



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

Campsall Park

Statement of Significance

This statement of significance for Campsall Park, created by the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, is derived from research carried out as part of Doncaster Historic Designed Landscapes project.

1. Heritage Values Summary

Campsall Park provides an interesting insight into the desire of one owner to create a designed landscape during the second half of the 18th century. This was the key period in the development of the English 'landscape garden' style and those with large and medium-sized estates wanted to show their taste and wealth by having one. Many employed professional improvers, such as Thomas White, who worked on over 200 commissions. A recent study of two plans by White for Campsall, created twenty-five years apart, gives a different perspective to the historic value of this landscape, showing that its creation was a long and protracted process.

2. Historical Value ('Narrative')

Campsall is perhaps unique in having two major designed landscapes adjacent to it. Originally a royal manor, by the early 18th century it was in the hands of the Frank family of Campsall Hall and the Yarborough family of Brayton Hall and later Campsmount. While the Franks were the 'lord of the manor', they were the minor landowners in the township with their holdings scattered. Campsall Hall, dating from the early 17th century (or possibly earlier), occupied a prime position in the village next to the parish church but Richard Frank only owned a small plot of land (c. 20 acres) to the south and east of it.

When Richard's nephew, Bacon Frank, inherited the estate in 1762, he wanted to create an estate that befitted his status. Like many of his contemporaries he employed John Carr to modernise the 17th century Hall between 1762 and 1764. Seven years later, he commissioned Thomas White senior, the noted landscape designer, to prepare an 'improvement plan'. White's ambitious proposal for a meandering piece of water surrounded by parkland and shelter belts would have involved not only the removal of public roads but also the inclusion of a large part of common land, known as Littlemoor. However Frank was not able to implement the plan in full as he did not own much of the land, the bulk of which was the property of his neighbour, Thomas Yarborough.

Frank was undeterred and twenty-five years later, in 1796, he commissioned another plan from Thomas White. By this stage, he had collaborated with Elizabeth Yarborough (Thomas's daughter and co-heir) to move the public roads. However the enclosure required to put Littlemoor in private hands was only implemented in 1818, six years after his death. By this stage his son and heir, Edward, had been declared a lunatic and the estate was controlled by his mother. Campsall Hall was



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rented out for the next thirty years until Frederick Bacon Frank, his great grandson, moved back there in 1852. Frederick finally completed the designed landscape, which remained largely intact for a hundred years. In the 1950s, parcels of land were sold off for housing that culminated in the Hall and adjacent buildings being demolished in 1984. Part of the former parkland was bought by the Council and is now a public park.

3. Evidential Value ('Research')

While there are a good series of estate maps that document the changes to the landscape, detailed documentary records are missing from 1767. The map evidence shows that a small part of White's initial plan was carried out by 1795, most notably the lake ('Fishpond') and some pleasure grounds on the western extent of the parkland. However exactly when this occurred is unknown, as well as White's involvement.

It would be interesting to find out the designer responsible for the changes to the lake, including the addition of a carriageway from the second 'West' lodge from c. 1814 to 1818. Although White's second plan shows an entrance from the west on Sutton Road, it is further south than the one built.

4. Aesthetic Value ('Emotion')

Although the main buildings associated with the designed landscape have been demolished, the remaining southern part provides an important setting to Campsall village. The historic core of the village, covering the Church, former vicarage and the main street, is included in a Conservation Area. Key features listed for the Conservation Area include 'limestone boundary walls' and 'numerous mature trees' that are part of the former Campsall Hall estate.

The former parkland of Campsall Hall occupies a low-lying part of the area and is therefore visible to the many neighbouring residents on the slightly elevated ground surrounding it.

5. Communal Value ('Togetherness')

The public park that was created from the southern section of the parkland is an important and well used amenity for the local population. It has an active Friends group who help maintain it and were recently successful in getting the carriageway bridge repaired by the local Council.

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