

HANDOUT 3

Researching Historic Designed Landscapes for Local Listing

Historic Landscape Project – Southeast



NOTES TO HELP IN DEFINING THE BOUNDARY OF A SITE'S DESIGNED HISTORIC INTEREST

It is recommended that you define at least a draft boundary line after completing your research. This can then be checked during site survey to confirm survival of the historic boundaries and/or to amend a boundary to take account of current conditions where change has occurred.

Ownership

- Ownership boundaries are not relevant when a site boundary is being defined – research by EH shows that the majority of sites are in multiple ownership (though most may originally been in single ownership)

Defining a site boundary

- The site boundary defines the extent of a park or garden considered to be *of special historic interest* and which survives in the present landscape
- The land within the boundary, therefore, describes and represents the area which is *listed as the site of local importance* (and therefore is included on the local authority's local list)
- Land eligible for inclusion within the boundary must be deliberately laid out for ornamental purposes; land laid out solely for economic or utilitarian purposes should be excluded (e.g. ancient woodland, ridge and furrow)
- Land or features outside the designated area may however contribute to its setting or views; these should be described in the text and marked on the boundary map
- The boundary of a site should always be drawn on an up-to-date OS map
- A site boundary reflects the current state of knowledge; further research may alter or extend the areas of historic interest
- Research will often reveal that the extent of an historic design has varied over time. As a general rule, the boundary map will aim to show the extent of the designed landscape *when at its maximum size*.

Condition/survival of a site

- Once a site's historic boundaries are identified (from research and mapping) these are compared with its present condition. Only those areas irretrievably and irreversibly lost to development e.g. housing, reservoir, major quarrying, are excluded.
- Where change is potentially reversible – or where land-use has historically been in a state of flux (e.g. C18 rotational cropping, parkland ploughed up in wartime, C20 farm intensification – or even a golf course), former areas of parkland now in poor/changed condition but where their historic boundaries remain intact should be included within the site boundary.

Boundary indicators

- The survival of strongly-defined historic boundaries is key to deciding if an area is retained within it. Where these boundaries have been lost on the ground a site boundary will need to

be drawn to a clearly-defined alternative that can be identified e.g. a stream, river, woodland edge; a man-made road or ditch; a mapped parish boundary

- Indicators of the boundaries of a designed park to look for on maps and on the ground may be any or all of the following: Park walls, ditches, boundary tree belts, typical parkland clump planting, ornamental water, breaks in the field pattern, drives and lodges. Early editions of OS maps show parkland as stippled.

Boundary indicators: Extended drives and rides

- Some sites were laid out with extensive rides and drives across the countryside. Judgement needs to be made as to their contribution to the overall design concept e.g. if they take advantage of striking topography to give approaches a picturesque effect. Local lanes and roads or farm tracks around the estate are normally excluded.

Buildings and the site boundary

- Include all main building groups, stables, kitchen garden structures, lodges and follies.
- Churches and farm complexes are normally excluded when on the fringes of a park; an exception might be when a church or farm/barn complex lies at the heart of a landscape.

Woodland and ornamental farmland

- Except where they clearly lie within the area of historic parkland, woodland features solely for economic or sporting purposes are excluded. Some woodland may serve both purposes and a judgement must therefore be made. Generally if the woodland is within the park, include it. If outside the park, exclude it.

Outliers

- A site may have a feature located outside the main park or garden but designed as part of the whole concept. These 'outliers' may be plantings or buildings (follies) and should be marked as detached areas with their own boundary. Where existing features (e.g. hill top clump, church) serve as focal points in the view, they are not included but should be marked as such points on the 'Views' map.

Gardens within a parkland setting

- Some sites will be listed purely for their gardens and will have very clear boundaries. A few may be set within amorphous parkland of poor quality and of minimal interest or relevance to the garden. In this case the parkland is excluded from the boundary and described only within the text section on 'setting'.

Virginia Hinze
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