

NEWARK PARK - LOWER PLEASURE GROUND WALLS

HERITAGE STATEMENT AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

LISTING

Newark Park House is Grade I listed. The Lower Pleasure Ground that exists today occupies a relatively level area of land at the head of the Muscovy Bottom valley to the south-west of Newark Park House. The walls to the Lower Pleasure Ground are Grade II listed and lie within the Grade II listed grounds on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. They are considered to be of moderate, local/regional significance.

Newark Park also falls within an AONB.

HERITAGE STATEMENT (INFORMATION EXTRACTED FROM 2012 CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (CMP))

The presence of a wall curving along the north and western edges of the Lower Pleasure Ground seems to date from Lewis Clutterbuck's era, and was part of his picturesque designed landscape to frame the Pleasure Grounds and to provide a surprise reveal when walking down to this area of the estate from the House. Particulars of Newark Park dated 1792 mention several features including the Pleasure Ground, which suggests that either Lewis Clutterbuck had been busy creating new features within the grounds of Newark Park already or that some elements of the ornamental landscape already existed in some form before his arrival. The recording of the fish pond as a separate entity from the Pleasure Ground suggests that in 1792 the Pleasure Ground still largely occupied the area immediately around the house and had not yet been extended downhill to include the fish pond and its surroundings. An engraving published by J & H Storer in 1824 shows both the wall that encloses the Pleasure Ground around its north side and the sinuous ha-ha wall that runs across the head of the valley below the lake.

A number of fashionable garden designers had worked in the region around the turn of the 19th century. However, there is no evidence to suggest that a landscape designer of repute was involved in the design of the Lower Pleasure Ground of Newark Park. The extent of the Pleasure Ground is modest and it seems quite likely that Lewis Clutterbuck developed the design himself. Designing their own picturesque landscapes around their houses had become a relatively popular pastime among the landed gentry by this date.

The Plan of the Manor of Ozleworth of 1821 (see Appendix 3) shows numbered compartments and gives descriptions of each. The Pleasure Ground is labelled as Area 2 and described in the schedule on the map as 'Garden and Plantation'. The zone extends along much of the north side of the ornamental pond and wraps around its west end. There is a further small, bulbous-shaped area attached to the west end of the main Pleasure Ground, which appears to have been enclosed by a boundary wall or fence. (This is also labelled as Area 2.) The notation suggests that this was the plantation. A

small building stood against the dividing wall between the main garden and this small plantation. A gateway connected the two spaces. Area 2 appears to have been framed by walls along its north and west sides and then enclosed by walls running in towards the edges of the pond. The small surviving gothic summerhouse that is built against one of these enclosing walls beside the east end of the pond is shown on the 1821 estate map. A second small building existed on the other side of the same wall, a little further to the north-east. As this building was positioned behind the Pleasure Ground wall, its use was probably utilitarian. At the extreme western end of the Pleasure Ground, there was another small building connected to the enclosing wall. It is shown on the 1821 estate map and the remnants of a corner of the building are still visible on site, with tumbled dressed stone lying nearby. This may have been another summer house and it has been suggested that it was designed to mirror the summer house at the east end of the lake. However, the 1821 map shows that it was built on the west side of the Pleasure Ground wall. It may have been designed to face into the second, smaller enclosure that to the west of the main Pleasure Ground, providing another, more private, summerhouse or a building of more utilitarian purpose. Part of the south-west boundary of the Pleasure Ground was defined by the western section of the ha-ha wall. The 1821 estate map shows the Pleasure Ground as being almost completely planted and it is possible to see a faint pattern of paths, laid out to a slightly distorted grid plan arrangement, running through the main area north of the lake. The planting was probably ornamental, intended to be viewed at close quarters while walking up and down the garden paths. A central east-west path was aligned on the gothic summerhouse. The smaller western enclosure appears to have been planted with trees and shrubs. No paths are visible on the map of 1821. The Gothic summerhouse to the east of the lake faces west and was probably used for taking refreshment during the summer months.

After the death of Lewis Clutterbuck in 1820, the estate passed to his son, Lewis (II), who appears to have been content to maintain the estate largely as his father had left it.

On his death in 1861, Lewis (II) Clutterbuck left a complex will allocating the use of Newark to each of his sons first and then his daughters, in age order. Three of his sons used and lived at the property intermittently and it was let between times. Little alteration appears to have been made to the landscape of Newark Park during this time, apart from making the Pleasure Ground into a productive garden and orchard, with a glass house built against the north wall. A greenhouse or conservatory had been built against the Pleasure Ground wall, which was adapted for the purpose. This was heated by a boiler house situated behind the wall. The footpath leading to this remains visible today. By now, the Lower Pleasure Ground was presumably used, at least in part, as the productive garden with the enclosing wall providing a suitable support for trained fruit trees.

After the deaths of all his children, Newark Park passed Lewis (II)'s grand-daughter, Annie Power-Clutterbuck in 1893, who did not want to live there and let it in 1897 to the King family. They immediately made it into their family home staying 50 years. The gardens were extended and embellished by the head gardener, Harry Cole under the direction of Mary King. In the Lower Pleasure Ground, the orchards that had been planted during the 19th century were cleared and the area was made into as an extensive productive garden. Aerial photographs of 1947 show the productive gardens occupying the whole of the area to the north and west of the lake, enclosed by the Pleasure Ground wall. There appear to have been two adjoining greenhouses, of slightly different sizes, built against the Pleasure Ground wall. Notes written by Harry Cole's grand-daughter, Ellen Elms, record her memories of a long walk with fruit cages in which cane fruits and strawberries were grown. She also describes a very long, south-facing peach wall which must have occupied at least

part of the 18th century enclosing wall. What appear to be substantial fan-trained peach trees are visible in a photograph of the productive gardens thought to date from the 1930s. (See Appendix 2 Photo 1)

In 1949 the National Trust took ownership and in a surveyor's report of late 1949 the kitchen garden (former Pleasure Ground) was described as semi-derelict and the wall surrounding it as being in unsound condition. The surveyor recommended reducing the wall in height or demolishing it.

For the first twenty years Newark Park was let and used as a nursing home. This was a period of decline during which the majority of the Pleasure Ground became overgrown and derelict. Simple gardens were maintained in the curtilage areas around the house.

When an American, Robert Parsons, took on the tenancy of Newark Park in 1970, the house was dilapidated and the grounds were overgrown and derelict. He began an almost single-handed campaign of restoration, working in the gardens by day and the house by night. He gradually cleared the grounds around the house, re-discovering the Lower Pleasure Ground and the Gothic garden building. The brick-and-stone walls enclosing the Lower Pleasure Ground had largely fallen down and very little of the wall east of the glasshouse remained at all. When he discovered the summer house at the east end of the lake, it was engulfed in ivy. The garden walls bordering the Lower Pleasure Ground were gradually re-built over a period of about 20 years with the aid of friends and volunteers. They were finally completed by the 1990s. Robert Parsons also constructed the Loggia in front of the Glasshouse and the larger gateway and piers into the Paddock at the west end.

BACKGROUND TO PROPOSED REPAIRS

The CMP recommended the following policies for the Lower Pleasure Ground:

- The wall should be maintained and repaired;
- Missing and failing sections should be re-built in a manner appropriate to the original 18th-century wall;
- The Loggia should be removed (currently unsafe);
- The archaeological remains of the building at the west end should be visibly retained during any re-building of the wall.

Regrettably, due to funding issues and other repair priorities at Newark Park, maintenance of the wall has fallen behind in recent years. The recent collapse of part of the Summer House wall following a period of prolonged and heavy rain has drawn attention back to the historical importance of this wall and the need to maintain it before further historical fabric is lost. This application presents a plan for repair that is intended to start to address this backlog and secure the future of the wall in line with the policies recommended in the CMP.

The western section is the best surviving section of the original 18th-century wall, retaining the features of its original stone north face and brick south face construction. It's difficult to see whether the walls were simply rubble stone walls with a brick facing added or if the brick facing was part of the original wall construction.

Structural problems and deterioration are now occurring to the sections of wall re-built in

the 1970s/1990s, but this presents an opportunity to reinstate the original 18th-century form of the wall.

Whilst the period of Robert Parson's occupation has been an important part of the history of Newark Park, and the 'crinkle-crankle' wall is mentioned in the listing, the National Trust considers that the greatest significance of the Lower Pleasure Ground relates to its importance as part of the 18th-century designed landscape. The repairs proposed are therefore intended to preserve the 18th-century wall and enhance the setting and character of the Lower Pleasure Ground by restoring the 20th-century walls to their original 18th-century form. They involve largely like-for-like repairs, using traditional materials and techniques, aimed at retaining as much historic fabric as possible. However, in order to ensure the long-term stability of the wall and prevent future health and safety issues from arising, some minor changes in detailing and modern intervention is required in places, including the installation of sock anchors for cross-bonding, stainless steel helibars for stitching cracks, new drainage to relieve hydrostatic pressure behind the walls and some new foundations where the existing are found to be contributing to movement.

The wall to the south of the Paddock gateway is also in need of repair and re-building, but it has not been included in this application as the priority for the National Trust is to focus on the walls that form the northern border of the Lower Pleasure Grounds. The intention is to reinstate the borders that were grown along the length of this northern wall and in order to do this we need to ensure that the wall is safe for staff and volunteers to work under. The visitor route also takes visitors along this northern side of the Pleasure Grounds; by repairing the north wall we will in time be able to reinstate the original path that ran beside the wall and remove the various sections of chestnut paling fencing that impact negatively on the visitor enjoyment of the Lower Pleasure Grounds.

PROPOSED WORKS

The proposal is for a planned scheme of works that aims to restore the 18th-century walls in line with the CMP. The scheme will take a number of years to complete, but by planning for the whole scheme now we will be clear about priorities as funding becomes available.

The works can be broken down into the following stages. Priorities may change subject to further unexpected deterioration. (See Appendices 1 A, B & C for existing photos and Appendix 5 for Section locations)

Priority 1 – Re-build the collapsed Summer House wall - Section N

This appears to be largely an original 18th-century wall and was in situ at the time of Robert Parson's restoration (see Appendix 2 Photo 3). The proposal is to re-build the damaged section of facing bricks in the same character as the original ie raked courses of bricks, using the original bricks as far as possible, laid in Flemish bond with flush joints. If any bricks are too damaged for re-use, reclaimed bricks matching the existing as closely as possible in terms of size (230mm x 110mm x 70mm), colours, texture etc will be used. The original Bath Stone coping stones will be re-bedded and re-pointed. The copings will be bedded on slate to minimise the risk of future rainwater penetration damaging the wall in the event of joints between copings opening up.

NHL3.5 or NHL 2 lime mortars will be used to match the existing and samples will be

prepared to ensure a close match. Pointing will be flush, but care will be taken not to cover the arrises, to ensure that the character of the old brickwork is retained. Only hand tools will be used to remove loose mortar.

Proposed Change to Ogee Archway

This was a 1970s addition by Robert Parsons and as part of the works to make the wall safe following the recent collapse, this arch had to be taken down as it was at risk of collapsing itself. The arch was only single skin brickwork and cracking appeared a few years ago (see Appendix 2 Photos 7 and 8). Attempts were made to re-build the arch, but cracks re-appeared shortly afterwards.

Whilst we know that there was a gate somewhere in this area, the current location and style was a re-invention by Robert Parsons. (It is possible that the existing alcove seat and plaque are built in the original gateway, although this might also have been the location of another small building). As it was not part of the original 18th-century scheme, we are not proposing to re-build this arch in line with the CMP principles. The gateway itself however will be left in situ as it is now an important part of the visitor route to and from the Lower Pleasure Ground and we have no evidence to confirm where the original opening was located.

The wall to the west of the gateway will be built back up in brickwork to the height of the main wall in Section M, with a cut coping to match the existing. The wall to the east of the gateway will be built back up in rubble with a brick facing to the original height, with Bath Stone copings, as shown in Appendix 2 Photo 9.

Removal of Timber Shed

The timber shed at the rear of the wall is also a late 20th-century addition. The poor detailing around the abutment of this shed with the copings on the wall head is believed to be one of the reasons that the summer house wall collapsed recently. Rainwater was being channelled into the wall and this had two effects; water flowing through the fabric of the wall caused erosion of the mortars and saturation of the masonry caused some freeze-thaw erosion. Open joints in the copings have also contributed to these issues.

The shed is not crucial to the operation of the estate and therefore we propose to remove the shed. (At some point in the future we may replace this with a small building that is structurally separated from the wall).

Proposed Bonding

A common feature of the 18th-century walls seems to be a poorly-tied brick facing to a rubble stone wall. There are very few bonding bricks; the headers seen in the wall facing were snapped and bricks that do bond were not well held within the core. This too has contributed to the partial collapse. When the wall is rebuilt, full headers will be used to bond back as far as possible, packing behind the brick with a NHL 3.5 lime based mortar. The fabric to the backing wall is open and inconsistent and therefore, on the advice of the Structural Engineer, we also propose to insert 8mm x 450mm long sockfix anchors at regular intervals to provide the important cross bonding. These will be drilled into brick bed and perp joints at approximately 500mm horizontal and vertical centres and the holes capped with lime mortar.

Proposed Crack Stitching

Prior to the wall collapse, the wall was fracturing and this movement was proved to be ongoing following remedial pointing. The Structural Engineer has proposed stitching across the crack with stainless steel helibars into the brickwork joints and facing up with lime mortar (see Appendix 4 Structural Engineer's Report page 3).

Proposed Improved Drainage

The ground level at the rear has built up over time and the wall now retains approximately 1m to 1.5m without drainage; there are no weep holes at the base of the wall to prevent the build up of hydrostatic pressure behind the wall. This will also be contributing to the washing out of mortar and may be exacerbating cracking in the wall. On the recommendation of the Structural Engineer (see Appendix 4 Structural Engineer's Report page 2), it is proposed to core drill 2 no. 70mm diameter drainage holes at the wall base, similar to that shown in Appendix 1 C Section M. Alternatively, depending on further investigation during the works themselves, a new French drain may be installed behind the wall to direct water away from the wall and the Summer House. Should excavation of the ground be necessary, an archaeological watching brief will be undertaken.

Priority 2 – Stabilise Wall - Sections C and E

These sections appear to be original 18th-century walls, but the coping stones are all missing from the wall head, which is currently protected by a membrane in an attempt to minimise water penetration into the wall itself. The latter is no longer in tact throughout the length, and some woody vegetation has been able to grow in the wall. This jacks the joints open as it grows and provides water routes into the fabric and results in mortar being washed out. Ultimately, if not addressed these sections of wall will collapse, as Sections B and D have done. The proposal is to carefully remove the woody vegetation, re-bed the bricks/rubble as necessary and re-point in lime mortar where mortar is missing/loose or cracks have formed.

New Bath Stone copings will be installed profiled to match the copings found elsewhere on the wall (see Drawing LPGW-01). There is variation in the length of copings, and it is difficult to know whether this is true to the original scheme; historic photos do not show the copings in sufficient detail to be able to determine any variations. The proposal is to install a mix of coping lengths that are between 600 and 1000mm long, to match the copings on Section A. The copings will be bedded and pointed in a lime mortar. The copings will be bedded on slate to minimise the risk of future rainwater penetration damaging the wall in the event of joints between copings opening up.

If any bricks are too damaged for re-use, reclaimed bricks matching the existing as closely as possible in terms of sizes (225mm/230mm x 110mm x 65mm/70mm), colours, texture etc will be used laid in Flemish bond with flush joints. NHL3.5 or NHL2 lime mortars will be used to match the existing and samples will be prepared to ensure a close match. Pointing will be flush, but care will be taken not to cover the arrises, to ensure that the character of the old brickwork is retained. Only hand tools will be used to remove loose mortar. Any historic nails will be left in situ.

It may be that during the process of repairing the wall, some cracks will require additional reinforcement using stainless helibar crack stitching and it may be necessary to introduce some cross-bonding, similar to the modern repairs in Section N. These will only be

considered where the only alternative would be to dismantle parts of the historic walls.

Improved drainage behind the wall will also be considered during the works if it is felt that this might help to prevent future issues. Should excavation of the ground be necessary, an archaeological watching brief will be undertaken.

Proposed Re-build of West Pier

The west pier is out of plumb and has slipped on a low bed joint and the wall that continues west from the pier has rotated. It is currently propped to prevent further movement and to ensure the gateway is safe for visitor access.

The pier and first section of wall approx. 1.7m in length, appear to have been re-built, probably in the 1970s by Robert Parsons, as the wall is single-skin brickwork only. The original construction is clear (see Appendix 1 A) and the proposal is to dismantle the pier and cracked section of wall to ground level and re-build using as much of the original material as possible, but adding a rubble rear-facing skin to the single-skin brick wall with cross-bonding to match the rest of the wall in Section E and the east pier to the same gateway. The pier will be approx. 2340mm high x 480mm deep x 350mm wide. It may be necessary to construct a new foundation depending on the extent of any root interference once the wall has been dismantled.

Priority 3 – Stabilise Wall - Sections A, F, H, J and L

These sections also appear to be 18th-century walls, with some sections of brickwork built off rubble bases between 200mm and 640mm high. Coping stones are in situ, but despite this, some wood vegetation growth is occurring at wall heads due to open coping joints. The proposal is to carefully remove the woody vegetation, re-bed the bricks/rubble as necessary and re-point in lime mortar where mortar is missing/loose or cracks have formed. Where large joints have opened up in the rubble and below copings, slate pieces may be used to provide packing and achieve a more stable repair.

Badly damaged coping stones, where the extent of damage interferes with their intended weathering performance, will be replaced with new Bath Stone copings to match in profile and length. Coping joints will also be re-pointed.

Individual bricks seem to vary in size from 225mm to 230mm long, 110mm deep and 65mm to 70mm high. There is also variation in bond, colour and age, some of which is associated with previous repairs; some brickwork follows a Flemish Bond and other is more like an English Garden Wall bond, although not consistent. If replacement bricks are required for significantly damaged bricks, these will be sourced to match the size, texture, colours and bond of the adjacent brickwork.

It is proposed to use NHL3.5 or NHL2 lime mortars and again there appears to be a mix of mortars across the various walls. Samples of bedding and pointing mortars will be prepared to provide as close a match to the historic pointing, rather than more recent repairs. There is evidence of old nails and old nail holes, particularly in Sections J and L (see Appendix 1 C). Where possible, these will be left in situ as they are an important part of the character of the wall and provide important evidence of how the walls were used historically. Pointing will be flush, but care will be taken not to cover the arrises, to ensure that the character of the old brickwork is retained. Only hand tools will be used to remove loose mortar.

It may be that during the process of repairing the wall, some cracks will require additional reinforcement using stainless helibar crack stitching and it may be necessary to introduce some cross-bonding, similar to the modern repairs in Section N. These will only be considered where the only alternative would be to dismantle parts of the historic walls.

Improved drainage behind the wall will also be considered during the works if it is felt that this might help to prevent future issues. Should excavation of the ground be necessary, an archaeological watching brief will be undertaken.

Priority 4 – Re-build Collapsed Wall - Sections B and D

As evidenced above, the original 18th-century construction is vulnerable to cleaving when the weather is allowed to get into the fabric of the wall, and Sections B and D have at some point collapsed in this way. The proposal is to re-build these to match sections A, C and E in height, form and bond, using reclaimed bricks and copings found on site as much as possible. Some loss is inevitable and so some new reclaimed bricks will need to be found from an alternative source matching the existing as closely as possible in terms of size, colours, texture etc and some new Bath Stone copings will need to be manufactured.

As these sections will be re-constructed from ground level up, it will be possible to ensure cross-bonding and weep holes throughout without the need for modern interventions. The copings will be bedded on slate to minimise the risk of future rainwater penetration damaging the wall in the event of joints between copings opening up.

NHL3.5 or NHL2 lime mortars will be used to match the mortars used in Priority 3 works.

It may be necessary to construct a new foundation depending on the condition of the existing foundations once the wall has been dismantled. Improved drainage behind the wall will also be considered during the works if it is felt that this might help to prevent future issues. Should excavation of the ground be necessary, an archaeological watching brief will be undertaken.

Priority 5 – Dismantle and Re-Build Wall - Sections K and M

This section of wall was re-built in the 1970s and does not match the 18th-century walls in size nor style; the 'crinkle-crankle/serpentine' construction is an invention by Robert Parsons.

The proposal is to take this section of wall down and re-build a straight wall to its original height to line up with Sections J and L adjacent, with a brick face and a rubble rear, built off a dwarf rubble wall. New/reclaimed materials will be sourced to match the brick, rubble and stone copings of Sections J and L and mortars mixes will be the same as used in Priority 3 works. The copings will be bedded on slate to minimise the risk of future rainwater penetration damaging the wall in the event of joints between copings opening up.

It may be necessary to construct a new foundation depending on the condition of the existing foundations once the wall has been dismantled. Improved drainage behind the wall will also be considered during the works if it is felt that this might help to prevent future issues. Should excavation of the ground be necessary, an archaeological watching brief will be undertaken.

Interim Repairs that may be necessary

These sections of walls have been prone to cracking due to the stresses involved in this type of wall. We are currently monitoring the cracks to determine the rate of ongoing movement. Should it be necessary to undertake interim repairs in order to make the wall safe prior in the period prior to dismantling, the repairs detailed in the Structural Engineer's Report Appendix 4 will be undertaken. These include some re-pointing, helibar crack stitching and cleaning out of weep holes.

Priority 6 – Dismantle and Re-build Wall - Section I

This section of wall was re-built in the 1970s and again does not match the 18th-century walls in size nor style. The height in particular is completely out of keeping with the other walls in this area.

The proposal is to take this section of wall down and re-build to its original height to line up with Sections H and J either side, with a brick face and a rubble rear, built off a dwarf rubble wall. New/reclaimed materials will be sourced to match the brick, rubble and stone copings of Sections H and J and mortars mixes will be the same as used in Priority 3 works. The copings will be bedded on slate to minimise the risk of future rainwater penetration damaging the wall in the event of joints between copings opening up.

It may be necessary to construct a new foundation depending on the condition of the existing foundations once the wall has been dismantled. Improved drainage behind the wall will also be considered during the works if it is felt that this might help to prevent future issues. Should excavation of the ground be necessary, an archaeological watching brief will be undertaken.

Interim Repairs that may be necessary

The wall head is capped with bricks, many of which are loose. The wall will be monitored and if necessary for health and safety reasons, in the period prior to dismantling, remedial repairs will be undertaken to refix these loose bricks to protect the wall itself.

Other Works

The Glasshouse Section G

In essence the plan will be to remove the 1970s Loggia built by Robert Parsons as recommended in the CMP, and to stabilise the original rear walls of the Glasshouse, so that the area can be opened up to visitors. This is likely to be a higher priority than some of the other works outlined above, but further investigation and preparatory work will be required for this so it will be the subject of a separate application at some point in the future.

ACCESS

The works will make no difference to accessibility to the Lower Pleasure Ground for visitors with mobility issues. However, stabilising the walls to ensure they remain safe will ensure that visitors in general are able to continue to enjoy the Pleasure Grounds.

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