Lyme Park, Cheshire

Detailed Survey of Aspects of the Historical Landscape Development

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Fragment of Equestrian Portrait c1676 showing a birds eye view of the north front with the terraced walled gardens, including the walled north forecourt. To the east of the hall a pond with statue is visible, while to the west is depicted the layout of the tree lined sunken (Dutch) garden, with central pond. In the foreground is seen the stag pond.

Plate 1: Late seventeenth century painting of hall and gardens
View on the north axis recording the changes to the hall c1695. The belcote is now central and it appears a west bay has been added to the painting. The north driveway is shown leading towards the stables and not on an axis.

Elevated view of the North front as seen from Cage hill c1710 of a more pastoral setting, the south avenue extending to the skyline. In contrast to the former painting, the Green Drive is illustrated on a northern axis.

Plate 2: Late seventeenth and early eighteenth century paintings of the North front
Painting ‘View of the Cage’ c.1745 by Thomas Smith. The scene includes the cage as rebuilt by Giacoma Leoni and the ride leading back the Stag pond in the foreground.

Engraving of the Stag Pond c.1745 by Francois Vivares. He emulates the view by Smith, but he omits the Cage. The trees in the parkland are shown protected from grazing by raised rings of stones.

Plate 3a: Engravings and Paintings North of the Hall
View of the North Front c1850 by PC Auld, W Gauci. The new west terrace, tower and north forecourt are evident, as is a fountain pool in Swine Park as per the c1740 plan.

Engraving: View of the North Front c1854 by W. Walton. The scene correlates with that in 1850, but omits the fountain pool.

Plate 3b: Engravings and Paintings North of the Hall
Engraving of the South Front and Orangery c1850 by PC Auld, W Gauci. The pond is again remodelled and has been expanded to allow an island to be formed. This extension was refined c1864 and was retained through the 20th century.

Engraving: South and front Orangery c1850 by PC Auld, W Gauci. Here the pond has again been remodelled, expanding it and leaving an asymmetric apron of lawn.

Plate 4a: Engravings on the South Front
Engraving: South elevation and Orangery c1824 by JP Neale. This vantage point shows the west terrace walls soon after completion, the new south lawn, and also the new but incomplete orangery on the site of the old bowling lawn.

Engraving: South and East elevations c1837 by T Allom. It has an open view of the Hall following the removal of the bowling terrace. The pond is formed in a serpentine style and the south lawn defines the space.

Plate 4b: Engravings of the South Front
Engraving: View from the South-West by J. Alken: This view of the hanging gardens prior to the Lewis Wyatt alterations to the Hall and rebuilding of the terrace walls.

This engraving engraving gives an insight into the evolution of the gardens and the early layout of the terraces. The walls are indicative of landform change; the base of them providing a benchmark for the excavation of hanging or sunken gardens.

The east batter is akin to an earth dam, suggesting that the large pond (shown on the 1779 engraving) did extend to the width of the south terrace during the C18th. The sluice gate may have fed the cascade and the lake provided the head for the fountain system. This creative piece of fountain engineering was the product of Renaissance gardens.

Plate 5: Engravings of the South and West fronts
North elevation in c.1900; note the clipped yews and absence of the central lawn in the forecourt

Frontispiece c.1900

Plate 6a: Photographic Record, of the North and West fronts c.1900-1950
The North front in c1906 with the foreground shrub, which was planted in 1902. A central lawn is evident.

The north elevation c1945. The yews were no longer clipped and the turning circle appears crowned

Plate 6b: Photographic Record, of the North and West fronts c1900-1950
The old west approach above Swine Park c.1900

Swine Park showing the open route of the beck c.1900

Plate 6c: Photographic Record, of the North and West fronts c.1900-1950
Photograph recording the east terrace and Lantern vista c1947

East end terrace and Pleasure Ground c1910

Conservatory terrace c1910

Clipped Holly c1910

Plate 7a: Photographic Record, East Terrace (1900-1950)
Summer bedding adjacent to the east terrace steps c1920

East elevation and terraces following the planting of silver lime c1947

The Conservatory or Orangery terrace c1904

Plate 7b: Photographic Record, East Terrace (1900-1950)
View towards the Rose Garden soon after planting

Layout in c1947

Plate 8a: Photographic Record, Rose garden and killtime (1900-1950)
Plate 8b: Photographic Record, Rose Garden and killtime ferns (1900-1950)
East Terrace steps with view to Hampers wood c1904 (Country Life)

A view of the c1840 south pond island, in c1910

Plate 9a: Photographic Record, South Pond c1900-1950
A view through to Hampers wood from East Terrace c1904

Island and view to Hampers wood showing the newly planted western hemlock, now prominent on the lake edge.

Plate 9b: Photographic Record, South Pond (1900-1950)
South elevation with conical yews as per the the east terrace. These were the favoured of Vicary Gibbs who advised Lord Newton on the planting of the lower west terrace.

Plate 10a: Photographic Record, South Front c1900-1950
View from the east terrace steps c1905 detailing climbers over the east range

South front with eighteenth century specimen lime

Plate 10b: Photographic Record, South Front c1900-1950
A view showing the leaning stem of the lime, but no crown

Plate 10c: Photographic record, South Front c1900-1950
The Dutch Garden c1904 in early summer

Photograph dated c1947 The small sculptures appear to be broken off.

Plate 11a: Photographic Record, ‘Dutch’ Garden c1900-1950
A 1903 view of the area then known as the Italian Gardens. A new yew hedge was planted to screen the course of the beck across the Swine Park.

A 1904 Country Life record of the virginia creeping the south terrace wall. In the south park the lime avenue is visible.

Plate 11b: Photographic Record, ‘Dutch’ Garden c1900-1950
A 1903 view of the area then known as the Italian Gardens. A new yew hedge was planted to screen the course of the beck across the Swine Park.

1904 Country Life record of the virginia creeping the south terrace wall. In the south park the lime avenue is visible.

Plate 11c: Photographic Record, ‘Dutch’ Garden c1900-1950
The Green Drive which was the main approach for two centuries was turfed over in 1903, in favour of the new main drive, following a more gentle and sheltered incline west of the old Hawthorne Drive.

The original west drive from Macclesfield emerges from the knoll (Turtle Brew), and gave the visitor a striking of the hall entering Swine Park. This view is now dominated by the main visitor car park.

Plate 12a: Driveway Photographs
The convergence of the drives in the north forecourt parts the avenues

A third drive to the east lodge enters the high moorland of Cater Slack and has views to the Cage and Pennines.

Plate 12b: Driveway Photographs
The North elevation.

Mid nineteenth century Yew trees reinforcing symmetry to the drive

Plate 13a: North Forecourt Photographs
Main gates and railings as drafted on the c1814 Lewis Wyatt plan.

View of the north axis to the Green drive

Plate 13b: North Forecourt Photographs
The Lewis Wyatt c1815 Walls and stepped terraces created after the removal of the bowling lawn. The project was completed by Irish architect Alfred Darbyshire c1864

Scene of the Yew tree crown cut out for the Lord Newton view of the lantern

Plate 14a: East Terrace Photographs
View to the lantern from the Hall roof and showing the trees and Turf House Meadow which remove continuity of the vista.

The site of the old south-east pavilion, at the same position and level as the of the Rose Garden path at the line of the steps.

Plate 14b: East Terrace photographs
The South East end of the pond correlates with the hollow now seen in the upper terrace.

The elevated pond of 1740 was silted or filled up in the nineteenth century prior to the c1864 east terrace extension. The original terrace limit was defined by the bowling green.

Plate 15: East Terrace Old Ribbon Pond Photographs
Wyatt’s work extended to the east bays and the low level service corridor linking to the north side. This is visible behind the planting.

Junction of the Lewis Wyatt work is conspicuous on the east Hall elevation.

Plate 16a: East Terrace Walls Photographs
Further detail of the recent restoration.

Plate 16b: East Terrace Walls Photographs
According to plan overlays of the earlier gardens, the path here marks out the north-western pavilion.

Plate 17a: Rose Garden photographs
View of the 1913 garden, created soon after the removal of the orchid houses (pre 1871). The garden is sited at the east edge of the old bowling lawn and is set at the same level (according to the c1814 Lewis Wyatt survey).

Rose garden viewed from the pavilion.

The yews in the background correspond symmetrically with those at the main steps. Planted on the bowling green, they frame the Lantern vista.

Plate 17b: Rose Garden photographs
The pre c.1824 transition between the early terraced gardens and parkland of Turf House Meadow was dictated by the pond.

The uneven rising ground east of the terraces, extending to Swine Park appears to be the natural landform and likely pre-dates the Hall and Gardens.

Plate 18a: Pleasure Ground - the Link to the East Terraces photographs
The earlier c1740 plan shows this area divided by a semi-circular park fence. The remaining old beeches stand just outside the 65m fence radius.

The herbaceous border pictured is sited over the line of the old fish ponds and lines the existing c1864 path complex.

Plate 18b: Pleasure Ground - the Link to the East Terraces photographs
Hampers bridge over Killtime (c 1751). If the arch included in the c1740 plan was built and subsequently reused, the present structure may have reclaimed the stone, which may explain the numbered blocks in the bridge.

The existing path network correlates with the survey of 1871.

Plate 19a: Pleasure grounds - Killtime Photographs
The leaning hornbeam is close to the site of the arch proposed in the c1740 plan.

The natural vale leading to Swine Park, truncated by the South Terrace, provides a romantic contrast as a natural aisle to the park. The c1740 plan sites sculptures and a triumphal arch and acknowledges the beauty of the valley.

Plate 19b: Pleasure Ground - Killtime Photographs
This South-East view of the Hall is little changed from 1840s formation of the island.

The Silver Lime planted in c1946 is sited near to the original late eighteenth century lime planted close to the base of the bowling green embankment.

Plate 20a: The South Lawns and Pond
The view from the Wyatt tower details the lime dominated by other features i.e. the remodelled lake and island.

The south edge of the lake has been pushed back with successive enlargements of the pond, as seen on the c1850 and c1871 surveys.

Plate 20b: The South Lawns and Pond
The raising of the terraces lost the view into the Swine Park, but created a new landscape.

The Leoni west front overlooking the Macclesfield approach from the raised terrace or ‘Bull Pen’ in the foreground. The terrace was redesigned c1813-1820; the same phase as the Lewis Wyatt work.

Plate 21a: The West Terrace and Dutch Garden Photographs
The 5m retaining walls were re-built along the alignments of the original ones, enabling a new intermediate terrace walk. The walls were extensively repaired in the 1970s.

The Dutch garden is so called due to the planting style, rather than the Renaissance style terrace. Referred to as ‘the old garden’ in the late eighteenth century, water has been a component there ever since that time.

Plate 21b: West Terrace and Dutch Garden
The ornamental planting is not part of the broader design. Plate 22a: Vicary Gibbs Garden Photographs
Plate 22d
The Vicary Gibbs garden now screens the visitor car-park from the terrace, but soon will achieve undue influence upon the landscape.

Plate 23c
The garden as seen from the north forecourt shows the informal planting enclosed by a frame of mature yew trees

Plate 22: Vicary Gibbs Garden Photographs.
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The Leoni west front overlooking the Macclesfield approach from the raised terrace or ‘Bull Pen’ in the foreground. The terrace was redesigned c1813-1820; the same phase as the Lewis Wyatt work.

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The Dutch garden is so called due to the planting style, rather than the Renaissance style terrace. Referred to as ‘the old garden’ in the late eighteenth century, water has been a component there ever since that time.

Plate 21b: West Terrace and Dutch Garden Photographs
The view shows across the Dutch Garden shows the limit of the garden obstructing the elevated West Terrace. It is named after the Hon Vicary Gibbs, who advised the planting detail (c1906).

The ornamental planting is not part of the broader design.

Plate 22a: Vicary Gibbs Garden Photographs
The garden as seen from the north forecourt shows the informal planting enclosed by a frame of mature yew trees.

The Vicary Gibbs garden now screens the visitor car-park from the terrace, but soon will achieve undue influence upon the landscape.

Plate 22b: Vicary Gibbs Garden Photographs
The twelve remaining sycamores denote the curve of the old ride of the cage and are not connected to the seventeenth century planning.

The Green Drive cut into cage hill extends some 400m on axis, enabling limited views to the hall. The North Gate route however allows views to the Cheshire plain.

Plate 23a: Views and Axis Photographs
On the South axis the Lime avenue sweeps to the horizon, while the parkland trees close other distant views.

The east axis an old vista which was established before the painting of c1676. The significance of the Great hall is reflected in the east range. A corridor has been cut into the recent wooded slopes to retain views of the lantern.

Plate 23b: Views and Axis Photographs
The 400m south avenue of a clone of European pines is set out with rows 6m apart (as seen at Versailles). The estimated age is currently based on ring counts of storm damaged trees indicating replanting took place c1840. This is 180 years after the original avenue, believed to planted soon after the Restoration of c1660.
Recent replanting at the southern end of the avenue seeks to restore the original grandeur. At 400m the ‘key hole’ view hides the south front, while the cage appears to sit floating in the trees.
Groups of four limes in the Pleasure Ground and meadow frame the old vista of the lantern in the manner of the c1740 plan of Lyme. Beyond the limes in the foreground is the Round, a woodland in the c1824. It is central to the Turf House Meadow, but offset from the Lantern scene.

Plate 25a: Turfhouse Meadow
In stem growth, the yew hedge appears to be post c1947, but the c1946 photograph shows a mature hedge on the same line, which may have been replaced soon after that date. Yew hedges of similar size are the 1902 Dutch Garden hedge and the c1913 Rose Garden.

The track leading to the quarry follows the line of the ridge above the pleasure grounds. To hide the garden deer fence and maintain privacy from the footway, the yew hedge would have been logical.

Plate 25b: Turf House Meadow
The walled enclosure (145m x 70m) shown on the c1740 plan of Lyme was clearly scratched out on the original c1824 survey plan. It may have been an early walled productive garden, or an animal enclosure. It was set apart from the ornamental gardens (as seen on other estates at this time). Now parkland, the cedar and yew clumps alone echo the old enclosure. A ridge is evident on the line of the most southern connecting wall (or fence) which extended to Bull close. The walls linked to the Killtime and avenue are not so readily discernible.

Plate 26: Walled Enclosure in Hampers
Damage to the Rhododendron bushes, Coalpit Clough.

Sheepscar on Park Moor recolonised vegetation.

Plate 27: Erosion at Coalpit Clough and Park Moor
Bare soil scar at north side of Poynton Brook - scar and disintegrating turf cover

Bare soil scar at Pursefield Wood - tracks and bare soil expose by deer

Plate 28a: Bare soil scar at Poynton Brook and Pursefield Wood
Bare soil scar at North side Poynton Brook - scar and disintegrating turf cover

Bare soil scar at tributary valley to Poynton Brook - tracked and disintegrating turf cover.

Plate 28b: Bare soil scar at Poynton Brook and Pursefield Wood
Tracking of the valley floor at Cater Slack

Tracking of the valley floor at Park Moor

Tracking of the valley floor at Coalpit Clough

Plate 29: Tracking of the Valley floor at Park Moor and Coalpit Clough
Stream bank broken down by red deer

Deer track crossing coalpit clough

Plate 30: Erosion at Park Moor and Coalpit Clough
Stabilised margins of scars - gorse and grasses around the margins, invading shale scar

Stabilised margins of scars - mossy, undisturbed backscar

Plate 31: Stabilised margins of scars
Plate 32: Deer ‘wallow’ at Park Moor and Coalpit Clough
‘Rutting Track’, below eastern escarpment, Park Moor - east side

Rutting track, below eastern escarpment, Park Moor - west side

Plate 33: ‘Rutting Track’ at Park Moor
Plate 34: Heather Moor at Dale Top

Heather Moor, Dale Top - grazed

Heather Moor, Dale Top - ungrazed, within enclosure
The cage following a major programme of restorations (Recent Works 5)

The Kennels following refurbishment - showing repairs to the eastern wall (Recent Works 5)

Plate 35: Restored Buildings - Cage and Kennels
The restored Wyatt Garden looking north (Recent Works 10)

The restored West Terrace Garden (Recent Works 11)

Plate 36: Restored Gardens - Wyatt Garden and the West Terrace
Recently established Paddock Cottage to Cage vista viewed from Paddock Cottage
(Recent Works 13)

Restored Lime Avenue - looking south (Recent Works 15)

Plate 37: Restored Vistas and Avenues: Cage/Paddock and Lime Avenue
Plate 38: Replanted Rounds: Turtle Brew and Drinkwater Rounds
Plate 39: Repaired Walls - Hase Bank and adjacent to Drinkwater Round

Repaired Hase Bank Wall (Recent Works 19)

Wall by Drinkwater Round during restoration (Recent Works 24)
Plate 40: Restored / Excavated Buildings: Paddock Cottage and the Stag House
The area of Cluse Hay which has been replanted with up to 5000 trees

Plate 41: Cluse Hay Restoration Project