



ENGLISH HERITAGE

Garden and Park Buildings Selection Guide

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Selection Guide

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I INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

'Designed landscapes' is now a well-established omnibus term to describe landscapes created to provide aesthetically pleasing settings for private houses, institutions and facilities (such as waterworks). It includes private urban gardens, public parks, town squares and public walks, and municipal cemeteries, as well as allotment gardens. The landscape parks of the eighteenth century that were set out around country houses in an idealised 'natural' manner were hugely influential throughout Europe and North America and are considered to be among England's most important contributions to art and design. Planned green open spaces in our towns and cities make a major contribution to the quality of life. All designed landscapes are likely to contain buildings and other hard landscaping features that will often make a positive contribution to the overall character of the place. Those buildings of special interest will deserve to be designated, just like the designed landscapes within which they stand which may be included on the *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens*. With early designed landscapes where the remains are mainly below-ground or survive as earthworks Scheduling has generally been the preferred designation option.

This section covers architecture in gardens and landscape. Inevitably, there is overlap with other selection guides. Monuments and Mausolea are covered in that for **Commemorative**. Fountains, hard surfaces and other items are covered in **Street Furniture**. Some categories of landscape buildings are also covered in **Sport and Recreation**, such as boathouses.

2 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SELECTING BUILDINGS ASSOCIATED WITH DESIGNED LANDSCAPES FOR DESIGNATION

Some buildings associated with designed landscapes are important in their own right. Others are quite minor, utilitarian or unobtrusive but nonetheless make a contribution to the aesthetic quality or the functioning of the whole and help us interpret the landscape. While such minor elements may not always warrant individual designation, they may assume greater significance when they lie within the best parks, gardens, and other designed landscapes. These latter (currently standing at about 1,600 in all) have been included on English Heritage's *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens* (available on the English Heritage website) and specific criteria for their selection have been published elsewhere.

Many of the best-known structures in this category are garden buildings. In the past, they were not taken seriously, and were dismissed as 'follies'. There is now much greater appreciation of the quality of the buildings and the role they play as key incidents in subtly planned landscapes, as eyecatchers and incidents on carefully conceived routes. While local materials were frequently employed in their construction,

these buildings are rarely vernacular in character. Instead, as complements to architect-designed principal buildings, styles were generally taken from the polite mainstream, and most leading architects undertook such commissions. Assessment for designation will take account of these changes in perception.

Designed landscapes, and especially private parkland, frequently contain functional structures that may merit designation too. Walled kitchen gardens, well houses, pump houses, ice houses, and game larders are all commonly found. Stables (see the selection guide for **Suburban and Country houses**) and kennels supported the sporting life, while home farms (see the selection guide for **Agricultural Buildings**) could be architectural expressions of an enlightened and improving landlord.

3 HISTORY

Before the Eighteenth Century The greater medieval castles, palaces, houses and monasteries had gardens designed both for pleasure and the cultivation of vegetables and herbs. They were formally laid out and equipped with garden walls, arbours, benches, fountains, and even banqueting halls detached from the house proper. 'Little parks' were semi-natural pleasure gardens close to the house and anticipated the informality of later centuries. Great houses sometimes lay within wider designed landscapes, intended to set them off and impress visitors, with artificial moats and lakes. These most often survive as earthworks and archaeology, rarely as standing buildings. Scheduling has generally been used to designate the best examples. Deer parks, of which there were several hundred by the end of the period, usually sited in open country were enclosed by banks and hedges, occasionally with walls, likewise normally survive as field monuments. Again, very good examples may be Scheduled. Sometimes archaeological or other evidence may be sufficient to allow for accurate re-creations to be made, as at Queen Eleanor's Garden, Winchester Castle. Upstanding buildings associated with gardens and parks remain extremely rare even throughout the Tudor period. This is because they were often of impermanent construction, or underwent thorough remodelling in later centuries. Very occasionally, houses that declined in status (perhaps because the principal family seat was moved elsewhere) retain features that were not modernised such as the walled courts, lodges and banqueting house at Haddon Hall (Derby.). Such survivors are very precious.

In the decades to either side of 1600 increasingly large and showy country houses started to appear, outwardly designed to impress with displays of symmetry, carving, and ranges of glinting windows. Complementing these were usually formally arrayed garden courts, entered by impressive gateways (sometimes with elaborate wrought iron gates and armorial overthrows), defined by balustrades or other decorative walling, and sometimes with pavilions or summerhouses at their corners to provide shelter and views over the gardens and the wider estate beyond.

The fashion for such formal landscapes, largely influenced by Italian and French gardens, took off apace after the Restoration in 1660. Garden compartments about the house, defined by hard landscaping or clipped hedges, were extended into the countryside beyond by linear avenues of trees or rides through woodland. Within the garden compartments, parterres might be laid out - symmetrically divided patterns created through beds cut in lawns, low hedging, and gravel and coloured stones. Water was sometimes used for fountains, jets, and cascades, or at greater houses carried into

below-ground grottoes set with statues of river gods. After the Dutch king William III came to the throne in 1688 garden fashions from the Low Countries became fashionable; parterres became more complex, elaborate topiary became popular, and greater use was made of lead urns and statuary, much drawn from Classical mythology. Good examples of garden buildings and hard landscaping of this date, as encountered at Westbury Court (Glos.), are rare.

The Early Eighteenth Century Influential opinion, and garden fashions, now began to move away from such rigidly artificial layouts. Cleaner sight lines were favoured in gardens, and the ha-ha or sunken fence introduced to allow an uninterrupted view from house and gardens across to the landscape beyond. Classically derived (and more rarely Gothic) temples, statues and columns appeared, sometimes intended to convey political ideas or philosophies to the well-educated visitor: pre-eminent among these are the grounds of Stowe (Bucks), laid out throughout the eighteenth century. Lodges or other architectural features such as short lengths of curtain wall marked the main entry points to designed landscapes.

The 1730s and 1740s saw a relatively short-lived fashion for so-called Rococo gardens featuring serpentine or curvilinear paths, shell-decorated grottoes, and especially garden buildings and bridges in the classical, 'Gothick' or Chinese (Chinoiserie) styles. Complete landscapes of this type were relatively rare: Painswick (Glos.) is among the outstanding examples, although many gardens gained individual features. Many Rococo features were insubstantial – often made of softwood – and survivals are rare.

In towns, the houses of the well-to-do generally had small pleasure grounds behind, and in microcosm these could reflect broader garden fashions. Summerhouses or gazebos set on the end wall were the commonest structures.

Public Walks and Open Spaces Residential squares began to be laid out in London in the seventeenth century, and during the eighteenth started to appear in cities like Bristol (Queen's Square, 1700) and Bath (Queen Square 1728). These squares were sometimes public, but in other cases formed private communal gardens, accessible only to residential key holders. Public squares often acquired statuary and other memorials, along with seats (sometimes roofed) and other street furniture. It was also during the eighteenth century that town commons and other urban open spaces were occasionally provided with public tree-lined walks and hard landscaping. Linear public gardens with houses set back from the road, grew in popularity in towns like Cheltenham and some seaside resorts in the early nineteenth century.

The Mid Eighteenth Century to Early Nineteenth Century: Landscape Parks Informal landscapes evolved rapidly from the middle of the eighteenth century, under the influence of designers like William Kent (1685-1748) and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-83). Huge numbers of landscapes around houses were transformed, or laid out from scratch, in an idealised 'natural' manner, with pasture ground running uninterrupted from the house (animals being kept at a distance by an unseen ha-ha) into gently undulating grounds studded with clumps of trees and with the world beyond screened by plantation belts around the park edge. The key feature of interest was usually a lake in the middle distance, ideally contrived to resemble a great river curving through the park. Buildings and structures played a key role too. Eyecatchers added variety and interest to the wider landscape and exceptionally, as at Stowe, these

adhered to an over-arching iconographic scheme. The whole landscape was likely to be bounded by a wall or railings, with gateways watched over by gatekeepers' lodges. Such landscape parks are reckoned among the country's most important contributions to European civilization. While landscaped parks of this sort are generally associated with great country houses, even a modest gentleman's house, rectory, or merchant's villa might be set in an informal few acres of grass and specimen trees defined by an imposing wall and with some form of summerhouse to provide shelter. Kitchen gardens multiplied too.

Georgian to Victorian: The Rise of the Garden Landscape parks were criticised for reducing interest around the house. People wanted grounds to walk in, shrubs and flowers to provide colour, scent, and seasonal change, and a degree of shelter and privacy from the world beyond. Around 1800, the influential Humphry Repton (1752-1818) introduced raised terraces around the house to separate it from the grounds beyond. Sometimes these were decorated with elaborate flower urns. Pleasure grounds comprising flower beds, lawns, shrubberies and walks, sometimes with edged pools, summer houses, statuary and other architectural features, became commonplace between the house and park. The 1820s Swiss Garden at Old Warden, (Beds.) shows the Regency picturesque landscape – a style often called the gardenesque - at its busiest.

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, some gardens (such as West Park, Bedfordshire) reverted to the severely formal fashions of the seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries with terraces, balustrades, vases, basins and fountains, elaborate steps and gateways, seats, summerhouses, and statuary. Some of these latter features, vulnerable to the elements, were industrially produced, moulded from terracotta, Coade stone, or cast iron.

Public Parks and Institutions In the 1830s, concerns about urban overcrowding and the condition of the poor resulted in the public parks movement. Town parks, funded from the rates, began to be laid out in large numbers, and by the end of the century were common. Victoria Park in Bath, designed by Edward Davis in 1829, was among the earliest. Overall design concepts were borrowed from the rural parks of the gentry with boundary walls, gate lodges, shelters and seats, inter-weaving paths for exercise, specimen trees, one or more lakes, and mass bedding, but with communal buildings such as bandstands thrown in. Such parks have been systematically reviewed by English Heritage with designation generally confined to the earlier, and best surviving, examples and features. Institutions such as hospitals, workhouses and lunatic asylums, which proliferated in the mid nineteenth century, were similarly set within extensive landscaped grounds, with severely formal gardens near the main buildings, and more informal, park-like, grounds beyond.

The Twentieth Century Formal gardens remained popular in the Edwardian period, especially where they complement larger houses and institutions. Designers like Thomas Mawson (1861-1933) and Sir Reginald Blomfield (1856-1942) continued to employ steps, balustrading, and formal pools and basins around the house. At the same time architects like Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1914) and C.F.A. Voysey (1857-1941) created garden settings and features in a so-called English Vernacular style to complement relatively modest houses in the same idiom. Planting was informal with flowing

herbaceous borders as popularised by William Robinson (1838-1945) and Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932); garden structures played a lesser role in the overall effect.

The mid and later twentieth-century designed landscapes that have attracted the greatest attention are those associated with new towns and post-war renewal such as Plymouth, with its Civic Square (1962) by Geoffrey Jellicoe (1900-96), or large-scale housing developments such as the Barbican in the City of London. A theme that is common to many of these is the presence of specifically commissioned statuary and sculptures, many of which are of exceptional interest: Henry Moore's reclining figure at Dartington (Devon), placed on a terrace above the tiltyard, shows the combination of art and landscape at its most impressive.

4 SUMMARY OF SELECTION CRITERIA

When considering buildings that are associated with a designed landscape (but are not themselves the principal estate building such as the great house or institution) the following points are considered.

Date How an individual structure or group of buildings relate to the period of development identified above. Broadly speaking buildings are more likely to be listed the older and rarer they are.

- **Pre-1700** Much is known from documentary sources about the appearance of buildings within parks and gardens but very few indeed survive. All reasonably intact buildings of this date are eligible for listing as are fragmentary survivals including hard landscaping if they possess important evidence of their original function.
- **1700-1750** Buildings of this period are important, and reasonably intact examples are invariably eligible for listing, especially where they form part of an ensemble. Their interest and grading may be enhanced if they are the work of significant architects or are exceptionally rare examples of the insubstantial buildings typical of the Rococo period.
- **Circa 1750-1840** A period of international importance when English landscape design was at its most influential. Buildings will almost always be designated where they are integral to the overall design of the most important landscapes (those designated on the *Register of Parks and Gardens* in a high grade). Many are of high intrinsic architectural interest and will themselves warrant high grades. Serious consideration should be given to other buildings that survive in anything like their original form even where their context has been lost or degraded.
- **1840-1900** Designation will be more selective, with the better examples warranting protection. Intrinsic quality, rarity, intactness, historical significance and the extent to which individual structures form part of a wider garden or landscape, will be the main criteria used.
- **1900 on** Those buildings displaying high architectural quality, especially where the setting survives, will be eligible. The works of the most important architects and garden designers may warrant designation at a higher grade.

5 SPECIAL INTEREST OF CHARACTERISTIC BUILDING TYPES ASSOCIATED WITH DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

Buildings in parks and gardens fall into two broad overlapping categories: buildings of pleasure and buildings of utility. First are the eyecatchers, designed solely for architectural and visual effect (ruins, temples and columns), along with those buildings erected specifically to view them and the wider landscape (e.g., summer and banqueting houses, belvederes). The second category contains buildings that may be described as functional (dairies, deer houses, bridges, shelters), but which were often embellished so as to create architectural incidents along the circuits that ran through polite landscapes. Functions served both to maintain the estate economy (e.g., kitchen gardens) and entertain (e.g., hermitages, grottoes).

Buildings to See and Be Seen

Columns, obelisks and pyramids punctuate gardens and landscapes from the seventeenth century on; they frequently bore iconographic messages which adds to their interest. In parks of the mid eighteenth century *romantic ruins* became fashionable. A few were real: most were new. Always of interest, the grandest examples (like that at Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire) will merit a high grade. *Temples* were dotted around parks: normally they are classical (like that now at Cobham Hall, Kent, designed by William Chambers) but occasionally gothic, Chinese or even 'Hindoo' styles are encountered. These are always unusual and even more recent examples will warrant listing. Occasionally, eyecatchers made political or family statements.

Elaborate gates, ornamental screens often with heraldic displays of *statuary and armorial overthrows*, controlled access to landscapes and to zones within and between garden and park and were popular in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and are usually listable. There was a revival in their popularity in the later nineteenth century: intrinsic quality of workmanship and their contribution to important landscapes should guide selectivity. *Statuary, urns* and other features such as *sundials and astronomical devices* became extremely popular in the formal gardens and landscapes of the later seventeenth century. From the eighteenth century foundries and potteries began to mass-produce garden furnishings, and sometimes marks and stamps help identify and date these. Survivals are fairly common but have often been moved or introduced from elsewhere. Nonetheless, pre-1840 examples will generally always merit designation; later examples will be judged on aesthetic quality, rarity and date. Being located within a registered park will strengthen the case; so will being in situ. *Water features* were prominent within the formal gardens and landscapes of the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and were sometimes retained in later schemes. They include *pools and canals, rills* (or artificial streams), *fountains, and cascades*. Significance is enhanced if features form part of a contemporary complex, as notably found at Rousham, (Oxon.). Long unimpeded views from house and garden to the wider landscape were afforded by *ha-has*, ditches usually with a brick or masonry near-vertical inner face, intended to keep stock from the pleasure grounds around a house without the need for intrusive fencing. First appearing in England in the seventeenth century, early or monumental examples may be listable, as will those with strong group value.

Some buildings served as vantage points. *Banqueting houses* enabled family and favoured guests to take refreshment whilst enjoying the view. Their construction probably ceased after the mid eighteenth century and all are eligible for listing. *Belvederes* (from the Italian 'beautiful to see') and *Gazebos* (from the bastard Latin for 'I will gaze') and *summer houses* are often difficult to differentiate: typically belvederes are prominently sited and highly visible while gazebos are smaller and stand at the corners of inner courts. They will often fall within the curtilage of a listed building, or may be worthy of designation in their own right. Even early nineteenth-century urban allotment gardens, used more as pleasure gardens than for vegetable growing, contained summerhouses: these exceptionally survive and may merit designation.

Stands to provide an elevated viewpoint for spectators to the hunt (hence the modern term 'grandstand') are often elaborate and are invariably listed: they form the earliest surviving buildings associated with sport. Medieval *hunting lodges*, usually sited on an elevated location towards the centre of the park, often contained a large and well-lit first-floor room used for refreshment and spectacle: examples are rare and deserving of designation.

Utility and Decoration

Entrance lodges appear from the later seventeenth century both for security and to give the passer-by or visitor a hint of the quality of the family and its house. Generally small but often elaborate (and often designed to anticipate the architectural achievement of the greater house beyond), they survive in large numbers: many thousands were built up to the early twentieth century. Architectural quality will be a key factor when assessing them for listing, together with the degree of alteration. Their importance is enhanced if the accompanying park is registered. Similar principles apply to lodges at the entrance to public parks and cemeteries. Victorian park keeper's shelters are now rare, and may warrant designation too.

Bridges were often ornamental, sometimes designed to be seen rather than carry serious traffic, as at Blenheim Palace (Oxon.). Pre-1840 examples will generally be listable; later examples only if they are architecturally elaborate, have technical interest (e.g., in their use of iron or concrete) or are essential elements in an important landscape. Exceptionally *paths and surfaces* will have a decorative role (e.g., in the use of flags, sets and steps) and may be listable if integral to a wider design: see the **Street Furniture** selection guide.

Supplying the needs of the household was the *walled garden* where vegetables, fruit and flowers were grown. It was generally enclosed within tall brick, or brick-lined walls, creating its own secure micro-climate. From the mid eighteenth century it was usually placed away from the main house, and sometimes concealed by a shrubbery or plantation belt. South-facing slopes were favoured and sometimes the south wall was omitted to allow frost to 'roll off'. Exceptionally walls were made strongly sinuous ('crinkle-crankle walls'), perhaps to improve the micro-climate for fruit. The north wall might be 'hollow' and contain horizontal flues through which passed air heated by furnaces housed in sheds to the rear to aid the growing of soft fruit.

Intact *walled gardens* are likely to be listed if they form part of a wider estate ensemble, especially if it is a registered landscape and the 'big house' survives. An early date,

especially predating the proliferation of detached walled gardens in the mid eighteenth century, will strengthen the case for inclusion. Features to note include heated walls, surviving stoves or other heating equipment in north-wall sheds, hotbeds, like pine pits, and other attached structures. Considered design as displayed in elaborate doorways, copings, bee boles, and careful construction can also be relevant. Completeness matters too. Similar considerations govern *garden walls*. Where the original building they served survives, so much the better. Intactness, quality of construction and design, earliness of date and the presence of features of note such as gates, gate piers and niches will be of relevance too.

The growing of orange trees in tubs was introduced to England in the mid sixteenth century and light, airy and heated *orangeries* were erected to over-winter them. They were generally of brick (sometimes stone) with tall windows to the front and sometimes sides, typically opening to the ground to allow tubs to be carried straight in. Roofs were tiled or slated. The expanse of glass can make them among the most attractive garden buildings, as is the case with *vinehouses* too. In the 1840s cheaper glass led to a proliferation of *glasshouses* (for camellias, cucumbers, orchids and other exotica foodstuffs as well as bedding plants which characterise Victorian gardening). Examples predating 1840 will usually merit individual designation but greater selectivity must be exercised after that date, as many greenhouses were of standard construction.

Other produce-related buildings include *game larders* usually designed to be cool and well ventilated and sited down-wind from the house and walled garden. Examples survive from the eighteenth century, and some are architecturally decorative. Pre-1840 larders will generally qualify for designation as will elaborate later examples (such as that at Holkham, Norfolk). From c.1600 below-ground *icehouses* were built, usually brick-lined and typically with the profile of an inverted egg, for the storage of perishable goods kept cool by packed ice. By the later eighteenth century virtually every country house had one. Intactness, architectural elaboration of the entrance or façade, and relative date (generally eighteenth-century) will be the key considerations. As with all ancillary buildings, the structure's place as part of a surviving house and estate complex will be a key consideration. Ornamental *dairies* were not uncommon in mid to late eighteenth-century landscapes, a place where ladies of the house might assist with pastoral tasks such as butter-making. They contained tiled interiors for ease of cleansing, and were designed to be kept cool. Often picturesque in treatment, like the 1770s Gothick example at Sherborne Castle, Dorset (complete with reset Roman mosaic) they can occupy key positions in gardens and can be listable in a high grade.

The provision of a reliable source of clean water for greater households became an increasing concern in the post-medieval centuries. Structures such as *well houses* and *conduit heads* were sometimes designed to be more than purely functional.

Buildings to house birds and animals include *menageries* and *aviaries*, which became fashionable from the mid eighteenth century on, especially to house the then exotic pheasant. Early and decorative examples will generally be listable; survival rates are poor, however, owing to their light and ephemeral construction. *Dovecotes* (or *pigeon houses*) were built from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century to supply tender meat from spring to autumn, and were the preserve of elites. Whether square, multi-angular, or circular, dovecotes were typically of two storeys with internal nesting holes for the birds and a central revolving ladder (or potence) to give access to them. Most

frequently these are found in home farm complexes although sometimes they served as hilltop eyecatchers. Early and intact examples will always be considered for designation; some have been scheduled in the past too. *Deer sheds* to store fodder are often simple buildings but may have architectural pretensions when used as eyecatchers. Where they are associated with a court, paddock, wall or ha-ha they should be considered as a group. Likewise, *kennels* were sometimes ornamental, and elaborate or complete examples, especially pre-dating 1840, will be listable: the hunt complex of 1810 at Brocklesby (Lincs.) by James Wyatt is of particular note.

Numerous buildings in landscapes were erected for recreational purposes, and more consideration is given to these in the **Sport and Recreation** selection guide. These include *fishing pavilions*, sited alongside lakes and watercourses from the seventeenth century, which were sometimes provided with elaborate forms to be enjoyed from a boat or from a vantage point. Comparable too are *boathouses*. *Cold baths and plunge pools* often had medicinal uses. Few baths pre-date c.1700 – that at Carshalton, London Borough of Sutton, of c.1720 is a particularly monumental survival. By the end of the century cold, or plunge, pools became fashionable and relatively common. Essentially masonry tanks and of various plan forms, pools could be open to the elements or covered by bath houses. The fashion waned in the early nineteenth century, with the preference for outdoor swimming. Such structures will usually be listable. As ever, inclusion in a registered landscape will add weight to any case.

Two rare building types fall outside categories of utility and decoration. In each case, their primary purpose was to appeal to the visitor's imagination and induce a *frisson* of awe. This could be brought on through human and natural agents. *Hermitages* accommodated an aged hermit (in reality often a retired family servant), and were popular features in well-visited Georgian Romantic landscapes, such as the garden at Painshill, Surrey. They sought to appear rustic and self-built, of boulders, branches, moss and thatch, or else rocky and awesome. *Grottoes* are known in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (as at Wilton, Wiltshire) but reached their heyday in the eighteenth: Painshill has a fine example of this type too. A few were built in the nineteenth century as well, but by then fashion had moved on. Many invoked the underworld via the incorporation of water, statues of river gods, and exotic surfaces decorated with quartz, shells, bones and colourful minerals: the late Georgian example in Margate, Kent, now surrounded by housing, shows the sophistication these structures could attain. The degree of survival of such decorative schemes is a consideration although most grottoes will be listable.

Bandstands appear in public parks in the 1860s and concerts soon became popular: by the end of the nineteenth few parks lacked one. Most were probably purchased from commercial manufacturers and cast iron was the most popular material. Bandstands remain relatively common, and discretion should be used in selecting examples for designation; quality, rarity, date, and condition will all be factors, as may its location and the significance of the park itself. Again, registration will add weight to the case.

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