

Understanding Historic Parks and Gardens in Buckinghamshire



The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research & Recording Project

Barton Hartshorn Manor

April 2016, revised September 2016



The Finnis Scott
Foundation



Bucks Gardens Trust

THE
GARDENS
TRUST



The Stanley Smith (UK)
Horticultural Trust



Scale: 1:3,285 at A4



Barton Hartshorn Manor: 2006 aerial photograph

© Getmapping plc. www.getmapping.com

Produced by the County Archaeological Service
February 2016



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 Gardens Trust (formerly the Association of Gardens Trusts and the Garden History Society) and funded by BGT with significant grants from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust and the Finnis Scott Foundation. BCC generously provided current and historic mapping and access to the Historic Environment Record.

The Trust would like to thank the volunteers and owners who have participated in this project and given so much time and effort to complete this challenging and rewarding task.

Further information is available from: www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk

COUNTY:	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	BARTON HARTSHORN MANOR HOUSE BCC HER 0491402000
DISTRICT:	AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT	
PARISH:	BARTON HARTSHORN	
OS REF:	SP 641 309	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Overview

A compact, complex Arts and Crafts garden for a smaller country house built to designs by Robert Lorimer when he extended the C17 manor house in two phases in the 1900s. Planting advice by Gertrude Jekyll is recorded but it is unclear to what extent this was executed. The layout includes formal terraces, lawns and garden compartments and a summerhouse, surrounded by a small park. Lorimer's layout and garden structures largely survive but it is unclear to what extent the Jekyll planting survives.

Archaeological interest

The identified archaeology is of local significance as far as it is understood. Archaeological potential relates to the former agricultural use of the site, lost buildings and elements related to the farmstead and manor house, and the lost C16 house noted in *Country Life*, as well as lost features relating to the early C20 layout, particularly lost garden paths, glasshouses, structures and other features in the former kitchen garden.

Architectural interest

A largely complete ensemble of buildings for an early C20 smaller country house incorporating a modest C17 manor house, including a summerhouse, steps and garden walls. The house was designed in two phases with the garden layout including walls, a pergola and summer house by notable Scottish architect Robert Lorimer. For Lorimer it was an unusual English commission for a smaller country house in two phases with the garden. The glasshouse group in the former service yard was supplied during this period, it seems by Messenger and Co. c.1905-09, but has gone.

Artistic interest

A complex early C20 Arts and Crafts style garden within a small park forming the setting for a smaller country house by Lorimer, which survives largely intact. The Lorimer layout responds to both his remodelled and enlarged house, and to the site with a series of formal terraced garden compartments below the west and south fronts of the house including originally the kitchen garden, contrasting with informal lawns and parkland beyond, within the rural setting. Gertrude Jekyll, one of the most prolific and influential early C20 garden designers, advised on the planting, as she did for other architects at other sites which she did not visit, but the detail of her advice is unclear.

Historic interest

The site is associated with the notable Scottish Arts and Crafts architect Robert Lorimer and the doyenne of early C20 garden design, Gertrude Jekyll.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Barton Manor is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 and the early lords of Barton took their name from the place. The manor was first called Barton Hartshorn in a grant of 1421. In about 1629 the manor was sold to Thomas Lisle, whose initials – T.L. - are thought to be those carved on the north-west gable of the house along with the date of 1635. His heir, Fermor Lisle, held it at his death in 1742 when it was left in trust for the use of his sister and her heirs (VCH). By 1813 the site comprised a yard, garden and orchard belonging to William Lisle and Charles Bowles, along with separate ownership of several other nearby cottages and parcels of land, adjoining a road running from west to east (Enclosure Map, CBS). The entrance to the house from the road lay through this cluster of buildings, with the church to the north-east. No significant changes occurred until about 1899 when it was acquired by Lieut. Col. Charles Trotter (VCH), possibly coinciding with the opening in 1899 of a railway line to London, with a station about 1.2km away.

Col. Trotter was of Scottish descent and married the eldest daughter of the first Baron Hamilton of Dalzell, also Scottish (*Buckinghamshire: A Short History with Genealogies and Current Biographies*; ed Grant, J). By 1910 Col. Trotter had acquired 41 acres, including the house and farm plus five acres of woodland and buildings either side of the road running through the locality (Domesday Survey, CBS). Trotter c.1901-02 commissioned the Scottish Arts and Crafts architect Robert Lorimer to extend the house and also possibly to lay out the grounds (RIBA). This included a general tidying up of the area, clearing farm buildings and the removal of the Fox Public House to a site on the road further east from the house (*Savage, Lorimer and the Edinburgh Craft Designers*). Close to the manor house and within the garden was a C16 house 'so dilapidated that nothing could be done save remove it' (*Country Life*). In 1902 Col. Trotter made changes to the footpaths in the area (*Bucks Herald* 1908). I

In 1908 Lorimer returned to make further major additions to the house including the summerhouse (RIBA and *Dictionary of Scottish Architects*) and possibly the garden layout, when Gertrude Jekyll was also commissioned to undertake a design for the garden (Surrey History Centre, January 2015). By 1910 a new drive led to the house from the north-west, constructed directly off the road (Domesday Survey). A feature in *Country Life* shortly after Lorimer's work was completed noted that "the gardens have grown up well and the leaden cupid bearing a sundial is able to survey trim hedges which do credit to their tending." (September 1913). The new park and garden layout were shown in detail on the 1920 OS, including a group of glasshouses probably supplied by the notable firm of Messenger and Co. between 1905-09 (MERL).

In 1931 Colonel Trotter died. His son had been killed in action in 1915 and the estate was left in trust to his grandson, through his daughter Mrs Fortescue. In 1958 the estate, described as Barton Hartshorn Manor (7 acres), Manor Farm (106 acres), five cottages and the kitchen garden (sales particulars) was sold by Mrs Fortescue and the estate was divided. In 1984 Mr and Mrs GC Cox bought the manor and garden and subsequently also the farm. In 1996 they sold the manor and garden, but kept the paddock and kitchen garden. The manor and garden were sold again in about 2005 and the site remains in private hands and in divided ownership.

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING

The 17ha. site lies near the western Bucks border with Oxfordshire, some 10km north-east of Bicester and 5km south-west of Buckingham. It lies south of a minor road which runs east from the A 4421 before joining another road running north-east to join the A421. The area owned by Col. Trotter included land mainly to the south of the road, including cottages and the farm to the west. The northern boundary of the Manor House grounds continues west from the main gateway along the road to the entrance to St James's Church, beyond which is the northern boundary of the former orchard, now the location of a house; then by the Manor Farm buildings which enclose the north-east corner of the site. The western boundary is marked by a track running south to fields.

The east, south and west of the site are surrounded by agricultural land. To the north beyond the road the land is arable. The area is flat, rising gently towards the north and the soil is clay. There are trees along the road and individual trees and clumps in the fields to the south. There are no significant views beyond the site, but the setting is rural and, despite its location near to two busy roads, it is very quiet.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

The main entrance to the Manor House is from the north off the village road via a gateway standing 90m north of the house, comprising double iron gates set in stone pillars, with decorative obelisks above. From here a gravel driveway flanked by yew hedging leads south to a large turning circle at the front door, which is on the west side of the north wing of the house. The approach is dominated by the entrance drive and turning circle. A mature walnut tree that was retained as a focal feature in Lorimer's new forecourt (*Country Life*) has disappeared, though it seems a new tree has been planted in the same spot. The 1922 OS shows a group of shrubs outside the north east wing, similar today and the turning circle is bounded by yew hedging. The north-west side of the forecourt is divided from the church and graveyard by hedging and an area of mature shrubs and trees.

A secondary entrance off the village road lies 112m north-east of the house, which was designed as the tradesmen's entrance. It is smaller in scale, but has stone pillars and gates, possibly early C20. This leads south-west to a parking and courtyard area, below the east side of the house, where there are also a wooden workshop and large garage/storage areas flanked by conifers. Between the two drives is an area of orchard (shown on the 1920 OS), a double garage, a hard tennis court and stores (sales particulars 2005).

A third entrance lies 70m north-west of the house, called the Postern Gate, adjacent to the churchyard entrance. This entrance predates the other two (OS 1880). It comprises a tall wooden gate set within an arch set back off the road by some 50 along a broad gravel drive which runs along the north side of the orchard. On the south-west side is a brick wall, parts of which may be contemporary with the manor house with to the north the hedge that separates the garden from the churchyard.

Several footpaths formerly crossed the park (OS, 1920).

PRINCIPAL BUILDING

The Manor House (listed grade II) is built of rubble stone with ashlar dressings about 1635, with major additions by Robert Lorimer in two stages. The first work commissioned in 1902 was to add a small number of rooms to the existing house and in 1908 the house was reordered with the addition of a large kitchen wing to the north and east (*Country Life*). On completion of these works the house formed an L shape plan with the main living quarters to the west and the service quarters to the east. A mature walnut tree as the focal point in the north corner (*Country Life*). Specimen walnut trees are often found closely associated with Bucks farmhouses (Pers. comm. S Rutherford, December 2015). The result is picturesque and entirely successful (Pevsner).

The north face of the house, with the front door, looks over the main driveway to the gateway and road. Lorimer added a gable on the north-west front to match that on the north-east, existing from the C17. The south aspect, with views from the drawing room and dining room, looks over terraces, which originally had planting designs by Gertrude Jekyll and then out to the garden, small tree belt and beyond to park paddocks. A view of the house from the south-east (*Country Life*) showed assorted climbers covering much of the walls, typical of early C20 Arts and Crafts schemes. The west garden, which is also viewed from the drawing room as well as the smoking room and the boudoir, has terraced steps leading down to a formal garden. This had a seat at the top of the steps outside the house and again the house wall was covered in climbers at the south west corner (*Country Life*). The east wing contained the tradesman's entrance and service yard, with a range of service rooms.

Manor Farm (listed grade II) stands 180m west of the house and is C16-17, built of rubble, with gables and mullioned windows (Pevsner). The earliest parts of the church of St James (listed grade II), standing 30m north-west of the house in a small churchyard, probably date from the C13 and it was restored in 1905 (Pevsner).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

No design plans have been found of the garden, but Peter Savage (*Lorimer and the Edinburgh Craft Designers*) states that the layout of the gardens was the work of Lorimer. It is unclear whether the garden was laid out in the first phase of Lorimer's work, c.1902 or the second, 1908, when Gertrude Jekyll provided advice on the garden. The new garden included the extension of the north drive to the forecourt, terraces on the south side of the house, and the establishment of extensive compartmentalised yew hedges of the west side and a new kitchen garden. Details of the garden layout at its most fully developed appear by 1920 (OS) and were replicated in the sales particulars of 1958 which described the house as surrounded by well matured grounds, with some very fine old trees, evergreens and ornamental hedges. The pleasure gardens were said to be most undoubtedly one of the finest in the district – with open lawns, rose and flower borders and picturesque tree lined walks. The beech tunnel was mentioned as a special feature, as was the summerhouse known as The Gazebo.

The Manor House is surrounded by garden to the west and south.

The east boundary of the garden runs south from the minor road for 250m and was formally enclosed by park fencing, parts of which survive. 50m south-east of the house at an early C20 stone summerhouse the boundary of the garden turns west in a loop round the house, with a small stone wall and ha-ha below. At a corner south-west of the house are the remains of an iron park gate. From here the boundary projects west for about 200m before reaching an early wooden gate which gives access to a beech allee running north.

Below the south front is terracing, similar to the 1913 layout (*Country Life*). *Country Life* refers to a lead cistern, dating from the reign of Queen Anne, on the south terrace. To the south beyond the terracing is a formally planted terrace. East of the house below the former service wing is a paved area with car parking, and to the south, beyond this is a lawn, bounded by hedging which includes the stone Gazebo at the far south-eastern corner. This looks over grazed park paddocks, with a scatter of mature trees. To the south-west is another area of lawn, with groups of shrubs and trees bounded by a belt of mature trees including horse chestnut, birch and yew.

Below the west front of the house is a terrace, with steps down from the drawing room corner on the south west corner, leading to a small area of lawn and then a formal yew hedge set out in a "D" shape, with the straight side facing the house and the semi-circular side facing the kitchen garden beyond, with a path through the middle. This path leads through the beech allee and continues across the northern boundary of the former kitchen garden. On the west side the boundary between the garden, the former kitchen garden and orchard is marked by the beech allee running north/south, ending at the south in the wooden gate into the park. The boundary to the north-east is hedged between the entrance by the church near the north-west corner of the house. This layout is recognisable from the 1920 OS. In 1913 (*Country Life*) a view extended from the drawing room on the west front, along a formal grassed allee to a cupid positioned at a focal point on the path leading west towards the kitchen garden. The cupid has since gone. Yew hedges, with topiary, also seen in 1913 (*Country Life*) have been simplified.

PARK

The house and garden are surrounded by a small park to the south and east now grazed pasture, with some mature specimen trees and a plantation to the south. In the late C19 (1880 OS) planting in the fields around the house was mainly confined to the boundaries. By 1920 (OS) the ornamental planting included a major clump directly south of the house which terminated the view south from the house.

KITCHEN GARDEN

The c. 1 ha. rectangular kitchen garden lies 70m south-west of the house. It is bounded to the east by the beech allee, to the north by an overgrown yew walk, to the south by the park boundary and to the west by the Manor Farm buildings and the track running south to the fields. At present (2015) this is laid to grass with no obvious features.

By 1920 (OS) the kitchen garden was bisected west to east by a path which continued the line of a path running west through the beech allee from the informal lawned garden compartment south-west of the house. Just west of the beech allee was a circular feature within a semi-circular hedge or wall. In 2005 a cone protected this site which may have been a well, or dipping pool. In 1958 (sales particulars) the kitchen garden was productive with a considerable number of mixed fruit trees, with three greenhouses, 20 cold frames and an old boiler house.

Peter Savage (*Lorimer and the Edinburgh Craft Designers*) states that Lorimer sited the vegetable garden to the east of the service wing. This is contrary to the 1920 OS map; the map in the 1958 sales particulars and to local knowledge (2015).

North of the kitchen garden lies the former orchard (0.5 ha.). This is bounded to the west by Manor Farm buildings, to the north by the road and the drive to the church, to the east by the beech allee and to the south by the remains of the yew hedge. This contains in the eastern half a recently-built house.

West of the kitchen garden, adjacent to the farm track, lies a walled enclosure, now a paddock, which was formerly a service yard containing a group of glasshouses (gone). The group included a large, freestanding, south-facing glasshouse with another smaller glasshouse adjacent to the west and frames to the south. The notable glasshouse company Messenger and Co. recorded greenhouses, a forcing house and heating apparatus for the Hon. Mrs Charles Trotter as their client in 1905, 1906 and 1909 (Messenger archive, MERL TR MES AD1/1666). The layout of the glasshouses and related structures shown on the 1920 OS was still present in 1945 (AP, RAF, Google Earth).

ROBERT LORIMER, ARCHITECT (1864-1929)

Robert Lorimer was a renowned early C20 Scottish architect who carried out several commissions in England and abroad, but most of his commissions were in Scotland and of a domestic nature. He is noted for creating a modern Scottish style of architecture and gardens based on historic precedent and for his sensitive restorations and promotion of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Barton Hartshorn is an unusual isolated English commission for him, for a smaller country house together with the garden layout in Arts and Crafts style. He married c.1902 Violet Wyld of Tile House, Denham (qv), Bucks who was a distant relative. It seems that he did not work in England again until he returned to Barton Hartshorn in 1908 for the second phase of the house, when the garden was apparently laid out. He also worked on the farmhouse, farmstead and the summerhouse (*Dictionary of Scottish Architects* online). Elsewhere in Bucks he worked at Eton College in 1917, and at Stowe School in 1926-27, including designing the school chapel after winning a competition.

The first of his English houses was Whinfold in Surrey, 1898, where his client E P Benson introduced him to Gertrude Jekyll who developed his ideas on gardens: from the very first these had been a particular interest from the family garden at Kellie and his great early work, the restoration of Earls Hall, Fife (1892) in which he laid out a new garden, designed garden pavilions and a lodge. Gertrude Jekyll was influential on his ideas on gardens and gardening and he was inspired by a visit in 1897 to her garden at Munstead Wood, Godalming, Surrey. In 1901 he was working at High Barn, Hascombe, Surrey around the same time, or shortly before, he began the first phase at Barton Hartshorn. Miss Jekyll also advised on the planting at High Barn in 1901. It is unclear how Jekyll was brought in to Barton Hartshorn in 1908 but probably upon the recommendation of Lorimer who would have produced the framework design which she clothed with planting schemes. Shortly after, in 1910, while he restored and extended Lympne Castle he worked on the terraced gardens, at the head of a slope with spectacular views over the Kent coast and English Channel.

Although so often associated with the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, Jekyll worked with nearly 50 other architects including prominent names and those, such as Lorimer, who were leaders of the Arts and Crafts Movement. She once described the difference between working with Lutyens and with Lorimer as that 'between quicksilver and suet' (Tankard, Wood).

Miss Jekyll provided designs for a number of other sites in Buckinghamshire including Woodside Place, Chenies (her first commission with Lutyens, 1893), Cheswick, Hedgerley (1902), Pollard's Park, Chalfont St Giles (1906), Rignalls (Adams and Holden, 1909) Nashdom (Lutyens, 1909), Chalfont Park (Lutyens, 1912, qv), Fulmer Court (1913), Bramleys, Great Missenden (architect E Willmott, 1913), Pednore House, Chesham (architect Forbes & Tate, 1919), Little Haling, Denham (1927, architect W Sarel), Ponds, Seer Green (1928).

REFERENCES

Bucks Herald (14 September 1901; 24 May 1902; 12 September 1908)

Country Life Architectural Supplement (27 September 1913), pp22-23.

Dictionary of Scottish Architects, Robert Lorimer, http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200052
accessed 22 December 2015

Godalming Museum email 16 January 2015 (CBS)

Grant, J. ed., *Buckinghamshire: A short history with genealogies and current biographies* (1911)

Pevsner, N and Williamson, E. *The Buildings of England, Buckinghamshire* (second edition 1994) pp 166-167.

Sales particulars 2005 (CBS)

Sales particulars 1958 (Jackson-Stops) (CBS)

Savage, Peter. *Lorimer and the Edinburgh Craft Designers* (1980).

Surrey History Centre email 24 January 2015 (CBS)

Tankard, J.B. and Wood, M., *Gertrude Jekyll at Munstead Wood* (1998), pp 135, 167.

Page, W, (ed), *Victoria County History Buckinghamshire, Vol. 4* (1925), 147-149.

Maps

1813 Barton Hartshorn Enclosure Map (CBS)

1910 Domesday Survey (CBS)

Aerial Photographs: 1947, 1999, 2003, 2006

Ordnance Survey

1813/14 Ordnance Surveyor's Drawing (British Library)

1879 (surveyed), 1st edition 6" & 25" scale.

1898 (surveyed, 2nd edition 6" & 25" scale.

1920 (surveyed), 3rd edition 6", 25" scale.

Archival Material

RIBA

Contract for stables and alterations/additions to the house, 7p, signed, 1902 (LOR/1/4)

Alternative designs for entrance gates and stone piers for Col. Trotter 1908 (LORIMER PA883/2(1-2))

Museum of Rural Life (MERL), Reading University

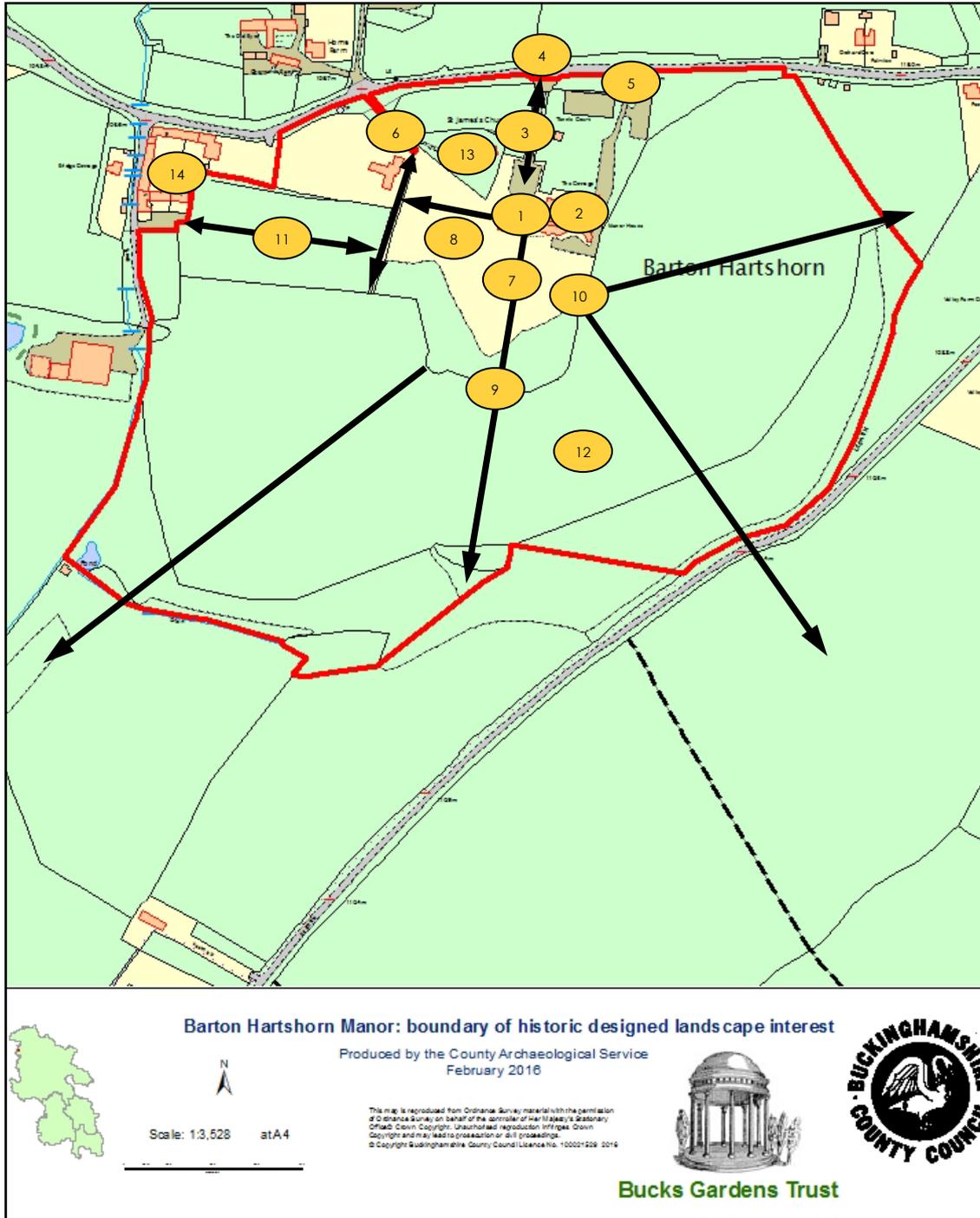
Messenger and Co. Archive, records for Barton Hartshorn 1905, 1906, 1909, TR MES AD1/1666.

Online at https://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/merl/TR_MES_full_catalogue.pdf

Jill Stansfield & Gill Grocott, 14 December 2015

Edited 18 September 2016 SR

KEY HISTORIC VIEWS & FEATURES



Key to numbered features

1. House	2. Service wing & courtyard
3. Main, north drive	4. Main, north entrance
5. Service entrance & drive	6. Church drive and Postern Gate
7. South gardens	8. West gardens and terraces
9. Ha-ha	10. Gazebo
11. Paddock (Kitchen garden)	12. Park
13. Church	14. Manor Farm

IMAGES OF KEY FEATURES IN 2005/06

Kindly supplied by Christopher Dingwall and Charles Boot



Main north entrance; gate pier; north, entrance front & forecourt.



East front (service wing); cross



Summerhouse overlooking park



Summerhouse; Church Gate; Tunnel Gate



Topiary; west front; seat and table



Bench view; west and south fronts; terrace



Topiary view; west front; view from west front



West front



Parterre southwards; parterre northwards to south front and west wing; parterre south-eastwards



Beech Walk; topiary below west front;



Rear of summerhouse, wall to park; ha-ha from park