



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

Sutton Park

Statement of Significance

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

1. Heritage Values Summary

The designed landscape of Sutton Park was developed by its owners, the Harland family and their successors for over 300 years, with major developments in the early 19th century and the 1960s. An improvement plan was prepared by Adam Mickle II in the late 18th century, however current evidence suggests little if any of it was implemented. The historic landscape including formal and productive walled gardens, an icehouse, pleasure grounds, parkland, woodland copses and woodland shelter belts largely remains. The estate therefore provides an important aesthetic and community asset for the village of Sutton on the Forest and its visitors. The house, Sutton Park (formerly Sutton Hall) is grade I listed, the icehouse, former stables and wall to kitchen garden are listed grade II. The house and gardens lie within the Sutton in the Forest Conservation Area.

2. Historical Value ('Narrative')

Sutton Park was initially developed by the Harland family who owned most of the village. Philip Harland is thought to have rebuilt the house, enclosed part of the former village green with the village pond to form a walled garden and probably started to develop the pleasure grounds and parkland between 1750 and 1766. An undated plan by Adam Mickle II for proposed alterations to the grounds commissioned by Philip Harland's son-in-law the Reverend Henry Goodricke survives. Whilst the proposals do not appear to have been fully carried out they give an indication of the owners' interest in contemporary landscape design and in Mickle's own working practices and ideas.

There were changes though to the designed landscape and in 1820 there was a small area of parkland of 40 acres (known as 'The Lawn' that had been extended in 1808) in addition to the walled garden, pleasure grounds and plantations. By 1851, the parkland had increased to 150 acres and features such as the woodland shelter belt next to the public road (enclosing the 'Long Walk' with a summerhouse at its southern end) and two formal terraces had been added south of the Hall. A fernery was added in the Edwardian period, and a third terrace together with a canal and additional landscaping was added in the 1960s. This was done, it is believed, on the advice of the landscape architects Percy Crane and Peter Coates.



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3. Evidential Value ('Research')

The late 16th century 'mansion house' that was remodelled or rebuilt to become the current Hall had gardens and orchards associated with it. Further research may reveal whether any of these features were incorporated into later landscaping. The listed icehouse also merits further examination to see if a more definite date could be found for its construction and whether it was converted from the summerhouse shown on Mickle's plan.

Further research might shed light on the extent of the involvement of Adam Mickle II at Sutton Park and his possible connections with the Goodricke family of Ribston Hall. Their 18th century gardens, developed by Henry Goodricke's father, were noted for their collection of rare and unusual trees and as the birthplace of the Ribston Pippin apple.

The extent of the involvement of the landscape architects Percy Crane and Peter Coates in the 1960s is not clear and it would be useful to pursue this further, given the growing interest in later 20th century gardens.

4. Aesthetic Value ('Emotion')

Sutton Park is the setting for the Hall (Grade I listed) and its associated stables. The house is surrounded by walled gardens, rolling parkland and a shelter belt in the heart of the village. The extensive red brick walls surrounding the mix of formal and more open walled garden, along with the house itself, are key features of the village landscape blending well with the traditional structures in the village. Although parts of the larger historical estate were sold off in the 20th century the present estate provides an aesthetically pleasing landscape.

5. Communal Value ('Togetherness')

Sutton Hall and its associated park are an integral part of the village of Sutton on the Forest and have been so for over two centuries. It provides a valuable semi-wooded green space in an otherwise flat, mostly agricultural landscape. A public footpath maintains some access to parts of the historic woodland for the local community who value and appreciate the landscape. During WWII Sutton Hall was occupied by officers of the Royal Canadian Air Force and it holds memories for those who were stationed there. The gardens continue to evolve with the development of a productive flower and vegetable garden outside the historic walled garden and the creation of a woodland Temple walk.

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