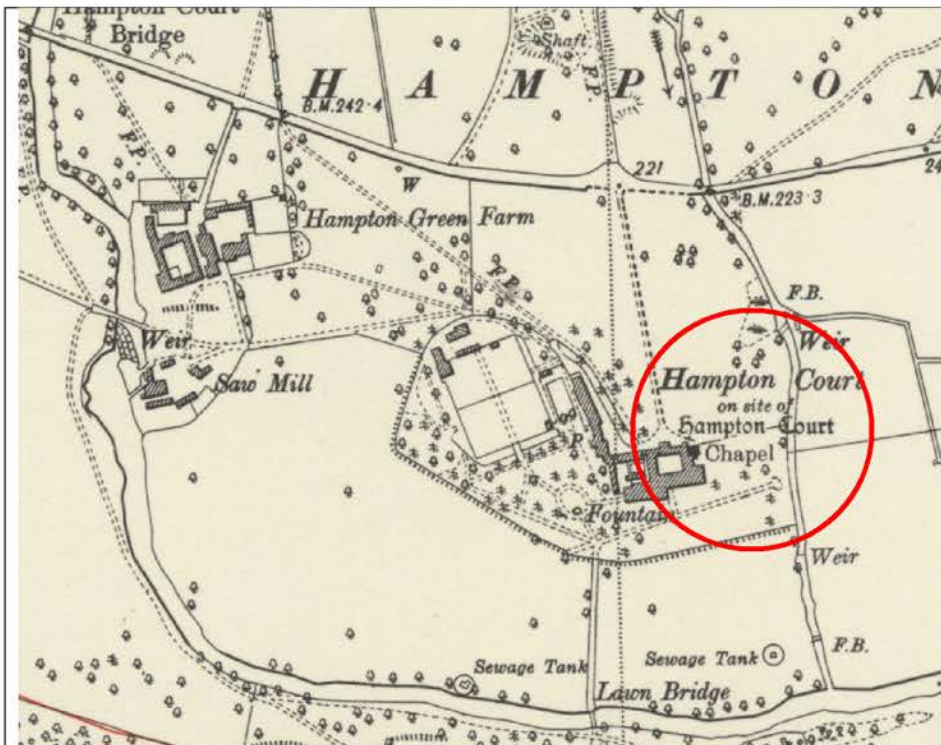


Fig 6. Map extract c1952



Fig 7. Portrait of Thomas, Lord Coningsby (1656–1729), Seated in a Romantic Landscape, with a View of the North Prospect of Hampton Court in the Background. The portrait illustrates an informal, naturalistic style of gardens to the north and east around Hampton Court Castle

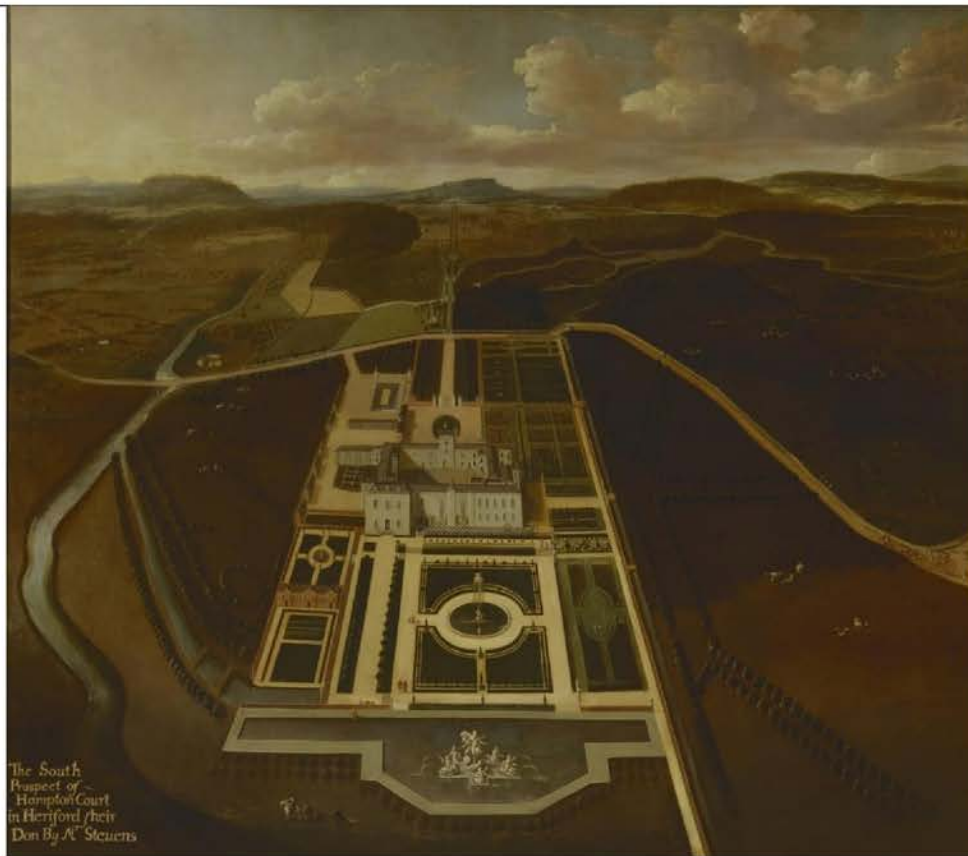


Fig 8. Hampton Court from the south, by John Stevens, c.1705 showing the George London designs from 1692



Fig 9. Hampton Court from the north, by Leonard Knyff, 1699 (detail)

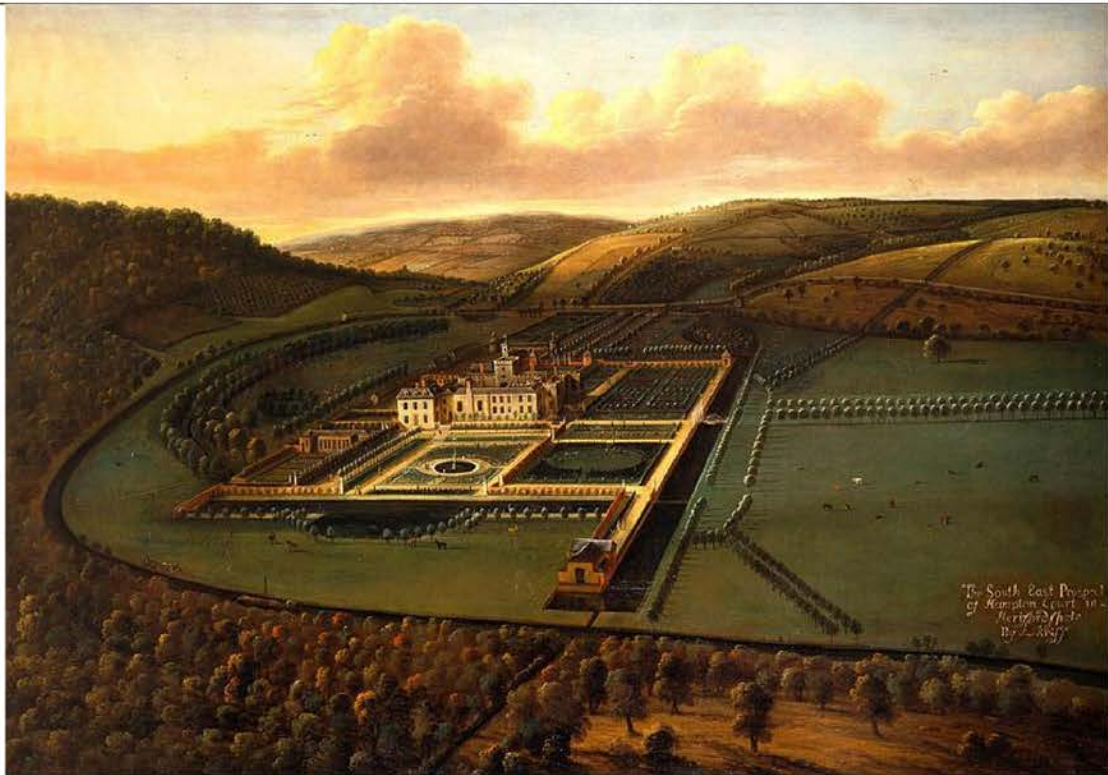


Fig 10. Hampton Court from the southeast by Leonard Knyff, c.1699, showing the extensive formal garden layout on all sides of the castle.

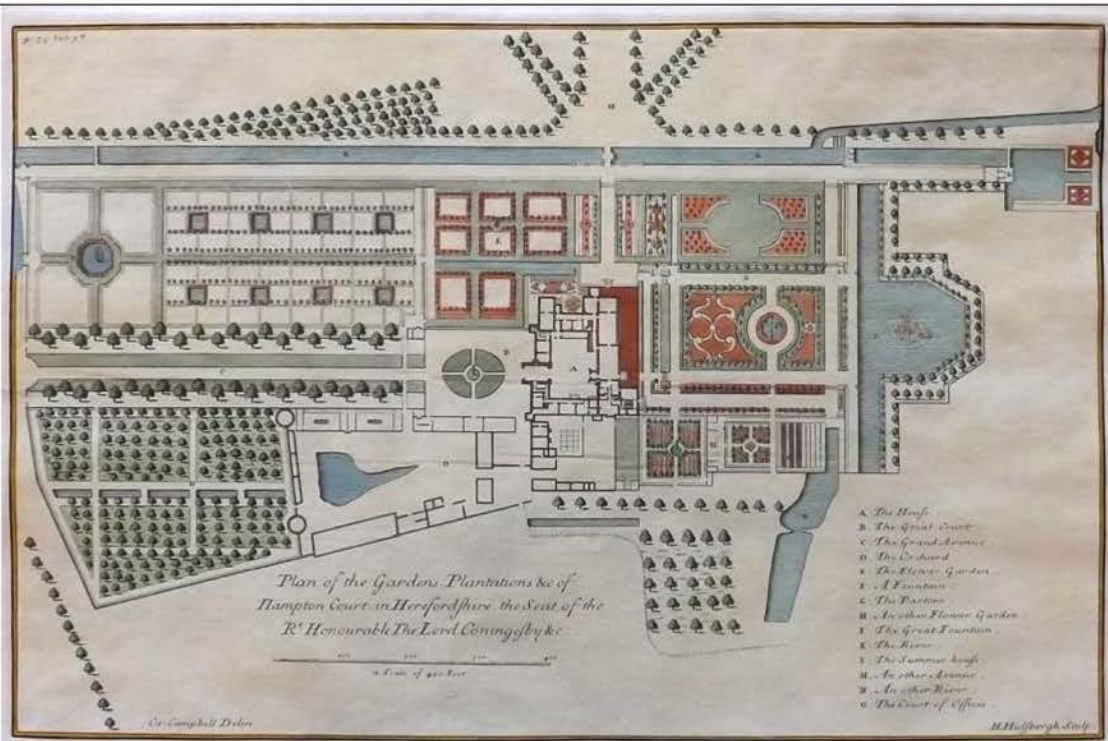


Fig 11. Plan of Gardens, John Kip, published in Britannia Illustrata in 1707, showing the layout of the formal gardens.

Photographs of Gardens as Existing at Hampton Court Castle:



Fig 12. East lawn with ornamental tree, chapel elevation seen to left and gatehouse on A417 seen in the distance.



Fig 13. East lawn with views to the Humber Brook and trees beyond.



Fig 13. View from corridor window to east wing of castle, showing the view across the east lawn towards the Humber Brook, with ornamental trees.



Fig 14. View of east elevation of castle with corridor windows at ground floor level, showing proposed location of new doors, ramp and steps to east lawn.



Fig 15. Ha-ha and bridge, with stone kerbed edging to existing gravelled area to north front of castle.



Fig 16. View from north front facing east across lawn to Humber Brook.



Fig 17. View of castle from south lawn showing ornamental trees around Orangery. Similar trees from east lawn to be relocated to this area.

Official Listing of Hampton Court Park and Gardens, Historic England:

Official list entry

Heritage Category: Park and Garden

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1403731

Date first listed: 22-Jun-2012

Location Description: Hampton Court lies to the south of the A417.

Statutory Address 1: Hampton Court, Hope under Dinmore, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 0PN

Location

Statutory Address: Hampton Court, Hope under Dinmore, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 0PN

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: County of Herefordshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Hope under Dinmore

National Grid Reference: SO5185652450

Summary

The site of extensive C17 formal gardens laid out by George London for Lord Coningsby, Privy Councillor to William III, improved in the C19 by the Arkwright family who commissioned Humphry Repton and Joseph Paxton.

Reasons for Designation

Hampton Court is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Historic interest: it is a representative example of a late-C17 formal Dutch style garden by George London, a nationally important garden designer, with subsequent phases of development associated with Repton and Paxton, considerably adding to its interest. * Intactness: the extent and overall layout of the garden survives sufficiently intact to reflect its original design, and the archaeological potential of the site, as confirmed by aerial photography, has been retained in most places. * Documentary evidence: the historic development of the layout of the gardens is exceptionally well documented through a number of historic paintings and engravings.

History

Hampton Court dates back to at least the early C15. In 1434, Sir Rowland Lenthall, a knight in Henry VI's court, was allowed to crenellate, turrellate and embattle his manor at

Hampton Rychard and impark 1000 acres of land. In c1510 the manor and its land were sold to Sir Humphrey Coningsby, Justice of the King's Bench, whose family would own Hampton Court until 1810. In c1618 his great-grandson Sir Thomas Coningsby (d. 1625) is known to have developed gardens at Hampton Court. Later, from 1692, Thomas, Lord Coningsby (d. 1729), Privy Councillor to William III of Orange, employed the royal gardener George London (c1614 -1740) to remodel the gardens. These are recorded on a number of paintings and engravings, including John Stevens's painting of c1705, which shows Hampton Court enclosed by a series of formal gardens in the Dutch style. A large formal basin with a central statue of Neptune, created by diverting the course of the River Lugg, terminated the gardens to the south. The Humber Brook, a small stream bounding the east of the site, was transformed into a narrow canal with bridges. Parts of these gardens survived well into the late C18, though had probably been neglected by then. A plan of Hampton Court of 1786 indicates that by that date, the park retained some of the landscape features shown on the late C17 paintings.

In 1781, George Viscount Malden, 5th Earl of Essex inherited the estate. He remodelled Hampton Court in c1790 to designs by the architect James Wyatt. During this period a large double-walled garden was introduced to the north-west of the Court, and Wyatt's partner, the landscape designer Humphry Repton (1752-1818) advised on improvements for the gardens. The extent of his work is unknown: no Red Book drawing has been found. In 1805 the gardens at Hampton Court were described as 'picturesque and beautiful', with a 'good shrubbery, intersected by a pleasant walk' and a 'fine cascade' (Brayley 1805).

In 1810 the estate was purchased by Richard Arkwright Jnr. (1755-1843), the son of Sir Richard Arkwright. He introduced an industrial approach to agriculture, and the by then much reduced deer park to the north was ploughed for the first time. Nevertheless, throughout the C19 the falls and cascades in the Humber Brook, which runs through the deer park, remained an important picturesque feature, attracting many visitors throughout the C19 (Whitehead, 2001). The Arkwrights were also responsible for the improvements to the weirs and mills near the bridge over the River Lugg and built a number of saw- and stone-mills. In 1830-50, Hampton Court was extensively altered by John Arkwright to designs by Charles Hanbury Tracy, a local architect. During this period the gardens were further improved, and in 1846 a conservatory by Joseph Paxton (1803-1865), head gardener at Chatsworth, was added to the south side of the Court.

In 1912 the estate was sold to Major William M Burrell and his wife who, during the First World War, established a military convalescent hospital at Hampton Court. In 1924 the estate was sold again, with most of the land falling into separate ownership. Hampton Court itself was bought by Viscountess Hereford. During the late 1960s the house and grounds deteriorated (the roof to Paxton's conservatory collapsed), and in 1972 the house and 1,936 acres of land were sold and subsequently had a number of successive owners. In [REDACTED] it was bought by [REDACTED] who restored the house and extensively improved the gardens, and opened them to the public. In [REDACTED] the estate, including the house and garden, was sold to a new owner.

Details

LOCATION, SETTING, LANDFORM, BOUNDARIES, AREA The site covers an area of 31 ha and is situated in a rural location south of the A417 at Hope under Dinmore, the road forming its current boundary. Its setting includes the land to the north of the road. This is the site of the former deer park which, during the C17, was laid out with a number of formal avenues and rides. Although some mature parkland trees survive in places, it has been partly built over by industrial units, and the majority of the remaining parkland has been ploughed since the early C19. The site's boundary to the south and west is formed by the River Lugg and to the east by a narrow stream, the Humber Brook. The north-east corner of the site is bounded by Hampton Green Farm and by the buildings of a former Saw Mill, now ruinous. Dinmore Hill situated to the south of the site, has been covered in dense woodland (Church Coppice and Ashen Grove) since the C19, and its steep northern slope forms a dramatic backdrop to the garden.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The entrance to the site lies to the north along the A417. It is marked by a gatehouse with circular castellated towers introduced in 1997. From here an avenue, planted in the late 1990s, leads to a small bridge over a ha ha both introduced in the late 1990s, to a turning circle at the north front of Hampton Court. At the start of the avenue (at the north), a branch runs off, curving in a south-westerly direction to the visitor car park north-west of Hampton Court and the walled gardens, before continuing to Hampton Green Farm.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Hampton Court (listed at Grade I), stands just off-centre in the eastern half of the garden. It is built in sandstone rubble with ashlar dressings and has castellated parapets. Its quadrangular plan reflects the original C15 layout, with a later service range to the west, also with a quadrangular plan thus creating two courtyards. Extending from the latter's north-west corner is Hampton Court Estate Cottages, including former stables and servants' quarters largely of C19 date.

The north front of Hampton Court consists of 1:3:1:3:1 bays composed of a large central gatehouse with flanking three-bay ranges terminating in small square towers. The windows are cusped lancets with either square heads with hoodmoulds or four centre arches. The C15 chapel adjoins the east end of the north elevation. The south elevation, largely remodelled in the C18, includes Paxton's conservatory of 1846. It is built against the south elevation of the service range to the west. The tall single storey building, built in matching stone ashlar, has a rectangular plan. Its walls consist of a continuous row of full-height four-light lancet windows with a castellated parapet above. After the loss of its roof in the 1970s, it was converted into an indoor swimming pool in the 1980s. In 1997 it became a cafe.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens at Hampton Court lie to the south, east and west of the house and to the south and west are separated from the park by a late C18 or early C19 dry-stone ha ha. The ha ha to the north of Hampton Court dates from the late 1990s (see above under ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES). The East Lawn has a double avenue planted in the late 1990s. The South and West Lawn have a number of single

mature trees dating from the late C18 and/or early C19, including pines and Cedars of Lebanon, which are marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 published in 1889. The West Lawn is bounded to the north by a mature topiary hedge which screens a mixed border laid out along the full length of the garden wall.

PARK The current park lies to the north, south and south-west of Hampton Court, separated from the gardens by a ha ha (see above). The parkland to the north of Hampton Court (south of the A417), is scattered with mature trees, with the A417 road screened by a narrow tree belt. In its north-east corner is a crescent shaped lake created in the late 1990s from a much smaller, triangular shaped lake shown on the OS map of 1889. The park to the south and south-west of Hampton Court contains a number of mature oak trees, probably dating from the late C18 or early C19. A track runs through the southern park from the ha ha to a late C20 bridge, replacing an earlier bridge called Lawn Bridge. It crosses the River Lugg giving access to Dinmore Hill. Set into the ha ha, circa 9m to the south-west of the house, is a brick-arched structure. This may be the entrance to a former ice house, although no evidence for this could be found. The parkland to the south of Hampton Court, bounded by the River Lugg, is probably the site of the formal basin that formed part of the C17 gardens. This area has been liable to flooding at least since the late C19.

KITCHEN GARDEN The former kitchen garden consists of a large double walled garden covering an area of 2.4 ha. It stands within the garden immediately to the north-west of the house. Its walls are 2.5m in height and constructed in brick with flat stone coping with the main entrance in the south wall. Outside the walled garden, at the north-west corner, stands a two-storey head-gardener's house. Built against the exterior of the north garden wall is a row of small gardeners' cottages and potting sheds. In the far north-west corner of the garden stands a group of green houses, probably dating from the early C20: two are free standing (by Messenger & Co) and two are built as lean-tos. The walled gardens were first introduced by Viscount Malden in the late C18, and further improved in the C19 by the Arkwright family. The formal water garden with two pavilions in the southern garden, and the maze with castellated tower west of the walled gardens, were introduced in the late 1990s.