

Bourne Heritage

Built Heritage Impact Assessment

Walled Garden adjacent to Dower House, Hitchin Road, Preston, Herts



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1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 This heritage impact assessment forms part of a planning application submission affecting the remains of a late 19th/early 20th century walled garden located on the northern outskirts of the village of Preston, south of Hitchin in Hertfordshire (Figure 1). It is proposed to demolish and rebuild the walled garden, developing its interior with a single self-build sustainable dwelling set within landscaped gardens. The local planning authority (LPA) in this case is North Hertfordshire Council.

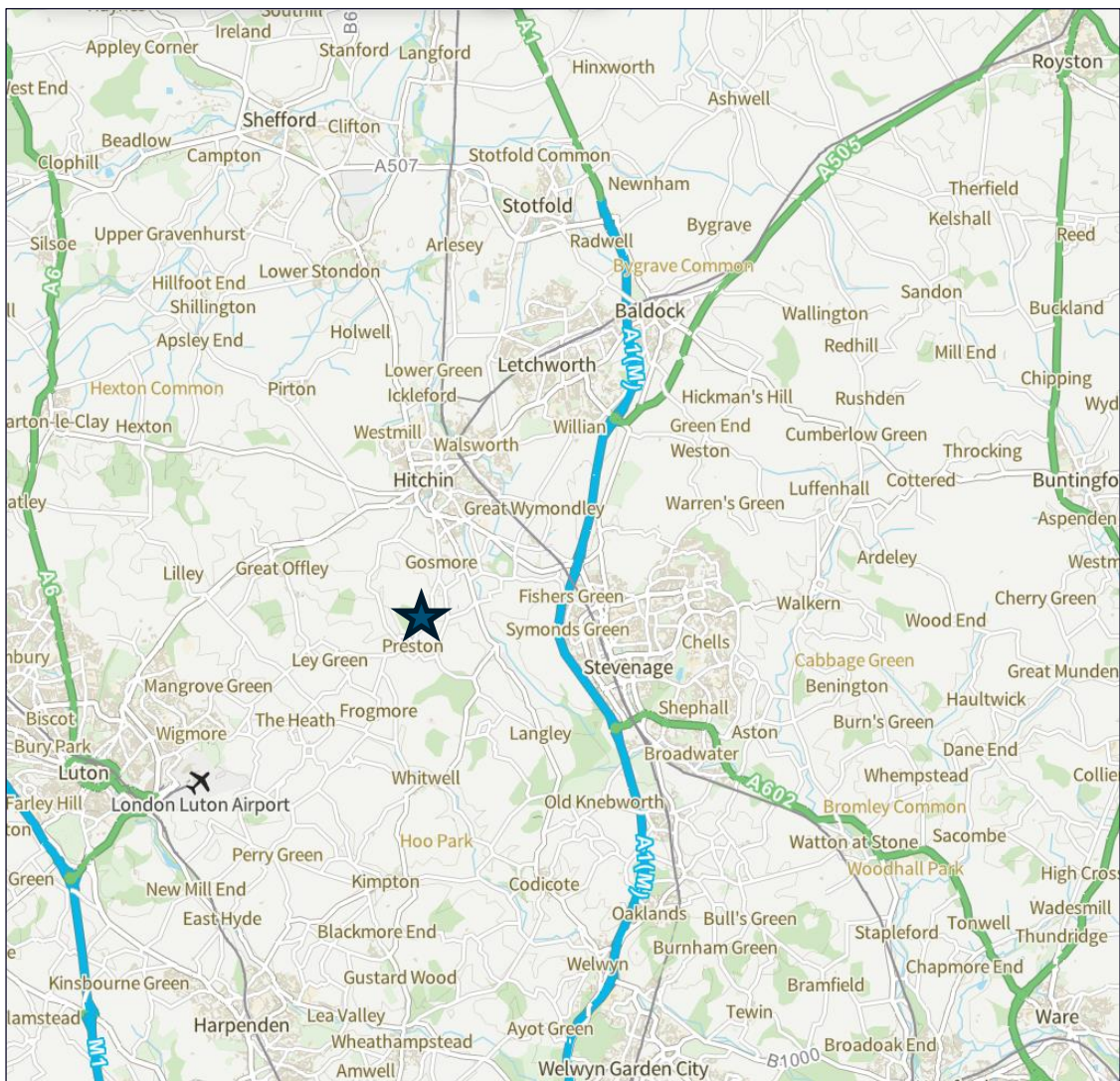


Figure 1: Site location plan (small-scale) showing the application site marked with a blue star

Application Site

- 1.2 The application site or the Site, as it will be simply referred to in this report, is a partially enclosed rectangular piece of land, c. 0.5ha in area, situated on the eastern side of the road leading south from Hitchin to the village of Preston (see front cover image and Figures 2 & 3).



Figure 2: more detailed map extract showing the application site in red



Figure 3: map extract showing close up view of the Site, in red

- 1.3 Plate 1 below provides an aerial view of the Site and its surroundings in 2022. It is also annotated with viewpoints of photographs referenced in the rest of this report.



Plate 1: 2022 aerial view of the Site, courtesy of Google Earth

- 1.4 As stated previously, the Site is all that remains of a late 19th/early 20th century walled garden, which once formed part of a large 18th century estate, Temple Dinsley, located on the eastern outskirts of the village of Preston. The walled garden is situated on the northern periphery of the estate, as parkland gives way to open fields. It has stepped & buttressed brick walls, in varying states of preservation and structural integrity, extant on three of its four sides (Figure 4), with the wall on the northwestern side lining Preston Road (Plates 2 & 3). The original wall on the southwestern side, which faces the rest of the estate and looks towards Temple Dinsley House, has been completely demolished, with only a short stretch of modern gated entrance wall and the extant wall trench marking its alignment (Plate 4). The tallest sections of the wall are 31 courses in height, with a noticeable change from English garden wall bond in the lower courses to Flemish bond in the upper courses.
- 1.5 The southern 20m of the roadside wall has been replaced with a modern brick wall in recent years (Plates 2 & 6) to enclose a substation in the southwestern corner of the

Site. The northern wall has an arched doorway looking out onto the open field north of the walled garden (Plates 7 & 8). Part of the south-eastern wall is lower in height than the other walls, with evenly spaced taller brick piers/pillars similar to those supporting timber pergolas in the gardens closer to the main estate house (Plate 9). Metal vine eyes wire tension spools and clamps for wall supported planting are preserved along this section of the boundary wall.

- 1.6 A structural condition survey undertaken for this application concluded that the extant boundary walls are in a very poor condition¹.

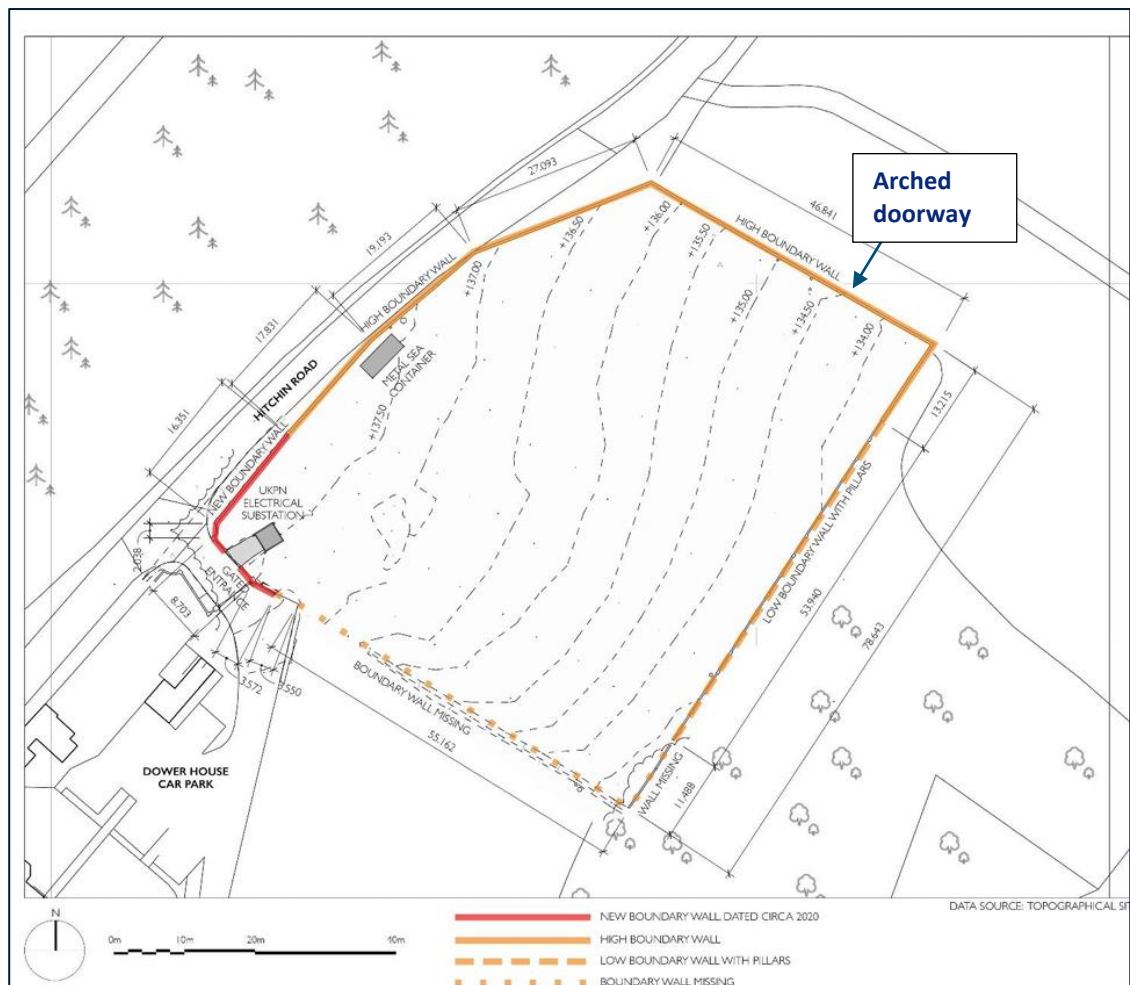


Figure 4: Plan showing the constituent boundary elements of the walled garden. This drawing also shows the topography of the Site, with a 2m drop to the southeast

¹ Condition Inspection Report – Brickwork to Former Kitchen Garden Walls at Dower House, Preston, Priory Heritage (unpublished client report), April 2023



Plate 2: the northwestern wall of the walled garden from Hitchin Road, looking northeast, showing the recent insertion to the right



Plate 3: the northwestern wall of the walled garden from Hitchin Road looking south



Plate 4: the wall trench for the southwestern boundary wall of the walled garden, marked by the dark green line in the centre of the photograph, looking northwest towards Hitchin Road



Plate 5: Interior of the walled garden looking southwest



Plate 6: adjoining sections of modern brick and original brick walling in the roadside wall (from the interior of the walled garden)



Plate 7: the northeastern boundary of the walled garden looking south from Hitchin Road - this view also shows the transition from the walled garden and parkland to an open field. The arched door (see Plate 8 below) is ringed



Plate 8: the northeastern boundary wall from the interior of the garden, note the arched doorway leading out to the open field beyond and its structural damage



Plate 9: part of the southeastern boundary wall looking northeast from the interior of the garden

- 1.7 The interior of the walled garden is presently overgrown and strewn with rubbish and debris (Plate 5). There is an electricity substation in the southwest corner, but otherwise, the interior of the walled garden is devoid of standing structures and there is no evidence on the ground of footings for any demolished internal features. There is a pronounced decline in slope to the southeast, with a drop in height of c. 2m. This is reflected in the stepped down character of the northeastern boundary wall visible in Plate 7.
- 1.8 As stated previously, the northwestern side of the walled garden forms a roadside boundary wall for Hitchin Road. The northeastern side of the walled garden is bounded by open pastureland and the southeastern side by a tree-covered vale (the walled garden effectively occupies the top of the valley slope). The remains of an orchard are situated in front of the missing southwestern boundary wall, with an 18th century residential building, Dower House, located just beyond. The house, which has been altered and extended in recent years, is now in multi-occupancy. There are several outbuildings attached to Dower House, which are either later additions or have been rebuilt/repurposed. There is a gated shared vehicular access for the walled garden and Dower House from Hitchin Road.

Heritage Designations

- 1.9 As a standalone structure, the walled garden does not have the protection conferred by statutory listing but it does carry a local heritage designation, with its identification in the Preston Parish Neighbourhood Plan, 2018-2031 as an “*undesigned heritage asset*”. This means that it is considered by the parish council to be of sufficient local historical and architectural interest to have its heritage significance taken into account in any relevant planning applications.
- 1.10 Although the walled garden has no inherent statutory protection, it does, however, form part of the Temple Dinsley registered park and garden (RPG), which carries a Grade II* heritage designation.
- 1.11 The close proximity of the walled garden to Dower House means that it also forms part of the setting of this building, which is statutorily listed Grade II. There are other statutorily listed buildings located further to the south of the walled garden, within the core of the RPG, including the Grade II listed main house (Figure 5), which was most recently occupied by Princess Helena College.

- 1.12 The walled garden also abuts the Preston Conservation area (Figure 6) and, therefore, forms part of the setting of this designated heritage asset.

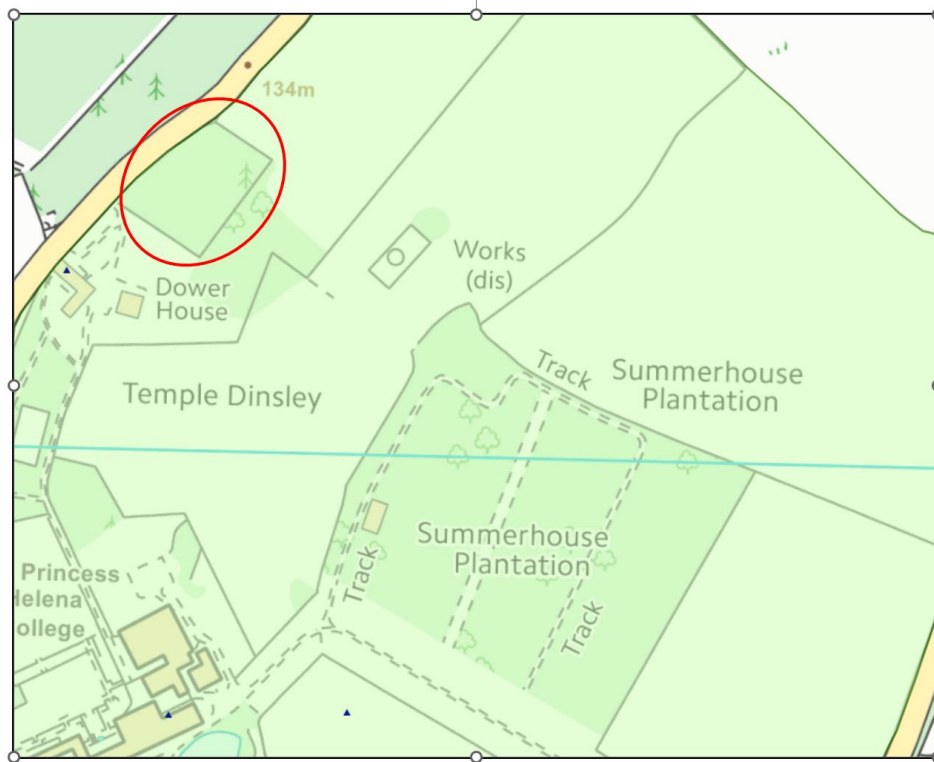


Figure 5: map extract, courtesy of Historic England, showing the location of the walled garden (ringed) within the Temple Dinsley RPG (shaded green), and relative to the two main listed buildings (the former Princess Helena College & Dower House); listed buildings are denoted by blue triangles

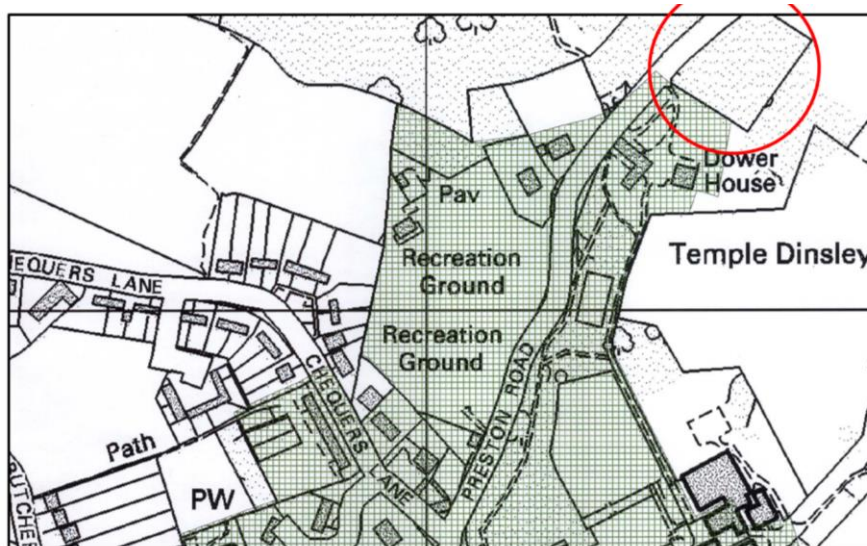


Figure 6: the Preston Village Conservation Area (shaded green), with the walled garden ringed in red

Consultation with Historic England

- 1.13 In respect of planning and listed building consent applications which affect Grade II* and Grade I designated heritage assets, there is a requirement for local planning authorities to consult Historic England. In this case, as stated previously, both Temple Dinsley RPG and the main house at its core, the former Princess Helena College, are statutorily listed Grade II*. The applicant team decided to take a proactive approach and consult with Historic England at the pre-application stage rather than wait for the LPA to consult with the heritage body at the application determination stage. In this way, the application proposals could not only be tested in principle, but if acceptable to Historic England, could be evolved in a collaborative manner. The current proposals have, therefore, been very much informed by expert advice and guidance from Christopher Laine and Neville Doe, landscape architecture and built heritage officers, respectively, at Historic England.
- 1.14 After several rounds of pre-application advice, including an initial formal pre-app response in July 2023 and a March 2024 site inspection, Historic England issued a final pre-app advice letter on the 4th May 2024 (Appendix 1). This letter confirmed the initial pre-app response assertion that the application proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the RPG and its listed buildings, but the harm in question would be towards the lower end of the spectrum. However, the letter concluded by saying that *“the conservation-led approach adopted in the designs for the proposed development would, in our opinion, deliver meaningful heritage benefits. This includes securing a positive function and future for the walled garden, restoring its enclosed form, sensitively rebuilding the surviving lengths of brick wall, and reflecting historic horticultural activity and interest via the new domestic garden with productive elements”*. Historic England also stated that they would not expect to raise an objection to the proposals at the application determination stage.

Relevant Planning History

- 1.15 There have been two previous planning applications for residential development within the walled garden, submitted in 1990 and 2007. The 1990 application (North Herts ref: 90/01016/1) was for four detached dwellings and garages. It was refused by the LPA at the time, and further dismissed at appeal. The 2007 application (North Herts ref: 07/00263/1) was for two detached five bedroom dwellings with integral garage and one five bedroom dwelling with detached garage. This application was, however, withdrawn.

- 1.16 There were a number of applications between 2017 & 2021 which granted consent for the conversion and extension of Dower House from a school dormitory to flats (North Herts refs: 17/02800/1, 17/02801/1LB, 18/03124/LBC, 20/00302/LBC & 21/03239/LBC). The conversion of the listed building also involved the provision of the current gated access to Dower House and the walled garden, as well as re-landscaping of the area in front of the latter. The installation of the electricity substation in the walled garden was granted consent in 2019 as part of the re-development of Dower House (North Herts Ref: 19/00172/SU). The most recent grant of planning consent in the vicinity of the walled garden was for the single storey rear extension, associated external and internal alterations to and part-demolition of the curtilage-listed barn to the east of Dower House in order to convert it into a single dwelling (North Herts ref: 20/01539/FP).

Purpose of this Report

- 1.17 This report assesses the significance of the heritage assets referred to above, with a particular focus on the contribution that their settings make to that significance (section 3). It then assesses the potential impacts of the application proposals on the setting and significance of these heritage assets (section 4). The findings of the assessment are summarised in Section 5 and relevant heritage policy and guidance are provided in Section 2.
- 1.18 This report focuses on the potential impacts of the proposals on heritage assets preserved above ground, and as such, does not assess how the application proposals would affect any buried archaeological assets preserved within the walled garden. That is addressed in a separate archaeological desk-based archaeological assessment provided by Abrams Archaeology².

² *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment – Walled Garden, Temple Dinsley, Preston, Hertfordshire*, Abrams Archaeology (unpublished client report), June 2024

2. Relevant Heritage Policy & Guidance

- 2.1 The decision maker is required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the character and appearance of a conservation area. The decision maker must also give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area. There is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm the special interest of the conservation area, though this may be capable of being mitigated and outweighed by public benefits.
- 2.2 As the walled garden is not situated within the Preston conservation area, but abuts its boundary, Section 72(1) of the Act is not directly engaged. However, setting can contribute to the special interest and significance of a conservation area, and is therefore taken into account in determining planning applications.
- 2.3 The decision maker is required by section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. The decision maker must also give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its setting. There is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm the special interest of the listed building, though the presumption is capable of being lessened by mitigation and by public benefits in the planning balance.
- 2.4 Harm is defined by Historic England as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.5 The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as being made up of four main constituent elements: architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. Setting can also contribute to heritage significance, and is described in the NPPF as follows:
- “The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral”.*
- 2.6 The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of a heritage asset to be considered in terms of either “substantial harm” or “less than substantial harm” as described

within paragraphs 205 to 208 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test, which may not arise in most cases. Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgement for the decision maker.

- 2.7 Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance.
- 2.8 In response to recent appeal decisions and the increased weight given to the importance of setting as a contributing factor to heritage significance, the following table provides a useful guide to clarifying harm as espoused by the NPPF:

Scale of Harm	
Total Loss	Total removal of the significance of the designated heritage asset.
Substantial Harm (Paragraph 207 of the NPPF)	Serious harm that would drain away or vitiate the significance of the designated heritage asset
Less than Substantial Harm (Paragraph 208 of the NPPF)	A high degree of harm that has the potential to be serious but is not so serious as to vitiate or drain away the significance of the designated heritage asset.
	A medium degree of harm, which is not necessarily serious to the significance of the designated heritage asset, but enough to be described as significant, noticeable, or material.
	A low-level degree of harm that does not seriously affect the significance of the designated heritage asset.

- 2.9 Paragraph 209 of the NPPF states that in weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets (in this case the walled garden), a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 2.10 At a local authority level, the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, 2011-2031, adopted 8th November 2022, contains the following heritage policy pertinent to this application:

“Policy SP13: Historic environment

The Council will balance the need for growth with the proper protection and enhancement of the historic environment. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight will be given to the asset’s conservation and the management of its setting. We will pursue a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment through:

- a) Maintaining a strong presumption in favour of the retention, preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting according to their significance;*
- b) Identifying sites on the national register of Heritage at Risk or on the Council’s ‘At Risk’ register;*
- c) Periodic reviews of Conservation Areas and other locally designated assets; and*
- d) Publication of detailed guidance”*

- 2.11 The Preston Parish Neighbourhood Plan, 2018-2031, adopted in December 2019 contains the following heritage policy pertinent to this application:

Policy EH2: Conservation Areas and Heritage Assets:

All development proposals, including new build, must demonstrate how the particular environment of Preston has been taken into account during conception and evolution of the design. Proposals that do not positively contribute to the local character must explain why and demonstrate the reasons behind the alternative approach.

All development within a conservation area and within the setting of other designated and non-designated heritage assets must take account of the historic fabric of these areas and conserve, and where appropriate enhance, their character and appearance.

Proposals should provide a statement containing an appropriate level of detail for the importance of the asset, including:

The significance of any heritage asset(s) affected

- Any adverse impacts the development may have on the asset(s) and their setting and any proposed mitigation measures*
- How it will contribute to the character and setting of the relevant heritage asset(s)*
- Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment undertaken by an appropriately qualified specialist so that the impact of the*

proposed development on the significance of the heritage assets can be assessed and, where necessary, carry out a field evaluation.

- *The design of any new build should have regard to prevailing scale, massing and density of properties in the Conservation area and be in harmony with the character of the location in which it is being constructed. Materials used should be complementary and similar to neighbouring properties.*

2.12 The advice of Historic England on the setting of heritage assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3 [GPA3] has been taken into account in this assessment, although GPA3 does not prescribe a single methodological approach for assessments relating to the setting of heritage assets.

2.13 This assessment is confined to the significance of heritage assets. It does not address the planning balance in which public benefit is weighed against harm, although public benefits, which includes heritage benefits may be referenced in the concluding section of the report.

3. Site History & Significance of Heritage Assets

3.1 This section of the report draws upon the following source material:

- Preston Conservation Area Character Statement, published by North Hertfordshire District Council December 2019
- A History of Preston in Hertfordshire website (<https://www.prestonherts.co.uk>)
- Photographs and information provided by the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust
- Historic maps
- Heritage Statement for the 2017 Dower House LBC application³
- The Priory Heritage Structural Condition client report
- The Abrams Archaeology Archaeological Desk Based Assessment
- Historic England Search the List Portal (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>)
- The initial July 2023 Historic England pre-app response letter

Development of the Walled Garden

3.2 There is no evidence for the walled garden on historic maps, sale and deed plans pre-dating the 1870s. The earliest known depiction of its original form is Ordnance Survey (OS) map evidence from the 1870s/1880s (Figures 7 & 8).

3.3 The late 19th century map evidence shows a standard path layout dividing the walled garden into areas of cultivation which conformed to its then irregular shape, but there are no internal glasshouses or other structures present. The earliest map evidence for the walled garden in something akin to its current form comes from early 1920s OS mapping (see Figure 9).

³ *The Dower House Proposed Conversion – Heritage Statement*, Robert Ward-Booth Bsc (Hons) MRICS DipBldCon IHBC (unpublished client report) 2017

- 3.4 The Temple Dinsley estate was substantially reorganized by the famous architect Edwin Lutyens during the early 20th century (see the RPG section below), with both historic map evidence and the assessment of historic fabric provided in the structural condition survey indicating that the enlargement of the walled garden, and its extension towards Preston Road, dates from this period. There is no evidence that Lutyens was directly involved, however, with the changes to the walled garden.



Figure 7: the walled garden, as surveyed by the OS between 1878-1881 (ringed)

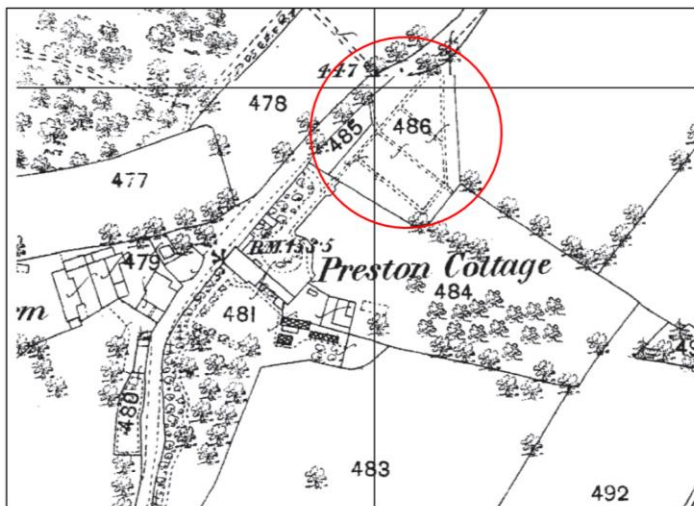


Figure 8: the walled garden, as surveyed at a larger scale by the OS between 1878-1881 (ringed)

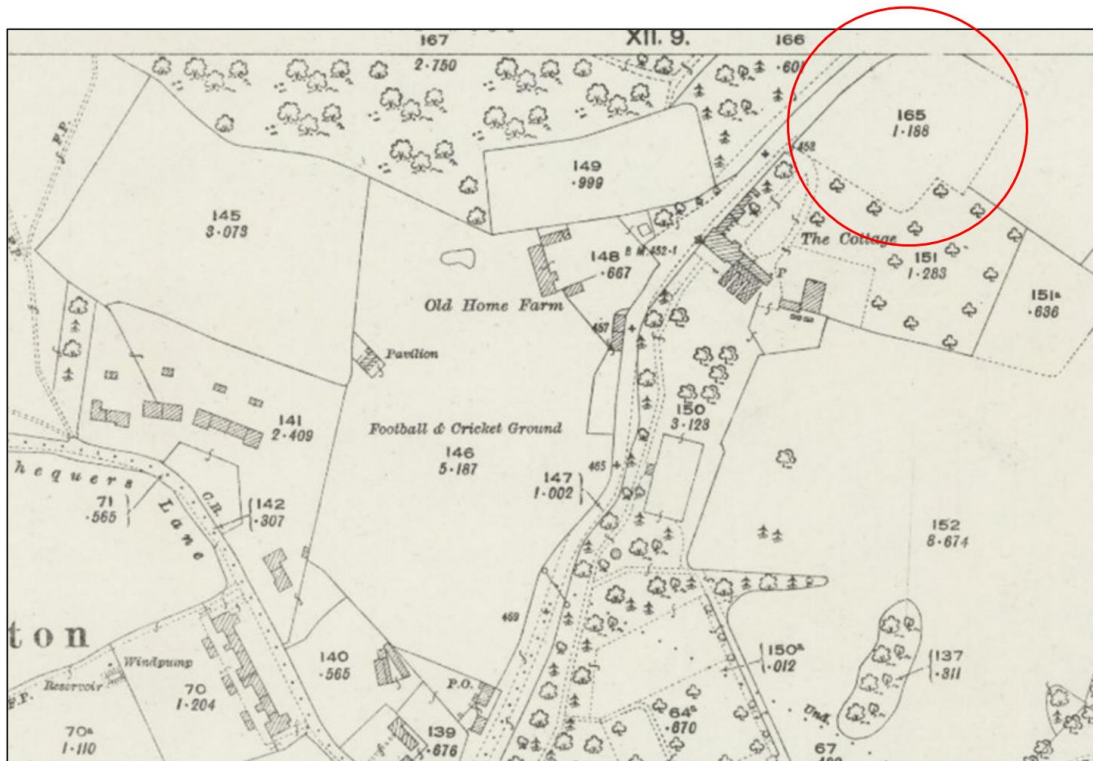


Figure 9: OS map extract from the early 1920s showing the walled garden (ringed)

- 3.5 It is more than likely that the replacement of the kitchen garden adjacent to the main house with a rose garden relocated horticultural productivity to the walled garden, hence its expansion in size.
- 3.6 The walled garden is likely to have reached its current extent by the time the Temple Dinsley estate was sold off in 1935 and converted into a school (Princess Helena College). From that time, according to the Historic England 2023 pre-app response, *“any intensive use of the walled garden ceased, leading to the loss of its layout, cultivation, and maintenance”*.
- 3.7 The earliest known photograph of the walled garden dates from the mid-1950s (Plate 10). It appears to reflect the reduced scale of operations and loss of layout referred to by Historic England.
- 3.8 The photograph also shows the following:
 - Direct access into the walled garden from Dower House (A on the photo) – this makes sense given that the house was formerly two cottages providing accommodation for gardeners (Herts Gardens Trust pers. comm)

- A path passing straight through the walled garden connecting the parkland to the field beyond (B on the photo); this explains the arched pedestrian access point on the northeastern wall
- The low brick-pillared section of wall along the southeastern boundary of the walled garden continued along the section of wall that has been removed (B on the photo)
- There were no internal structures, as is shown on historical mapping and reflected in an obvious absence on the ground of structural foundations within the interior of the walled garden; there were glasshouses in this part of the estate but the historical map extracts above show them located initially southeast of the Dower House and then attached to its southern side

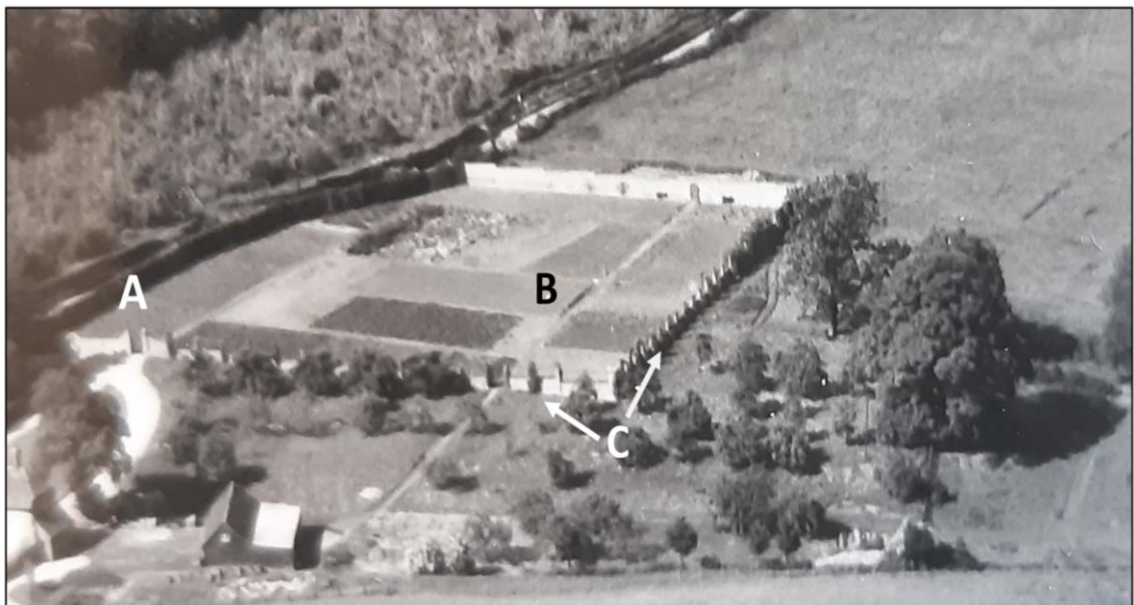


Plate 10: the walled garden from the air in the mid-1950s (image courtesy of the Herts Gardens Trust)

- 3.9 Otherwise, the 1950s aerial image demonstrates that the interior of the walled garden was given over to separate areas of horticultural cultivation.
- 3.10 The more ornamental element of the walled garden is primarily characterised by the lower brick-pillared sections of the boundary wall, the design of which were clearly intended to facilitate intervisibility with the parkland, formal gardens and principal buildings of the RPG to the south and east. The taller sections of the boundary wall were built along the sides of the garden facing open farmland and fronting onto Hitchin Road, where seclusion, not intervisibility, was the primary concern.

- 3.11 From the late 20th century until 2015/2016, the walled garden was in use as a Scots Pine plantation (Plate 11). Once the trees were cut down under license, the walled garden fell into disuse and decay, which has resulted in its current state of neglect. The loss of brick walling, and deterioration of the brick walling which remains, has been the most serious consequence of this neglect.



Plate 11: the walled garden (ringed) from the air in 2000, showing its use as a Scots Pine plantation

Temple Dinsley RPG & its Listed Buildings – Heritage Significance

- 3.12 The Temple Dinsley estate has its origins in the medieval period as a 12th century Knights Templars foundation (hence its name) The present house, which most recently housed Princess Helena College, was built in 1714 and substantially enlarged between 1908 and 1911 during the reorganisation of the estate by Edwin Lutyens.
- 3.13 The bulk of the estate became a registered park and garden in 1987 (list entry number 1000919), the extent of which is shown in Figure 10. A detailed description of the RPG is provided in the statutory list description (Appendix 2), which was written in 1999. Further detailed descriptions of the estate are provided in Country Life articles referenced at the end of the list description and on the PrestonHerts website.

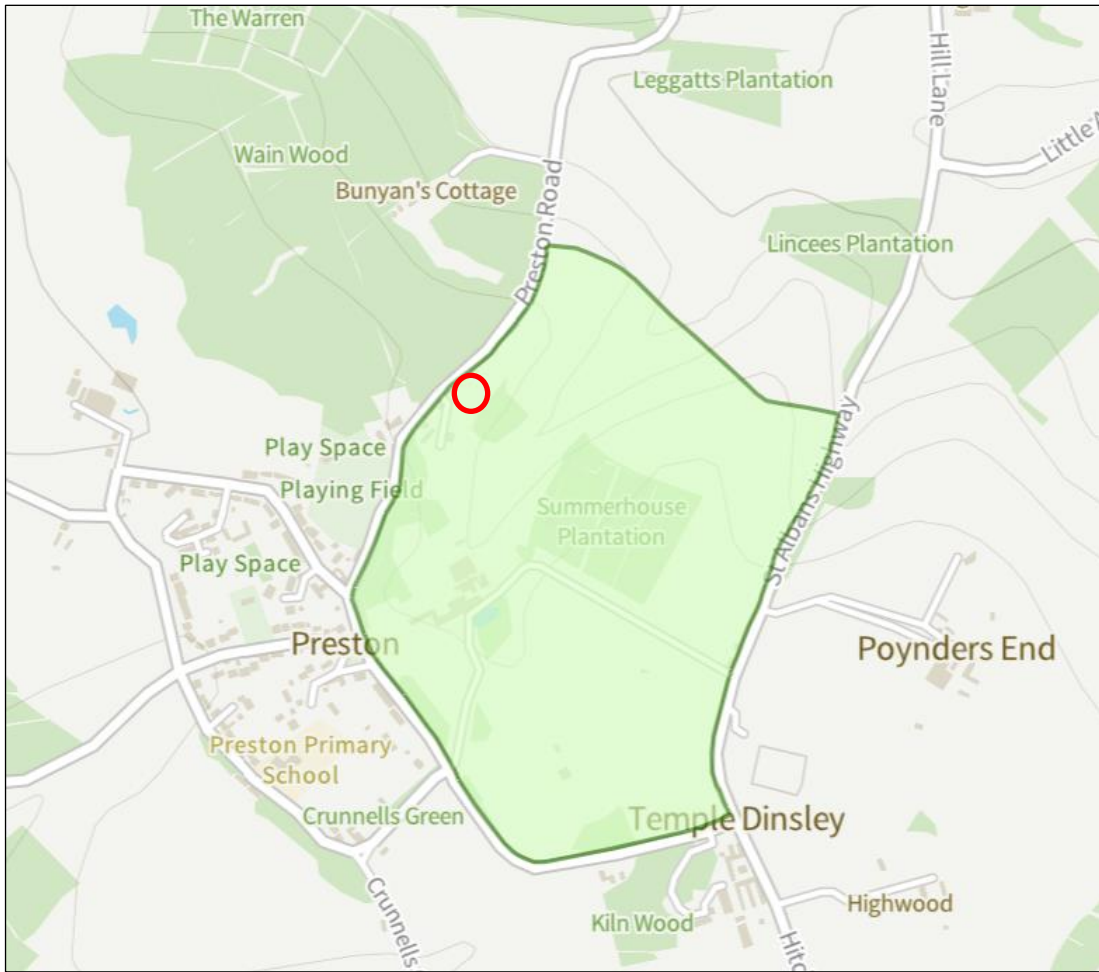


Figure 10: map extract, courtesy of Historic England, showing the Temple Dinsley RPG in green, with the location of the walled garden ringed in red

- 3.14 The 2023 Historic England pre-application letter usefully summarises the heritage significance of the RPG as follows:

“Temple Dinsley is a multi-phased designed landscape focused on a c. 1714 country house substantially remodelled and enlarged from 1908 by the renowned architect Edwin Lutyens alongside contemporary redevelopment of the formal gardens adjoining it to the west and north, potentially with input from Gertrude Jekyll (although no planting plans are known). This formal core is set within an early 18th century landscape park that was further embellished from the mid-18th century and as part of early 20th century investment by the estate’s owners. From 1935, it became a private girls’ school, Princess Helena College, which closed in 2021, resulting in the site’s being put up for sale. Prior to closure, the College sold the Dower House and adjacent barn and disused walled garden to a private developer, who converted the Dower House into flats”.

The main house is listed at grade II (NHLE list entry 1307766), attributing more than special interest and representing just 5.8% of all listed buildings. The gardens and parkland are included within the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest at grade II*, which places it within the top 30% of all registered parks and gardens and reflects a level of historic interest and significance that needs to be recognised and used to inform development proposals and management decisions.*

The site contains a further four structures of national significance and designated as listed buildings: the gate, gate piers and park wall facing School Lane (grade II); the Piggery by Edwin Lutyens (grade II); the icehouse (grade II); and the Dower House (grade II).

Additionally, various structures are recognised as non-designated heritage assets, including: the pumping station and barn in the parkland south of the mansion; the agricultural building in Summerhouse Plantation; the Lodges on the park's southern boundary; the barn at the Dower House; and, of particular relevance to this consultation, the walled garden adjacent to the Dower House".

Assessment of Views of the Walled Garden from the RPG

- 3.15 The initial 2023 Historic England pre-app response highlighted certain vantage points across the Temple Dinsley RPG where the walled garden is visible relative to the rest of the RPG:

"...the terraced gardens on the north side of the main house; the east drive as it bends SW towards the main house; and the edge of Summerhouse Plantation on the opposite side of the shallow valley".

- 3.16 A Landscape & Visual Appraisal conducted by the Pegasus Group during the Historic England pre-app process included these views on the map extract shown in Figure 11 below. An assessment of these views is provided below:

View C: this is the view of the walled garden from the eastern access drive as it turns southwest towards Temple Dinsley House, but it is clearly a visually distant, and partial, view, even in the winter months.

View E: this view looks northeast from the edge of the main house/garden complex towards the walled garden. Again, given the undulating topography and fairly dense vegetation cover, the latter is barely visible from this viewpoint, even in the Winter months, when leaf cover is at its thinnest

View F: this very distant view looks north from the southern part of the RPG towards the walled garden. As can be seen, even in Winter, there is dense tree cover between the two. It is very unlikely that the current application proposals would have much, if any effect at all, on this view.

View from Summerhill Plantation: The view in Plate 12 below shows the walled garden looking west from the northwestern corner of the Summerhill Plantation. Again, this is a distant and partial view. Any views of the proposed house from here are likely to be heavily filtered by planting in the landscaped gardens



Plate 12: the walled garden (ringed), looking west from the Summerhill Plantation

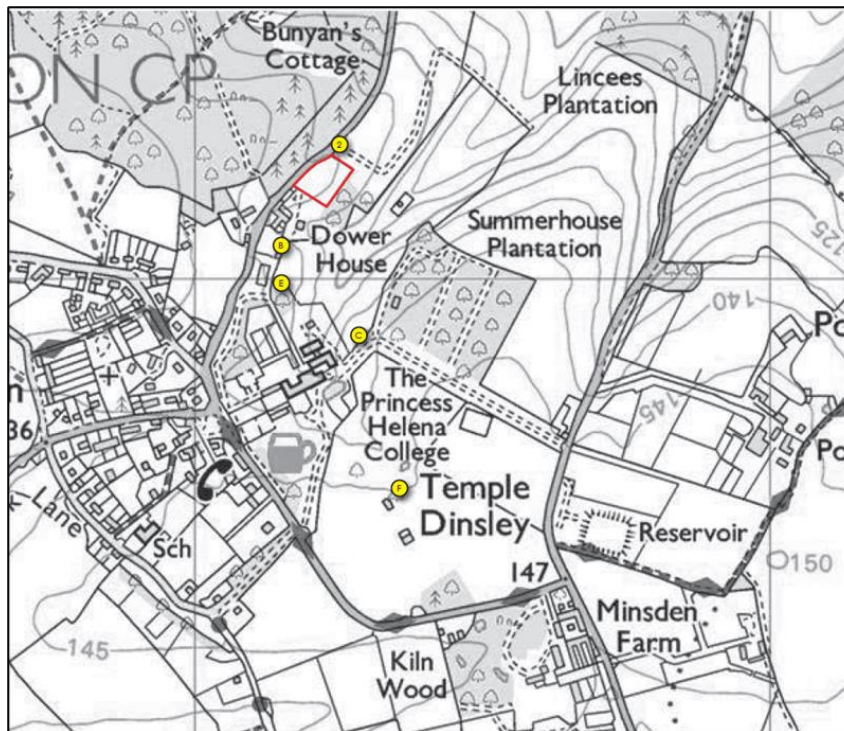


Figure 11: map extract showing viewpoints of the walled garden (in red) referred to above

- 3.17 The upper part of the main house is visible from the walled garden, but only in a partially glimpsed, visually distant view. Any views in the other direction, looking from the upper part of the main house towards the walled garden, are likely to be heavily filtered by intervening tree cover and the built form of the Dower House complex.

Contribution made by the Walled Garden to the Heritage Significance of Temple Dinsley RPG

- 3.18 The interest of the walled garden derives from the part it has played in the historic narrative of the Temple Dinsley Estate. It was a relatively late addition to the estate and is a rare example of a primarily early 20th century walled garden. It also represents an integral element of the reorganisation of the Temple Dinsley estate by Edwin Lutyens during the early 20th century.
- 3.19 However, the walled garden occupies a peripheral location within the RPG, away from its historic core. It certainly does not carry the historic interest of the main house and formal gardens to the south. This is, perhaps, why it is not referred to in the statutory list description for the RPG, nor in any Country Life articles about Temple Dinsley. There is also no reference to it in the extensive description of the estate on the PrestonHerts website.
- 3.20 As stated previously, there is no evidence to suggest that Edwin Lutyens had any direct involvement with the changes made to the walled garden during his time at Temple Dinsley.
- 3.21 Therefore, although the walled garden does make a contribution to the overall designed landscape of the Temple Dinsley RPG, it is clearly not as important as designated heritage assets within the estate.
- 3.22 The architectural interest of the walled garden derives from its mixed functional/ ornamental design. Individual features of architectural interest include the buttressing and stepped-in character of the roadside element, as well as the brick pillared lower sections of wall, which were clearly intended to provide intervisibility with the rest of the RPG.
- 3.23 The architectural interest of the walled garden has, however, been significantly compromised and diluted by the complete loss of the wall facing Dower House and partial loss of the wall along the valley side. The structural condition survey by Priory Heritage established that the remaining sections of wall are heavily damaged and would require replacement section by section to maintain their structural integrity. A meeting on site in February 2024 attended by the client team, Historic England and

Priory Heritage resulted in a broad consensus that a faithful rebuild of the existing boundary wall was the most sensible and logical option going forward.

The Dower House - Heritage Significance

- 3.24 The Dower House (formerly Preston Cottage) was statutorily listed Grade II in 1988, with the following description:

“House. Early C18, extended and altered early C19, lower C19 extensions to E. W part of front restored after flood damage 1968. Red brick in Flemish-bond, chequered with black headers to S front of older part. Dark weatherboarding to 1st floor at rear. Steep old red tile hipped roofs. A large irregular 2-storeys house facing S with long lower wings alongside road on W and stepping down steep slope to E. Double-pile plan main block with 2-storeys canted brick bay to rear at NE and large internal chimney with 2 square shafts linked by a recessed panel. S front 4 windows long with recessed sash windows with 8/8 panes and flat gauged arches. Flush box sash at left on 1st floor. Early C19 door with flush panel with reeded surround and corner blocks under trellis porch. 8-panel heavy fielded rear door and fielded panelled partition on 1st floor”.

- 3.25 The 2017 heritage statement states that the origins of the Dower House could go back even further to the 16th/17th century. The conclusion of the report was that not only is the listed building complex in character, due to successive phases of enlargement and remodelling, but that *“The objective reality is that the majority of the building which can be seen today is of relatively late construction with the south-eastern, northern and southern wings being of 19th, 20th century and post-war construction and with the 19th century south-east wing having been very substantially reworked during both the early 20th century and the post-war period”*. The proposals consented from 2017 onwards extended the southern and northern wings still further. Historic photographs (not reproduced) show how radically the form, appearance and character of the listed building has changed as a result of these modern interventions. Although alterations to a historic building over time provide a historical and architectural narrative for its development due to changing requirements and usage, the 20th century and later interventions to Dower House have undoubtedly contributed to a dilution of its heritage significance.

Contribution of Setting to the Heritage Significance of Dower House

- 3.26 The setting of Dower House, i.e., the surroundings from which the heritage significance of the listed building can be externally experienced and appreciated

comprises two main elements, namely the RPG and Hitchin Road. Both of these elements of setting make very different but equally positive contributions to the heritage significance of Dower House.

Contribution made by the Walled Garden to the Setting & Heritage Significance of Dower House

- 3.27 The photograph in Plate 13 below (viewpoint B in Figure 11) demonstrates that the walled garden, even in its currently truncated form, forms part of the setting of the Dower House. It needs to be emphasised, however, that this extensive view into the walled garden has been created by the recent removal of its southwestern boundary wall. As such, it contrasts heavily with the historical view evident from the 1950s aerial photograph in Plate 10.



Plate 13: view of the walled garden (ringed) relative to the Dower House (centre left); recent modern interventions to outbuildings are arrowed

- 3.28 It is clear from this photograph that it is predominantly the modern southern extension of the Dower House that is visible relative to the walled garden, rather than the historic core of the listed building, only part of which is visible end-on. Modern rebuilds of outbuildings attached to the listed building are also evident from this perspective.
- 3.29 Although the walled garden was introduced into the setting of the Dower House only 150 years or so ago, there is some associative historical interest between the two, as identified by the Herts Garden Trust in para. 3.8 above. This is based on the Finance Act Survey of 1910, an early 20th century property survey, which recorded part of Dower House at that time as being given over to two gardeners' cottages, one of which was a kitchen gardener's dwelling. This coincides with the reorganisation of the estate between 1908 and 1911 and the suspected relocation of the kitchen garden from beside the main house to the walled garden.

Preston Conservation Area – Special Interest

- 3.30 The 2019 Character Statement defines the special interest of Preston conservation area as follows:

“Preston Conservation Area demonstrates well the development of a village this size since the medieval period. Beginning as a medieval settlement adjacent to a Knights Templar foundation and centred on a village green, it expanded through the post-medieval period roughly along the main road that marks the western boundary of Temple Dinsley, before seeing a major period of renovation and reinvention in the early 20th century with significant design inputs from Sir Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll.

Those broadly Arts and Crafts inspired developments dominate the character of the Conservation Area today, with buildings of the period placed in prominent positions throughout the village. Preston House appears to be a later addition to the village, but in a similar style and dominating the north side of the village green, suggesting that this particular style is not just an historical phase but something that has been actively managed since.

Elsewhere, there are strong 18th and 19th century influences, notably around the Chequers and the Red Lion public house, introducing a red brick, vernacular classical styling that complements and perhaps provided some inspiration for the 20th century designs, as suggested by the proximity of, for instance Chequers and Chequers Cottages, and the way that the Red Lion and Preston House face each other over the village green.

The character of the village is very green, with much mature planting, a dominating wide grass verge along the Temple Dinsley boundary, and a lack of pavements, except leading away from the village green to the north and south.

A large part of the Conservation Area is within the Registered Park and Garden of the Temple Dinsley grounds, currently in the ownership of the Princess Helena College. Although this has rendered a significant part of the Conservation Area out of bounds to public access, the estate and its development has played a central role in that of Preston as a whole and it is part of a wider landscape theme led by Sir Edwin Lutyens.”

Contribution made by Setting to the Preston Conservation Area

- 3.31 The character statement does not really address the contribution made by setting to the character and appearance of the conservation area but it is clear, in the absence of modern development, that the rural historical setting of the village has remained relatively unchanged. As such, it makes a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.

- 3.32 Although the character statement does not describe the setting of the conservation area, it does highlight key views, one of which (KV5) is from the Dower House, looking south towards the village. This view does not take in the walled garden.

Contribution made by the Walled Garden to the Setting of the Conservation Area

- 3.33 However, the walled garden is a prominent feature as one approaches the village (and conservation area) from the north along Hitchin Road, as is evident from the photograph in Plate 14 below (Viewpoint 2 in Figure 11). It is also the first built form seen coming into the village from that direction. For the purposes of this assessment, therefore, it is considered to be an important element of the setting of the conservation area.



Plate 14: the walled garden, looking south along Hitchin Road towards the village

- 3.34 Plate 14 does however demonstrate that, even in winter months, the northwest corner of the walled garden is obscured by roadside tree cover.

4. Application Proposals & Impacts on Heritage Significance

4.1 The application proposals are as follows:

- Removal and replacement of the existing garden boundary walls with faithful replicas, both in terms of matching brickwork and architectural detailing
- Reinstatement of lost sections of boundary wall with a mixture of estate fencing and hedge planting
- Construction of a modern contemporary family home and arrival court, as well as landscaped gardens, within the walled garden

Impacts on Temple Dinsley RPG and its listed buildings/structures

4.2 The application proposals would result in the following:

- Loss of the existing historic fabric of the walled garden
- Introduction of a private domestic dwelling and garden into a historic space which up until now, has been devoid of built form and given over to horticultural activity and tree planting

4.3 These physical changes to the walled garden would be visible across the RPG, albeit mostly in restricted, incidental, visually distant views filtered by intervening tree cover across the estate.

4.4 It is axiomatic, therefore, that the proposals would cause harm to the overall significance of the RPG and its listed buildings/structures, but the harm in question would be less than substantial and towards the lower end of the spectrum.

4.5 The harm would be mitigated by the following measures:

- The proposed house would be located within the northwestern half of the walled garden, with views of it from the salient vantage points within the RPG heavily filtered by the proposed landscaping, garden planting, and boundary screening
- Excavation of the house into the existing terrain of the walled garden would minimise visibility of its structure above the proposed boundary treatments, thus maintaining the visual primacy of the latter
- The proposed main landscaped garden has evolved in its design to conform to the regular garden layout visible in the 1950s aerial photograph.

- 4.6 Historic England acknowledged these mitigation measures in its final pre-app response as follows:

“The new dwelling would form a substantial freestanding structure occupying a large part of the walled garden; however, the potential visual impacts have been reduced by excavating into the sloping ground within the walled garden to sink the new structure into the hillside, lowering its height in relation to the walled garden walls along the Preston Road. New planting within the surrounding domestic garden would further break up the form of the new structure.... The latest proposals for the domestic garden around the new structure have reduced the amount of organic and curvaceous forms... these amendments better reflect the ordered character typical of a walled kitchen garden, referring to the historic layout as recorded in historic mapping and aerial photos and including areas of fruit and vegetable production”.

- 4.7 There is a requirement for less than substantial harm to be weighed in the planning balance with public benefits. Paragraph 020 of the NPPG has the following to say about public benefits:

“Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

- *Examples of heritage benefits may include:*
- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation”*

- 4.8 The application proposals are very much conservation-led, providing the following heritage benefits:

- Returning the walled garden to its historic fully enclosed form
- The extant garden boundary wall will be rebuilt in architecturally appropriate brick, in the same bond, and will replicate elements of the existing structure, such as the buttressed and stepped-in character alongside Preston Road and the brick pillars on the southeast and southwest sides
- The proposals would allow for the removal of the architecturally unsympathetic, recently built brick wall partly enclosing the substation and its replacement with the same brickwork proposed for the rest of replacement roadside wall; this

would remove the jarring mismatch between the preserved brickwork of the original wall and the new wall alongside the substation

- The lost section of brick-pillared low walling on the Dower House side of the garden shown on the 1950s photograph will be replaced with estate fencing and suitable planting in order to retain historic intervisibility with the RPG
- The path from the parkland to the field shown passing through the walled garden is reinstated in the current design
- As stated previously, site inspections have noted preservation of metal vine eyes, wire tensioning systems and a metal clamping detail at the top of three brick pillars which may have been used to attach metal angles between the pillar heads for increased stability, enabling vegetation to climb up wires between pillars; historically preserved metal fixtures and fittings like are included in the proposed garden design, particularly in respect of attaching any horticultural planting to the rebuilt walls
- Although the proposed house is of a contemporary design, the principal staircase is influenced by the work of Lutyens
- The proposed entrance to the arrival court and house will occupy a similar position to that of the access point shown in the lost section of wall on the 1950s photograph, thus preserving historical continuity

Impacts on Dower House

- 4.9 Dower House is the closest listed building to the walled garden so the proposals for the latter would impact most on its setting. However, as stated in Section 3 of the report, not only has the historic core of Dower House been subsumed and altered by 20th and 21st century extensions and remodelling, but its immediate setting, in respect of built form and hard landscaping, has also been subjected to noticeable modern interventions, particularly since 2017.
- 4.10 For the same reasons provided in para. 4.2 above, the application proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the heritage significance of this Grade II listed building through a substantive change in its setting (Plate 15). However, the visual and physical impacts would be lessened not only by the mitigation measures listed in para 4.5 above but also by the fact that the proposals would be introduced (and more easily absorbed and accommodated) into the setting of a listed building that has already undergone recent, rapid and significant evolution.

- 4.11 Historic England advised early on during the pre-application process that the missing sections of the garden boundary wall did not automatically need to be replaced with brick walls so, as can be seen in Plate 15, the proposed southwestern boundary is therefore a mixture of estate fencing and hedging, with timber used in the new access gate. This would restore the missing boundary treatment and sense of enclosure of the walled garden, but not in a way that would be unduly prominent within the setting of the listed building.



Plate 15: visual render of the application proposals (ringed) looking north towards the walled garden from within the Dower House complex (the listed building is to the left)

- 4.12 The heritage benefits of the application proposals for the Dower House are the same as those for the wider RPG, but the clearest benefit would be to restore the legibility of the historical and spatial relationship between the listed building and the walled garden.

Impacts on Preston Conservation Area

- 4.13 The walled garden stands just outside the northern boundary of the conservation area so the application proposals would not directly impact on its character, appearance and special interest as described in para. 3.30. As stated previously, however, the road- and field-side walls of the garden are a prominent feature on the approaches to the village of Preston from the north. Their proposed demolition would not, therefore, preserve the historical setting of the conservation area. However, the mitigation measures and heritage benefits referred to above, in respect of impacts on the RPG, also apply in this regard.
- 4.14 The proposals would also enhance the setting of the conservation area by removing the architecturally inappropriate brick wall surrounding the electricity substation.

- 4.15 The visual render in Plate 16 below also demonstrates that there would be limited visibility, even in the winter months, of the proposed house above the rebuilt garden walls when approaching Preston village from the north along Hitchin Road.



Plate 16: the dashed orange lines show the outline of the dwelling proposed for the walled garden when approaching the village from the north along Hitchin Road – as can be seen, the bulk of the building would be concealed by a combination of the new walling and roadside vegetation

Impacts on the Walled Garden

- 4.16 Given that the walled garden has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset in the local neighbourhood plan, then its intrinsic significance also has to be taken into account in respect of the application proposals.
- 4.17 Clearly the proposed demolition of the extant garden boundary walls would result in total loss of historic fabric, but the structural condition report has identified that the brickwork is of such poor quality that it is not surprising that it has either already degraded or been lost. The March 2024 site inspection by the client team, Historic England and Priory Heritage reached a broad consensus that the existing wall is beyond the point of repair and that there was a viable case for a faithful rebuild following, as stated in the May 2024 Historic England final pre-app response, “*existing dimensions, design details, and alignment using a suitable modern replica of the brick that matches the existing as closely as possible*”.
- 4.18 Historic England has also agreed that the significance of the walled garden derives not so much from its inherent fabric as from its design, scale, form, extent and historical function. All of these will either be retained or sympathetically restored/replicated under the current proposals.
- 4.19 On balance therefore, the application scheme is considered to preserve the overall heritage significance of the walled garden as a non-designated heritage asset.

5. Summary & Conclusions

- 5.1 The application proposals are for the creation of a self-build sustainable new dwelling and landscaped garden within the remains of a roadside late 19th/early 20th century walled garden located on the northern approaches to the village of Preston, south of Hitchin in Hertfordshire.
- 5.2 The walled garden is a non-designated heritage asset within the Grade II* listed Temple Dinsley registered park and garden (RPG). It also stands north of the Grade II listed Dower House, which is also located in the RPG. The application site additionally abuts the northern boundary of the Preston Conservation area.
- 5.3 The application proposals call for the demolition and complete rebuild of the extant boundary walls of the garden, which are of poor build quality and likely to suffer the same fate as already decayed and missing sections of the garden boundary wall. The proposals would also introduce domestic built form and garden activity to a previously building-free historic space which has only ever served as either a working “kitchen” garden or tree plantation. The physical and visual impacts of the proposals would be noticeable to varying degrees across the RPG and would result in complete loss of the historic fabric of the walled garden itself. This would result in harm as defined by the NPPF, to the affected heritage assets but the harm in question would be less than substantial and towards the lower end of the spectrum. This would, therefore, engage para. 208 of the NPPF.
- 5.4 The Grade II* status of the RPG requires engagement with Historic England in any planning applications which have the potential to affect its heritage significance. The current proposals have been informed and shaped by pre-application advice provided by Historic England and are very much conservation led. Not only have mitigation measures been built into the application to minimise the low level of less than substantial harm but there are considerable heritage benefits to the proposals which can be weighed in the planning balance, as required by para. 208. We believe these mitigation measures and benefits would indeed secure *“a positive function and future for the walled garden, restoring its enclosed form, sensitively rebuilding the surviving lengths of brick wall, and reflecting historic horticultural activity and interest via the new domestic garden with productive elements”*, as identified by Historic England in their final pre-application response.
- 5.5 The application proposals also comply with local heritage policies SP9 and EH2.

APPENDIX 1

Final pre-application response from Historic England, May 2024

EAST OF ENGLAND OFFICE

Mr Matt Bargery
Modern Architecture Workshop Ltd
Bedford Heights
Brickhill Drive
Bedford
MK41 7PH

Direct Dial: -

Our ref: PA01197649
Your ref:

03 May 2024

By email to:
mb@maw.design

Dear Mr Bargery,

Pre-application advice

**PRINCESS HELENA COLLEGE, SCHOOL LANE, PRESTON, HITCHIN,
HERTFORDSHIRE SG4 7RT**

Thank you for continuing to engage Historic England in seeking extended pre-application advice on your proposals for residential development within the disused walled garden within the grade II* registered park and garden at Temple Dinsley in Preston, Hertfordshire.

On the basis of discussions and information shared during virtual meetings on 18 & 26 January 2024, a site visit to discuss the walled garden walls on 08 March 2024, a virtual meeting on 04 March 2024, and landscape and heritage reports circulated on 03 April 2024, we can offer the following advice.

Historic England advice

The significance of the Temple Dinsley site and the walled garden within it has been summarised already in our letter dated 07 July 2023 and in Bourne Heritage's report (as revised April 2nd, 2024).

Since July 2023, the design team has undertaken further work on the proposals for development within the walled garden, amending the design and providing further assessments and supporting information to address many of our comments to date.



24 BROOKLANDS AVENUE, CAMBRIDGE, CB2 8BU
Telephone 01223 582749
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Walled Garden Walls

We have agreed that *“the significance of the walled garden derives not so much from its inherent fabric as from its design, scale, form, extent and historical function”*, as stated in the Bourne Heritage report.

The 08 March 2024 site visit allowed for more detailed discussion on the approach to the walled garden walls in the context of Priory Heritage’s condition inspection report. There was broad agreement that the existing wall is beyond the point of repair and that a case could be made for a faithful rebuild following existing dimensions, design details, and alignment using a suitable modern replica of the brick that matches the existing as closely as possible. This would include removing the section of recently implemented brick wall around the substation and rebuilding to match the rest of the replacement boundary wall. The lost section of wall on the Dower House side of the garden would be replaced with estate fencing and new planting to complete the enclosure.

Regardless, demolition of the existing walls would result in loss of historic fabric. Any forthcoming planning application will require justification for this harm to significance by demonstrating why taking down and rebuilding is the preferred option rather than retention and repair. This justification would need to include the Priory Heritage report outlining condition, the Bourne Heritage report establishing the significance of the wall as a heritage asset, and also a section in your Design & Access statement setting out the other conservation options considered and discounted. You should also demonstrate recording sufficient to ensure the detailed designs for the new wall construction incorporate all of the characteristic features of the existing walls.

New Dwelling

Much more detail is now available about the proposed new dwelling’s structure, massing and materiality. The new dwelling would form a substantial freestanding structure occupying a large part of the walled garden; however, the potential visual impacts have been reduced by excavating into the sloping ground within the walled garden to sink the new structure into the hillside, lowering its height in relation to the walled garden walls along the Preston Road. New planting within the surrounding domestic garden would further break up the form of the new structure.

Visual appraisal of the proposed development have been carried out and are presented in the Pegasus Group’s landscape report and Bourne Heritage’s revised heritage report. These help to demonstrate how the proposed development has evolved in response to potential impacts to the setting of the grade II listed Dower House and conservation area, assessing public viewpoints (especially along the Preston Road) as well as both designed and incidental views at locations within the registered park and garden.

The considerable earthmoving required to sink the new dwelling remains unclear. Any forthcoming planning application should be accompanied by details for the proposed cut-and-fill and disposal or re-use of any volumes of arising spoil, especially how any of the arising spoil that must remain on site would be sensitively incorporated into the design.

New Domestic Garden

The latest proposals for the domestic garden around the new structure have reduced the amount of organic and curvaceous forms while incorporating a clear line strongly evoking the former path aligned with the arched pedestrian access point on the north-eastern wall. In all, these amendments better reflect the ordered character typical of a walled kitchen garden, referring to the historic layout as recorded in historic mapping and aerial photos and including areas of fruit a vegetable production.

Historic England position

Historic England recognises the effort that has gone into working up the proposals. We welcome the additional information, which has helped us better understand the details of the proposed development and how the design has evolved in response to our advice to date.

Clearly, the proposed development would still result in direct physical and visual impacts to the walled garden as set out in our letter dated 07 July 2023, causing a low level of harm to the overall significance of the registered park and garden. Impacts to the settings of other designated heritage assets would be limited, causing low-to-negligible levels of harm to their significance. Impacts to the non-designated walled garden itself would cause a higher level of harm from the change of use and character as well as the loss of historic fabric arising from demolition of the surviving garden walls.

For the purposes of the NPPF, we assess the harm as being located towards the lower end of the range of less than substantial harm. Nevertheless, any level of harm requires clear and convincing justification and should be accepted only if the local planning authority concludes that there is such justification and that the harm would be outweighed by the public benefits the proposals would secure (NPPF paragraphs 206 and 208). This includes the '*balanced judgement*' required in relation to non-designated heritage assets (NPPF paragraph 209).

With this in mind, the conservation-led approach adopted in the designs for the proposed development would, in our opinion, deliver meaningful heritage benefits. This includes securing a positive function and future for the walled garden, restoring

its enclosed form, sensitively rebuilding the surviving lengths of brick wall, and reflecting historic horticultural activity and interest via the new domestic garden with productive elements.

Overall, if this scheme as now proposed were to form the basis of a planning application, we would not expect to raise any objection on heritage grounds at application stage; however, we recommend that you provide comprehensive supporting information as required by the NPPF before any statutory approval is sought – particularly regarding the approach to and any impacts arising from the required earthmoving.

Next Steps

Thank you for involving us at the pre-application stage. We are broadly content with your proposals and feel that the information shared to date clearly demonstrates how your design has evolved with detailed consideration of the unique heritage of the walled garden at Temple Dinsley and its setting.

We hope that you will find this advice constructive and that it will enable you to proceed with engaging North Hertfordshire Council in pre-application discussions.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or wish to discuss the content of our letter in more detail.

If you would like to receive further pre-application advice, we would continue under the existing agreement for extended pre-application advice.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Laine CMLI

Landscape Architect

Email: Christopher.Laine@historicengland.org.uk

Cc – Neville Doe, Historic England

Appendix 2

Temple Dinsley RPG – List Description

Heritage Category:

Park and Garden

Grade:

II*

List Entry Number:

1000919

Date first listed:

11-Jun-1987

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

Hertfordshire

District:

North Hertfordshire (District Authority)

Parish:

Preston

National Grid Reference:

TL 18420 24903

Details

A country house of early C18 origin, substantially enlarged by Edwin Lutyens 1908-11, at which time he and Gertrude Jekyll collaborated on the creation of the formal garden around the house. The house and garden are surrounded by C18 parkland.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The manor house of Temple Dinsley was rebuilt by Benedict Ithell in 1714, following his purchase of the manor in 1712. Before this there appears to have been little garden surrounding the C17 house, which had a walled entrance forecourt largely surrounded by a paling fence enclosed by a line of trees (Chauncy 1700, reproduced in CL 1911). The manor passed through several hands during the remainder of the C18 and C19, being in the possession of H G Fenwick by the early C20. In 1908 Fenwick employed Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944) to enlarge the house substantially and remodel it. At

this time Lutyens collaborated with Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932) in creating formal gardens to the west and north of the house, providing a further extension to the house in 1911. The house became a school in 1935, in which use it remains (1999).

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Temple Dinsley lies adjacent to the east side of the village of Preston, 5km south of the centre of Hitchin, at the north-east end of the Chiltern Hills. The c 50ha site is bounded to the east, south and west by lanes, that to the west, School Lane, being one of the main village streets of Preston which is partly marked to the south of the house by a red-brick wall (E L Lutyens c 1908, listed grade II). To the north the boundary is marked by agricultural land. The ground is gently undulating, rising to the north-west of the house, with a pronounced valley extending north-east from the north side of the gardens, down which distant views of Letchworth are visible. The setting is rural, with further buildings by Lutyens for Fenwick lying adjacent to the south boundary, these being the former model farm, Ladygrove Stud Farm (also known as Minsden Farm, now converted to domestic use) and Kiln Wood Cottage (both E L Lutyens 1912-13, listed grade II). Lutyens and Jekyll were also working on the gardens at Putteridge Bury (qv), 6km to the west, at around the time Lutyens was employed in further extensions at Temple Dinsley.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main approach enters off School Lane, 250m south of the house, set back off the road between two brick-built gate piers with stone dressings flanked by a brick park wall (E L Lutyens c 1908, all listed grade II). The northern section of the wall extends north alongside School Lane; the southern section leads south, with a further gateway (E L Lutyens c 1908, listed grade II) set into it close to, and in similar style to the main gateway. The southernmost of the two gateways, opening into the south park, led to the former Temple Farm Homestead (now gone). The south drive curves northwards across the park, down a slope to the gravel forecourt lying on the south, entrance front, enclosed by brick walls. The south end of the drive was formerly (OS C19) flanked by an avenue of trees. The lowered south wall of the forecourt supports wrought-iron railings, at the centre of which lies the entrance to the forecourt, flanked by wrought-iron gates and piers with an overthrow (listed grade II* with the house), giving access to the main door at the centre of the south front. Iron pedestrian gates are set into the west and east walls where they meet the south sides of Lutyens' cross wings. In the early C20 (CL 1911) the southern half of the forecourt was laid to lawn divided by the gravel drive leading to a carriage sweep in the northern half. Luxuriant herbaceous borders ran along the inner sides of the west and east walls.

The east drive enters at a two-storey lodge standing 450m east of the house, adjacent to the St Paul's Walden to Gosmore lane. From here a straight drive extends north-west, flanked by an avenue set in strips of mown grass, along the south-west side of Summerhouse Plantation. Views extend from the eastern section north-east towards Letchworth. At the west corner of the Plantation the drive turns south-west down a slope, passing two oval pools at the edge of the park, giving access to the service yard on the east side of the house. The drive continues south to join the south drive 50m from the house. In the C18 and C19 (Dury and Andrews, 1766; OS C19) the east drive was flanked by a straight avenue, replanted in the late C20.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Temple Dinsley (1714, enlarged and remodelled by E L Lutyens 1908-9, listed grade II*) stands towards the west side of the site. The early C18 core of the two-storey brick building is flanked by Lutyens' cross-wings, with a kitchen wing (1908) and nursery extension (1911) both attached to the east. The extension links with the C18 former stable block adapted by Lutyens and since converted to domestic accommodation. In the late C19 (OS), a substantial wing projected south from the south-east corner of the house along the outer side of the east forecourt wall; this was demolished before 1900 (OS C19).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens are divided into a series of interconnected compartments largely related to the west and north fronts of the house, laid out by Lutyens with planting designs by Gertrude Jekyll, c 1909-10. The garden structures are listed grade II* with the house.

A doorway at the centre of the west front opens out into the formal Paved Rose Garden. A stone-paved path, flanked by narrow borders and beyond this panels of lawn, leads to a square parterre laid out with a geometric pattern of rose beds surrounded by further stone paving. The south side of the garden is bounded by a brick retaining wall, beyond and above which lie the Diamond Garden and Pool Garden. The north side is bounded by a brick wall into which is set a covered loggia, overlooking the centre of the rose beds, separating two garden houses. The loggia is supported on the south side by white pillars and flanked to west and east by the garden houses: square, brick garden pavilions with pyramidal roofs, each with a door opening out into the loggia. The west side of the Paved Rose Garden is bounded by a low, brick retaining wall with a flight of stone steps at the centre leading up to an open lawn enclosed by brick walls, the former Herbaceous Garden. In the early C20 this area contained broad herbaceous borders running west from the steps to the west wall along the north and south walls. The borders flanked a central path aligned on the door in the west front. The contours of the path are still visible (1999). The garden wall enclosing the former Herbaceous Garden is of C18 origin, and enclosed the former walled kitchen garden, the east wall of which stood close to the site of the west front of the adjacent cross wing of the house.

A second east to west axis runs parallel and adjacent, overlooking the Paved Rose Garden and Herbaceous Garden from the south. At the east end of this axial layout, the Diamond Garden is entered from the western forecourt gate, and also from the south-east corner of the Paved Rose Garden. From a stone path connecting these two entrances a broad flight of stone steps with tile risers leads south up to a raised lawn flanked by rose borders. This lawn overlooks the forecourt to the east, and the park to the south, being bounded on these two sides by brick retaining walls. From the top of the steps a stone path leads west between raised brick and stone rose beds to a further short flight of stone steps up to the Pool Garden. This is dominated by a swimming pool with a concrete surround set in lawn overlooking the Paved Rose Garden and loggia, below to the north. Formerly, as laid out by Lutyens, the body of water was an informal ornamental reflecting pool, and was enclosed by stone paths set in grass. At the west end of the Pool Garden a flight of steps set in a low, brick retaining wall leads up to the Spring Garden, laid to lawn with a stone path leading west into the Small Herbaceous Garden, now (1999) laid to lawn and partly enclosed by clipped hedges. Formerly a path led west across the Small Herbaceous Garden, flanked by herbaceous borders. The

west side of the Garden is bounded by a stone cross path which leads north into and across the Herbaceous Garden, and west of the path the Garden is bounded by the tall, brick garden wall standing adjacent to the village green.

A stone cross path at the east side of the Spring Garden gives access via a gateway to the park to the south, and to the Herbaceous Garden to the north down stone steps set into the dividing wall. The cross path continues north across the Herbaceous Garden, leading down stone steps between brick gate piers set into the north wall and down to the Side Path, which connects the west garden boundary with the Pergola Garden to the east. The cross path from the Spring Garden crosses the Side Path, leading north to the curved, stone Magnolia Steps which lead down to a stone-paved area. Here, two circular beds containing mature bush magnolias flank to west and east a small paved area, with a further flight of curved stone steps leading down to the north into the Rose Garden. The Rose Garden is laid to lawn and largely enclosed by clipped yew hedges with entrances set at the centre of each side. Formerly (early C20) this was planted with a pattern of rose beds. The northern entrance leads into woodland, the western entrance gives onto stone steps leading up to the informal Top Lawn, and the eastern entrance leads to a lawn set with several mature trees including a large holm oak overlooking the formal Pergola Garden.

A doorway at the centre of the north front opens out onto the formal North Terrace. Stone steps lead down to a stone terrace with a pattern picked out in bricks, flanked by Lutyens' west and east cross wings and bounded to the north by a terracotta balustrade on top of a brick retaining wall supporting the terrace above. Two flights of stone steps oppose each other as they lead down from either end of the stone terrace, to a further stone terrace bounded to the south by the brick retaining wall which here has a hemispherical arch in which a small circular pond is partly recessed. To the south of this lies a narrow rectangular formal lawn flanked by herbaceous borders, these in turn flanked by retaining walls supporting stone paths leading north from the steps which lead down from the top terrace. These paths are bordered by lawns leading along the north front of the projecting cross wings.

A flight of stone steps leads down from the central lawn of the North Terrace to the Pergola Garden, a rectangular sunken lawn surrounded by raised brick terraces on the north, east and south sides, and by a grass bank on the west side. A grass path runs along the top of the west and north terraces, and a stone path along the east and south terraces. A flight of stone steps leads down to the lawn from the centre of the west side, with a broader, central flight on the north side aligned on the centre of the house, and a further, narrower flight to the west of this. The east terrace is covered by a pergola with brick piers, with alternate circular and square piers and wooden cross members linking the tops of the piers. At the south end of the pergola a flight of stone steps leads south up to the easternmost of the two lawns flanking the central North Terrace Lawn. A further flight of stone steps leads up from the south side of the sunken lawn in the Pergola Garden, to the western of these two flanking lawns.

At the north end of the pergola stone steps lead up to the Belvedere (Lutyens c 1908), a small, square stone building with a pyramidal roof, which is offset to the east of the pergola, overlooking to the south the Small Orchard which bounds the Pergola Lawn below to the east. The Belvedere

overlooks the park to the east, with long views to the north-east along a valley, beyond the park towards Letchworth. The broad steps on the north side of the Pergola Garden lead north up to the Orchard, which itself slopes up to the north, overlooking the Pergola Garden and north front, and bounded to the west and north by woodland and to the east by a clipped yew hedge covering a brick retaining wall. It is now (1999) laid to rough grass, having lost almost all of the orchard trees. Views extend east and north-east, as from the Belvedere, which stands at the south-east corner.

In the late C19 (OS), a small garden lay immediately north of the house, covering the area now occupied by Lutyens' cross wings and North Terrace. The Side Path led west alongside the kitchen garden on the west front, giving access to a path through a narrow belt of wooded pleasure grounds on the west boundary which led northwards to the Dower House. South of the kitchen garden lay a rectangular compartment containing a rectangular pool on the site of that in the C20 Pool Garden. The Orchard, the Pergola Garden and other compartments north of the Side Walk, together with much of the enclosing woodland, were created on land taken in from the park by Lutyens and Jekyll.

PARK The park, laid to pasture and woodland, bounds the house and gardens to the east and south, and is divided by the east drive into north and south halves. At the centre lies Summerhouse Plantation, planted in the early to mid C20. The southern half of the park contains some mature specimen trees, with the remains of an avenue leading south-west from the east drive 200m east of the house, aligned on the site of the former Temple Farm Homestead (now gone). A brick icehouse (C18, listed grade II) lies 250m east of the house, south of the east drive. The Piggery (E L Lutyens c 1908, listed grade II) stands 240m south-east of the house. It is a small, red-brick farm building with a steep, pyramidal tiled roof, built as an eyecatcher within the park, particularly from the house and south drive.

The northern half of the park contains the Dower House (early C18 and early C19, listed grade II), a large, irregular, red-brick house of two storeys standing 300m north of Temple Dinsley house on lower ground.

In the late C19 (OS) the south park contained the remains of several avenues, including a fragment of a double avenue lying c 150m south-east of the house, on which it was aligned, together with the avenue flanking the south end of the south drive, and the avenue extending south-west from the east drive to the former Temple Farm Homestead. This farm, demolished in the early C20, formerly occupied a prominent position c 250m south-east of the house (Dury and Andrews, 1766; OS C19).

KITCHEN GARDEN The brick-walled, rectangular former kitchen garden, converted in the early C20 into Lutyens' Paved Rose Garden and Herbaceous Garden, extends west from the house, still largely enclosed by the remains of the C18 and C19 walls (OS 1884).

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