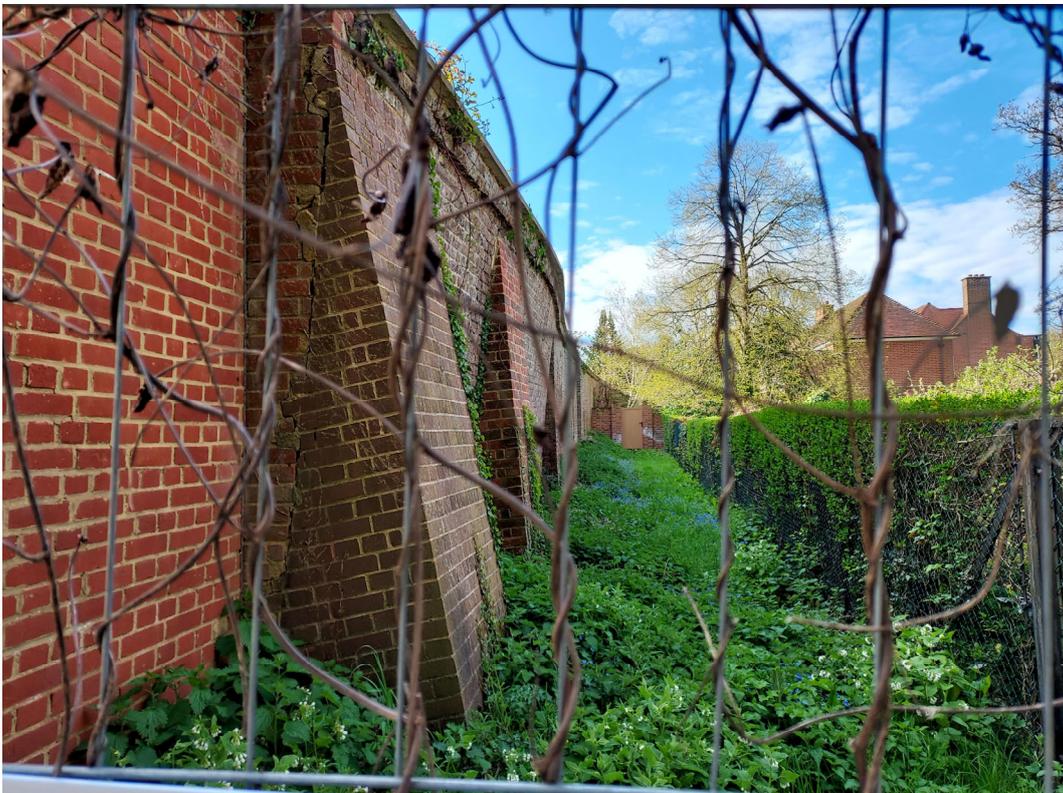


THE ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB

**DESIGN & ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT – JUNE 2021
REMEDIAL REPAIRS TO THE WALL IN THE NORTH-WEST CORNER
OF THE WALLED GARDEN**



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1. PROPOSALS

This proposal involves the necessary structural further remedial repairs to the North-West corner wall to the Walled Garden.

The earlier first phases of the repairs to the garden walls has been completed.

The third phase of the works involved the removal of the arched opening and rebuild of the west end of the North wall, as part of the construction of the new family facility.

The exterior of the Cottage was successfully restored in 2017, and completed as part of the family facility.

The final phase of the remedial works relates to the works to the northern end of the west wall. Previous consent has been granted for rebuilding this section under reference 18/01351/FUL. However, a detailed verticality survey of this section has identified that there is still a significant 'lean' at this point, so extending the rebuild by approximately 5.5m takes the rebuild back to a point that is relatively vertical.

2. THE WALLED GARDENS AND COTTAGE

The Walled Garden appears to date from the late 18th Century, and is contemporary with other brick-build structures around the estate, namely the dovecote, barn and the main Woodcote Park Clubhouse. The built evidence illustrates how the walls have been repaired, rebuilt and altered throughout their history, with glasshouses and sheds constructed at various times; changes to the functions of the garden it encloses; and sections of walls rebuilt or buttressed as part of ongoing maintenance. The present structure is therefore a patchwork of brick and coping types, rather than a complete composition of a single date.

The Cottage is also likely to date from the late 18th Century, and was constructed as a residence for the Estate gardener, who would have been responsible for preventing theft from the Walled Garden; hence the 'blind' windows facing backwards and the real windows overlooking the gardens. It has been altered and extended over time, the later ancillary structures to the east, and remains of 1930's fireplaces internally. The cottage became redundant when the Walled Garden ceased to be used to provide the Club houses in Epsom and London with fresh vegetables and flowers. Whilst it was left empty it suffered a major fire in the late 20th century which left it as a roofless shell, in danger of collapse. This was successfully restored in 2017.

The Walled Garden and Cottage are listed together at Grade II. They were first listed in September 1986, reference number 407607.

The listed building description of the property is as follows:

EPSOM WILMER HATCH LANE

1. 5358

(east side, off)

TQ2058

Kitchen Garden Wall and

SP/805 Cottage

II

- 2. Kitchen garden wall and gardener's cottage. Late C18, with later alterations. Red brick in Flemish bond with blue brick headers, slate roof. The 2-storey, 3 bay cottage is towards the east end of the northern wall of the rectangular garden wall. The wall is approximately 3 metres high with brick buttresses and stone coping. The cottage has a plinth and block central doorway in round-arched niche linked by impost band to flanking niches containing 12-pane windows with stone cills. Smaller 6-pane windows above, central are blocked, all openings with flat brick arches. Pediment with deep board at base supported on consoles blocked oculus in tympanum and oversailing*

eaves. Lateral stacks. The house which the kitchen garden survived is Woodcote Park House (RAC, qv.) which was built in 1753 by Isaac Ware.

Listing NGR: TQ2102061000

3. HISTORY OF WOODCOTE PARK

The first house at Woodcote was probably built around 1537 to 1547 by Sir Francis Carew or his successors in title, the Mynne family. They owned the estate after his execution in 1539. The estate descended by marriage to Richard Evelyn, the brother of the diarist, and then subsequently was owned by Barons Baltimore.

Richard and Elizabeth Evelyn lived at Woodcote, where manorial courts were held in 1667 and 1668 under Richard's lordship and later under Elizabeth. It appears that they were responsible for rebuilding the old 'capital message' at Woodcote

'Mr Evelyn, deeming Woodcote, a much more desirable situation (than the old moated manor house at Horton), erected a new mansion there, with a small but handsome chapel, and spared no expense in the decoration.'

In addition to the house at Woodcote, a survey of the manor of Epsom in 1680 lists a barn, a dovehouse, stables, outbuildings and, in mark of that house's distinction a gatehouse or lodge.

The design and construction of the fragmentary chimney stacks serving the brewhouse or bakery referred at the rear of the Stable Block are consistent with a late 17th century date and were almost undoubtedly commissioned by Richard Evelyn. They are the oldest surviving building elements on the Estate.

Most of the building that stands on the Estate was a much later construction. The demolition and construction of a new house at Woodcote Park was carried out either by the 5th or 6th Baron Baltimore. The design is ascribed to William Vardy, but has also been attributed to Isaac Ware and Henry Flitcroft. Internally it was fitted out in the French style, and some of those rooms escaped destruction during the fire of 1934 as they had been previously sold off to the Boston Museum. Ironically, they were sold as Chippendale rooms rather than the more unique French style Rococo rooms.

David Lambert in his Historic Landscapes study at Woodcote Park states that the 6th Baron spent lavishly at Woodcote and on his London house, and Walpole commented on Woodcote,

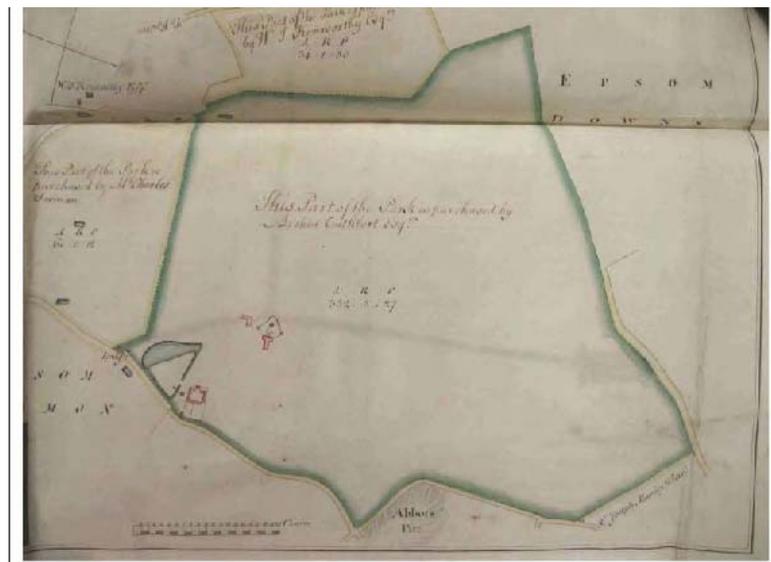
'The present Lord has laid out about £35,000 in making it what he called French'

It is likely that the Walled Garden was built about the same time as part of the redevelopment of the Estate and is contemporaneous with the other listed buildings on the Estate, the nearby farmhouse, dovehouse, the flint estate walls, the Stable Block and even the mansion itself.

The Roque Plan of 1768



The Roque Map of 1768 shows the house and its wings, but no indication of the Walled Garden



The Estate Plan of 1777 does not show the Walled Garden

In 1778 the Estate was described as *'now neglected, and the Park thrown into farms'*

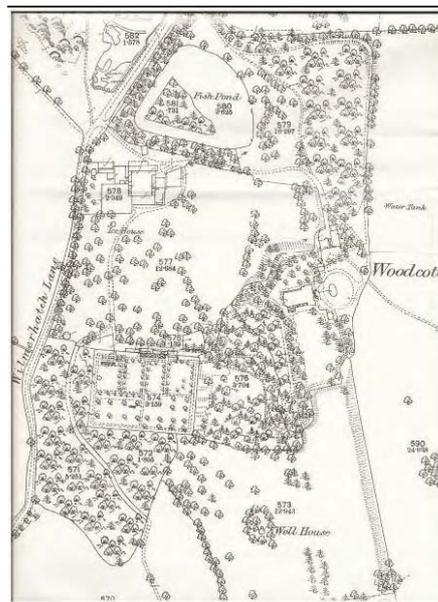
Ownership of the Estate changed hands a number of times in the 19th Century. The 1878 Ordnance Survey map shows the walled garden divided into sections, and

probably used for the growing of fruit, vegetables and flowers. Around this time, greenhouses were built along the southern side of the north wall, and various barns, sheds and other structures added to the north.

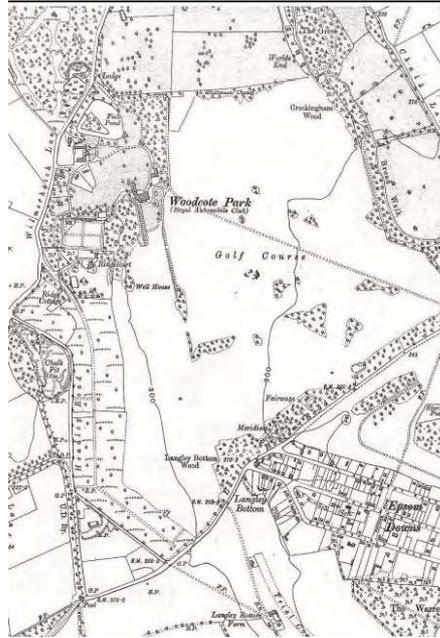
The Estate was marketed in 1911 but failed to find any purchasers. It was acquired by Royal Automobile Club in 1913 from the owner, Mr Robert Brooke.

Under the ownership of the RAC, the Walled Garden gradually changed its function from growing fruit and vegetable produce to tennis courts, hence the current level areas and the demolition of all the old greenhouses. One of these can be seen in the pre-war photograph of the Cottage.

It was also during the early days of the club's ownership that the outer parts of the estate were sold off as building plots, hence the detached houses that now surround the southern and western parts of the Walled Garden.



Ordnance Survey Map 1878



Ordnance Survey Map 1932

The 1932 O.S map shows that the main entrance to the Club from Wilmerhatch Lane was constructed to the south of the barn and that arrangement survives up to today.

The main house was badly damaged by a disastrous fire in 1934 and was almost totally demolished with the exception of the two front pavilions, the front staircase and the basement level of the front elevation. It was reconstructed in 21 months and re-opened in 1936 by Queen Mary. The Walled Garden and Cottage were far enough away not to be affected by the fire.

4. SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Walled Garden and Cottage is partly due to their age, and relative rarity in Surrey as unconverted, 18th century estate structures.

More importantly, they form part of a wider group of associated structures, including the Barn and Dovecote dating from Woodcote Park's heyday as a working rural estate and country house. The Cottage is one of the few low status dwellings of its date to survive in the area, and yet in its symmetrical, classical design was clearly intended as a statement of the architectural erudition of the owners of Woodcote Park.

The significance of both structures was previously compromised by their poor condition, and because of their poor condition they had been 'out of bounds' to club members and visitors. In particular, the fire at the Cottage had destroyed a lot of the important architectural features and left it as a vulnerable brick shell. The club have prevented further decay through a protective scaffolding with tin hat roof.

The redundant Walled Garden itself had also been left empty and vacant since before the Cottage fire. It has been used as a spoil heap to receive building debris from the Estate and has become totally overgrown and unkempt.

The Phase I proposals had involved the external restoration of the Cottage and the repair of the East and North garden walls, which has contributed enormously to the recovery of its lost significance. Phase II will further enhance that significance by fitting out the interior of the building and rebuilding the demolished wing in a traditional but subservient manner to the main building.

5. IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE

Phases previous were part of a rolling programme to enable the Cottage and Walled Garden to come back into beneficial use.

The construction of the new building and landscaping within the Walled Garden provides the facilities for use by the Club membership.

This last section of repairs to the walled garden will enable the completed facility to be fully utilised, ensuring that the wall is safe and no longer at risk of collapse

The Club membership can be satisfied in the knowledge that each of the garden walls are now structurally stable and will last into the future.

Where the existing Historic wall is to be reconstructed, all surviving whole bricks shall be cleaned and retained for rebuilding the wall.

6. ACCESS

The proposed works to repair the wall will have no impact on access to the overall site.