



Staunton Country Park – Heritage Statement

**Middle Park Way
Havant
Hampshire
PO9 5HB**

January 2020

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On behalf of:

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1.0 Assessment of Heritage Significance

1.1 Description

Staunton Park is deemed to be of national importance, and is registered Grade II* on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens from which the following summary description is taken;-

“A Regency landscaped garden, laid out in the 1820s and 1830s on the site of late C18 pleasure grounds and a walled garden, with a series of specialist gardens and follies by Sir George Staunton to accommodate his Chinese and botanical interests. The gardens are surrounded by a park of C18 origin, which was developed by Sir George in the early C19, and also incorporates late C19 alterations”.

The Park contains some of the last remaining remnants of the ancient Forest of Bere containing diverse and valued habitats and species.

1.2 Context

Staunton Country Park (also known as Leigh Park) lies on the northern outskirts of Havant, on the west side of the B2149, Petersfield Road. The 90ha registered area comprises c 19ha of kitchen and nursery gardens, pleasure grounds, and paddocks associated with farm buildings, c 30ha of woodland, and c 41ha of parkland.

The eastern third of the site lies on level ground which falls in gentle undulations towards the north-west boundary with the wooded ridges of the Forest of Bere beyond forming the distant view. The housing estates of Leigh Park abut the site to the south-west, south, and south-east although on the south-east boundary they lie beyond Petersfield Road, the northern half of which (Durrants Road) is fringed by detached houses interspersed with tree belts.

Middle Park Way, built in the 1950s, cuts from west to east across the southern third of the site, separating the area known as South Gardens from the North or Leigh Park Gardens. To the north-west and north, the woodland and grassland of the park merges into wooded farmland.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

Both North and South Gardens are entered from Middle Park Way. The entrance to the existing public car park in South Gardens situated some 80m west of its junction with Petersfield Road, and there is planning approval to build a new car park access from Petersfield Road. Pedestrians enter a few metres further west, at a pair of gateways with brick piers and iron gates which stand facing on opposite sides of the road and from which gravelled paths lead northwards towards the lake and pleasure grounds and southwards to the ornamental farm attraction entrance buildings. These, converted from C19 coach house and garden use, stand against the south-east wall of the kitchen garden.

The paths follow the route of the main drive to Sir George Staunton's house, which stood adjacent to the south-east corner of the kitchen garden. The drive, laid out on the course of a former sunken public lane which Sir George moved eastwards to the present Petersfield Road in 1828, had two entrances with lodges, one some 650m north of the house and a second a similar distance away to the south (both to designs by Vulliamy (Campbell 1988) and both now, 1998, gone).

While the approach from the south was retained to serve the new mansion built by the lake in 1863, a new drive from the north was laid out from a new North Lodge (dated 1868), which stands at the northernmost tip of the site at the junction of Durrants Road with Manor Lodge Road.

PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS

Following the demolition of both the C18 and C19 houses, the present principal buildings, which stand to the south-east of the kitchen garden, comprise those structures surviving from Sir George Staunton's building works, some of which have C18 origins.

Immediately south-east of the garden wall is the Gothick Library, a small, largely stuccoed octagon with crocketed pinnacles, built by the architect Lewis Vulliamy (1791-1871) in 1832 (listed grade II). It forms the only surviving part of an C18 house which stood on the south-west side of the Library. This was enlarged for William Garrett by John Kent of Southampton in 1802 and again by Sir George Staunton from 1819 before being demolished over a period of some years between 1863 and 1874 (Campbell 1988). The house and its gardens are illustrated in a series of watercolours by Joseph Gilbert in 1833 (private collection).

Some 70m to the south-east of the site of the former house is Leigh Park Farmhouse (now known as the Regency Farmhouse) and dairy (listed grade II), dating from the C18 and C19. The farmhouse, restored in the 1990s and in use as a tea room, comprises a two-storey building of red and blue brick with a pitched tiled roof and pointed gothick arches to the upper windows on the south front.

East of the farmhouse is an L-shaped range of a mid C19 red-brick barn and cowshed, with a further open-fronted timber and brick cart shed on the east side (group listed grade II); these now house farm animals (for the farm trail) and other country park uses.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

The gardens and pleasure grounds lie to the north and south of Middle Park Way, their present boundaries with the surrounding park largely established by c 1842 (Estate map). For a description of the whole site, please refer to the Heritage statement submitted for 2017 applications PP/17/00735 and 736. This statement with focus on the gardens North of Middle Park way.

NORTH GARDENS

North of Middle Park Way the broad walk, fringed as within the South Gardens by belts of exotic and native trees and shrubbery, continues into the North or Leigh Park Gardens.

East of the walk and abutting the road, the c 1ha walled Storey Garden, now laid to rough grass, was built and planted as an orchard in the 1860s (Sale plan, 1860; OS 1st edition).

Stable Cottage (listed grade II), built in the early C19 as Keeper's Cottage, stands immediately north of the garden, with associated timber yards and a saw pit. Note: This is currently owned by Portsmouth City Council and this building is not included in the current proposals.

Northwards again and with a frontage on to Petersfield Road is the red-brick Coach House, built in the late C19 (listed grade II as the Stable Block) and restored in 1997-8. It is now proposed to convert this to a new Visitor's Centre for Leigh Park Gardens.

Beyond the Storey Garden the walk, still following the early C19 route, bears north-westwards through the centre of extensive lawns planted informally with a wide range of trees of mixed ages and species and with shrubbery. Those on the north-east side, which include many trees dating from the 1960s and

1970s, were enclosed from the park as pleasure grounds between 1860 and 1870 (Sale plans) and planted as an Arboretum (Sale catalogue, 1874).

The lawns and shrubbery to the south-west of the walk comprise part of the early C19 pleasure grounds laid out by Sir George Staunton and formerly included a Rosary, a Moss House, and a Temple of Friendship (all now gone).

The walk terminates at the turning circle on the east front of the site of William Stone's Leigh Park mansion. This was built by R W Drew in 1861 and demolished in 1959, the only surviving feature being the garden terrace and parapet wall on the north-west side (listed grade II). The terrace, from which there are views north-westwards to wooded ridges beyond the site, overlooks the principal part of Sir George's pleasure grounds.

A broad open lawn enclosed by trees and shrubbery slopes down from the terrace to an irregularly shaped lake, known as Leigh Water, with five wooded islands. Two of these and the brick edging to the lake were added by William Stone in the 1860s.

A brick bridge with three elliptical arches (listed grade II) which connects one of the islands to the shore and a mock Chinese fort on one of the islands are the only surviving features from the many built by Sir George; these included five bridges, a Turkish Summerhouse, a Corinthian Bridge, and a Chinese Boathouse.

The perimeter woodland and shrub belt around the lake contains a walk along which further garden buildings were erected. Of these the Shell House, an hexagonal, gothick, flint-built structure (listed grade II* as the Staunton Memorial), survives sited within a dell some 60m south of the site the mansion. A length of the pathway leading south-east from the Shell House is surfaced with a pattern of coloured pebbles (early C19, listed grade II).

On the north-east side of the lawn, the woodland is cut by a vista and walk, known as The Avenue and dating from Stone's work in the 1860s, which runs 1.1km north-west from near the site of the mansion to Upper Lake. This, now partly silted up and overgrown, was also constructed by William Stone.

PARK

The principal areas of parkland lie within Thicket Lawn and High Lawn, to the west of the gardens and on the north side of Middle Park Way. The undulating ground is under light grazing or rough grass and is scattered with a few groups and individual mature trees.

The land is shown as part of the park on the estate plan of c 1842 but appears to have been further planted with parkland trees in the 1860s (OS). Adjoining the North Gardens on the north-east side, the small areas of grazed parkland in Hammond's Land and Beacon Lawn also form part of the early C19 park.

The crest of Beacon Lawn is crowned with the Beacon (Vulliamy, listed grade II), an open circular gazebo of eight columns and a dome with a metal acanthus finial which was built in 1830 (Salter 1987).

Northwards, the drive to North Lodge passes through the woodland of Hammond's Copse and alongside further areas of grazed parkland. The south-west corner of the site, south of Middle Park Way, contains Great Copse, reduced from its extent in c 1842 (Estate map) by housing built in the 1950s. Its mature deciduous woodland formerly contained arbours, an icehouse, and a fenced kitchen garden (CBA 1992), all now gone, and was linked to the South Gardens by the Long Walk.

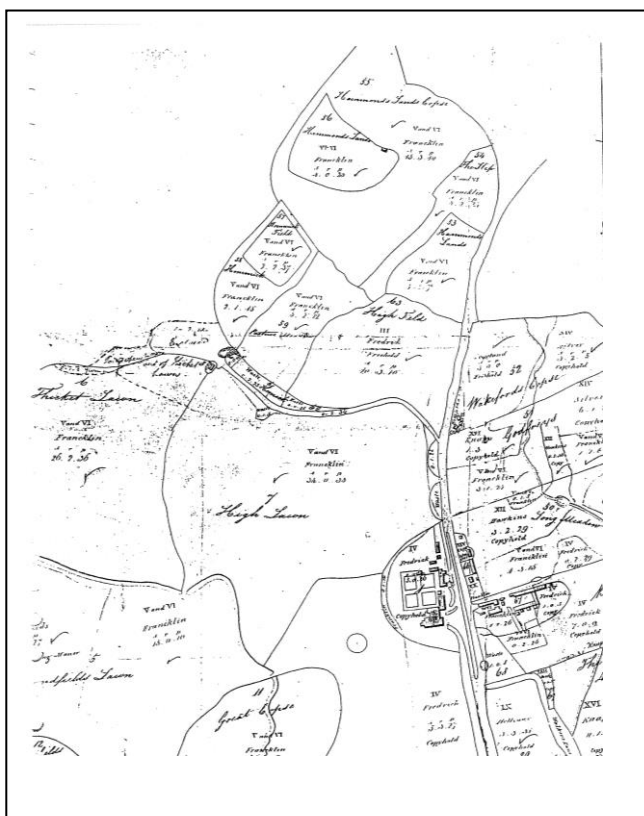
1.3 Historic Development

The Forest of Bere

- 1.3.1 The Forest of Bere was used from the 13th to the 16th centuries as royal hunting country. However, some contemporary records suggest that the area was poorly stocked and did not contain sufficient number of 'open glades' for more than very occasional use. Records belonging to the 12th, 14th and 15th centuries indicate its southern limits, with distinctions made between the 'East Bere Forest' and the 'Forest of Porchester' to the west. Havant Thicket, a part of the Forest of Bere, was at one time known as the Forest of Rowlands Castle. The Bishops of Winchester had a Royal license to hunt the Havant Thicket.
- 1.3.2 The forest was gradually reduced to a series of scattered and isolated areas of woodland, as a result of by economic need and exploitation. In 1347 its impoverished state was revealed by the order of the Crown that '...our Forest of Porchester' be reaffore as 'Men having woods and common of pasture'. The Crown guaranteed that it would safeguard the rights of all persons with rightful access to the resources of the forest, thereby giving royal sanction to further attrition of the woodlands.
- 1.3.3 In 1662 a detailed documentation of the Forest of Bere revealed that what had formerly extended over 30,000 acres, was by then barely 10,000 acres. Even so this was geographically significant. Pepys in 1662 recorded 'Up early and to Petersfield; and thence to got a countryman to guide us to Havant, to avoid going through the forest'. One of the routes through via Havant Stream from Havant to Rowlands Castle to Finchdean to Billiton.
- 1.3.4 In 1688 the last perambulation was carried out as a part of an early conservation survey of the Royal Forest of Hampshire. (Earlier ones had been ordered between 1218 and 1301). It formally laid down the bounds and meterage of the remaining 10,000 acres, and these limits survived in 1968 in the form of the boundaries administered by the Forestry Commission.
- 1.3.5 Between 1816 and 1826 the first detailed appraisal of the forest's timber resources was made. At the same time 1,000 acres was planted up almost exclusively with oak and conifers, trees most needed by the Navy. However, by the time they were ready for felling in the 1850's and 1860's ships the 'wooden-wall' had been replaced by the 'iron-clad'. Throughout the 19th century there was some sale to local timber traders of oak and fir, but essentially the woodland market economy had disappeared. Between 1860 and 1920 only 100 acres were felled and replanted.
- 1.3.6 Due to heavy thinning's at the end of the end of the 19th century and the ravages of the caterpillar, Tortix virudaria, by 1924 the forest was considered of little value, and could only be termed an 'amenity'. During the 1920's the Forestry Commission felled and replanted 500 acres, with oak remaining the dominant tree.
- 1.3.7 During the 1970's one of the last remnants of Havant Thicket was cleared to open up 150 hectares for agriculture.

The 18th Century

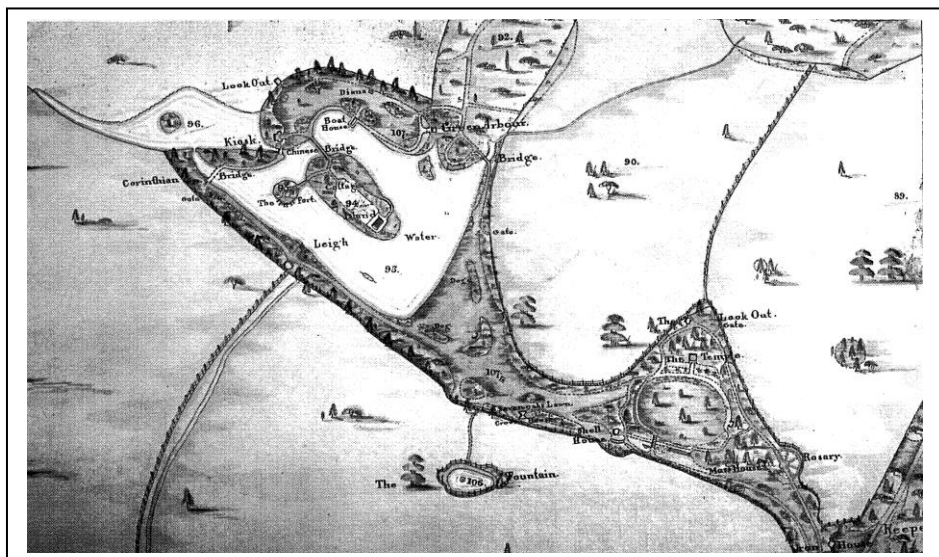
- 1.3.8 The early landscape of Staunton Park was associated with pasturing of stock in Havant Thicket and the Forest of Bere, which was in the ownership of the Bishop of Winchester.
- 1.3.9 A new lease in 1775 'reserved to the Bishop the right of all the growing timber, the right to cut and cart it, and the right of hunting, chasing and taking deer, in The Thicket, part of the Manor'. Since the people of Havant were also entitled to cut timber 'from the town wastes, which included The Thicket', this caused disputes with local people such as Joseph Franklin. The lease was surrendered in 1784, and a new lease granted to Richard Newland, who began selling off parts of the manor of Havant.
- 1.3.10 The Thomas Milne Plan dated 1791 shows the holding, which is named Ley, in the ownership of Harrison Esq. The outline of the holding is shown, of rectangular shape, with the boundary marked by fencing and a line of trees. It appears to extend north as far as mid way along Middle Thicket Lane, well beyond the fork off from the Havant to Rowlands Castle main road, and on a similar level to Wakefords Copse. The position of the house and walled garden is marked, as are the farm buildings and cottages on the east side of the road. In 1792 Harrison sold the holding covering approximately 20 acres to Admiral John Frederick.



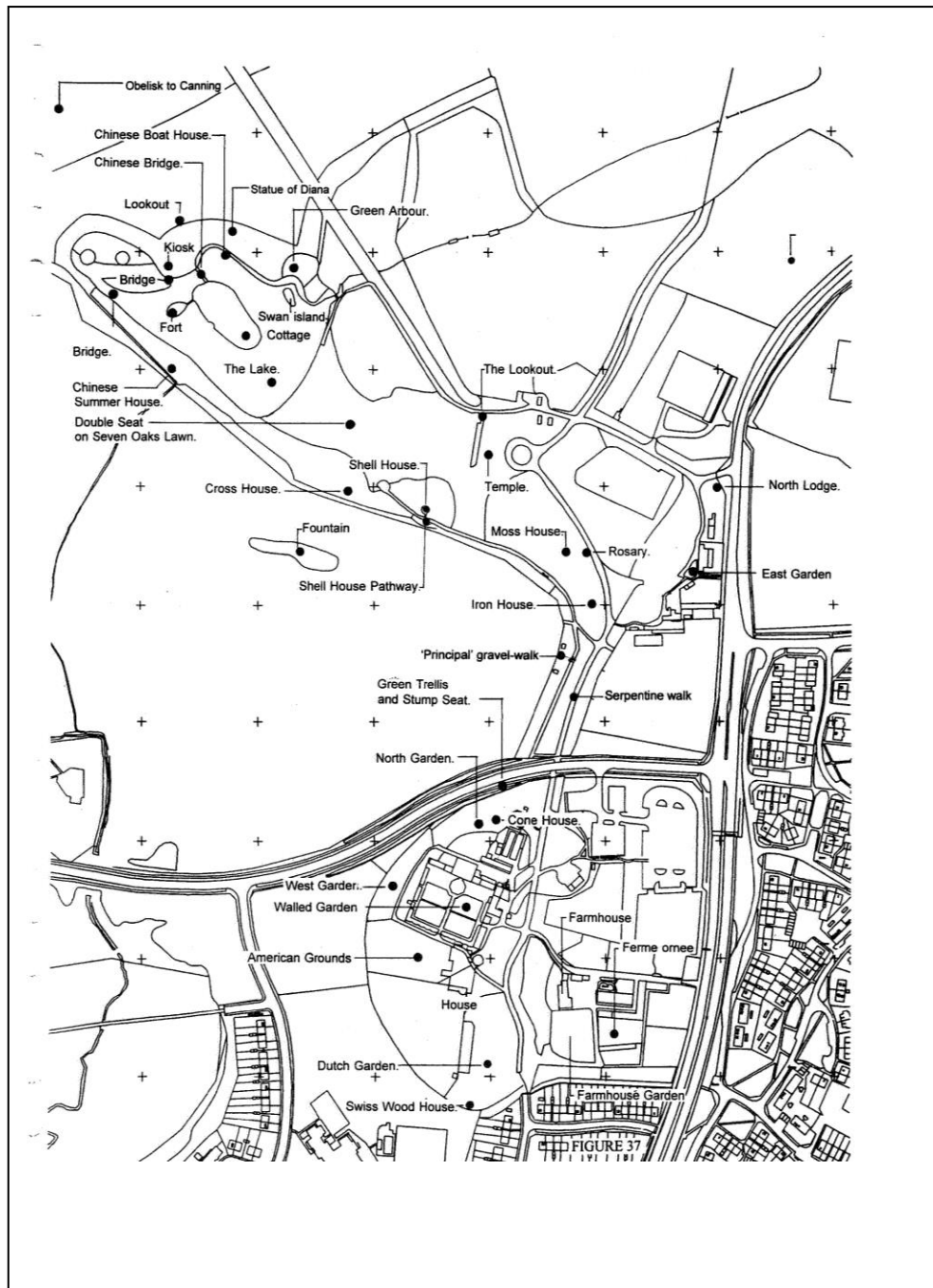
Map of Leigh Park c 1792

The 19th Century

- 1.3.11 In 1800 Frederick's widow Ann sold the house with nine acres of land to William Garrett, a man of local influence. In the same year Richard Newland conveyed the manor of Havant, with its rights, members and appurtenances to Garrett.
- 1.3.12 A contemporary description provides an account of the house and estate;- 'The House at Leigh, previous to its occupation by Mr. Garrett, was very small, and the land attached to it quite inconsiderable'. Around 1802 Garrett enlarged and almost rebuilt the house, using the Southampton architect, Kent, who had built other residences in the neighbourhood. The house had a 'very handsome' central entrance hall, 21ft. in diameter with niches for sculptures. There was a 'notable reception room' which was oval shaped, with five other main rooms on the ground floor. A 'geometrical staircase handsomely stuccoed with fluted doric columns' led up to eight principal and eight servants rooms.
- 1.3.13 At the same time he acquired the 220 acres of land belonging to Franklin. With further land purchases of contiguous land Garrett enlarged the estate into one of the largest in the district. The 400 acres were enclosed with a park paling, and named Leigh Park. Garrett built a small pond for the watering of cattle on the edge of Havant Thicket, and converted the farm into a Ferme Ornee. He laid out Pleasure Grounds around the house. The Kitchen Garden walls, including the crinkle-crinkle stretch along the south, date from the early 1800's. Garrett also constructed glasshouses.
- 1.3.14 A description in 1817 in 'A Topographical Account of the Hundred of Bosmere' by John Butler read, "Leigh Park has always attracted the notice of strangers, from the peculiar neatness and elegance of its appearance, its forest scenery, and its rich and interesting views of the sea. It stands upon a gentle eminence, in a park of four hundred acres, of hill and dale, ornamented with timber and plantations. The shrubberies are laid out with taste; and from the numerous wood-walks, at different points, are seen many interesting objects of the neighbourhood. The gardens are planned with great judgement, and furnished with pinery, hot-house, green-houses, and stores, and surrounded with shrubberies and walks communicating in all directions'.



Charles Lewis map 1842



Staunton Landscape Features

Staunton 1819-1860

1.3.15 The house was described in 1819 as a 'modern villa' at the time of its sale to Sir George Staunton. The estate comprised 828 acres, of which 420 acres were parkland and 408 acres were arable, meadows and coppices. Sale 'Descriptive Printed Particulars' included,

'Productive Gardens, Green, Pinery and Succession House, Melon Grounds, with pleasant and extensive Shrubberies. A Bailiffs House, an ornamental Dairy, and seventeen Cottages. The Agricultural Buildings are peculiarly complete, and the whole of the Lands present a perfect Ferme Ornee. This singularly unique and delightful House is situated on a pleasing eminence, in a pale

park of upwards of 420 Acres, commanding a peculiar richness of home landscape and forest scenery, with a fine view of Spithead, the Isle of Wight and St. Helen's: most delightful drives and walks through all the Coppices, of considerable extent, with seats, and many of the enclosures are margined by walks - the soil is favourable for Turnips, Seeds, Wheat and all other Grain'.

- 1.3.16 Staunton continued to add to the estate with further purchases, including Havant Farm in 1821 and Bedhampton Farm in 1832. In 1826 the Bishop of Winchester renewed the lease of the manor to Staunton, and held it until 1828 when the entire Leigh Park Estate together with the Manors of Havant and Flood were rendered freehold. They were conveyed 'Sir George Staunton, his heirs and assigns for ever, discharged from all encumbrances except tithes', with rights over Havant Thicket. The deeds excepted the timber from Havant Thicket and other manorial waste. However at some point the Bishop's rights in The Thicket must have been surrendered to the Lord of the Manor, as in a letter of 17th April 1829, the Bishop's warden apologised to Staunton for 'illegally marking timber in The Thicket'.
- 1.3.17 Staunton began enlarging the house in 1819, with the addition of a clock-tower, a spare coach-house, and harness room with a servants room, all designed by Lewis Vulliamy. In 1828 the Conservatory was extended and further extensions were made in 1832, to increase its size to 60ft by 40ft. The Gothic library was built in 1832, with a connecting corridor to the house. On the south side, where the house was sheltered by a colonnade, a stone terrace was constructed in 1834. The transition from the Conservatory to the garden was 'arched over with a trellis'



Sir George Thomas Staunton

1781-1859



Staunton House and the Gothic Library 1832

- 1.3.18 In 1828 Staunton had the ancient approach road to the house, which was likely to have been on the 'precise line of the Roman Road between Havant and Rowlands Castle', and passed 'within 40 yards of the front door of the house', closed off and a new one, three quarters of a mile long, built to the east on the 'opposite side of the farm-yard'. With the other public route through the estate, Middle Thicket Lane, also closed off, Staunton then began to lay out a classic 19th century country estate. Carriage drives were constructed with three lodges erected in 1828 and 1829.

- 1.3.19 Staunton was to expand the Pleasure Grounds to over 400 acres. In his 'Notices of the Leigh Park Estate', published in 1836 for private circulation, he divided the Pleasure Grounds into 'the Lawns and Shrubberies; the Gardens, properly so called; and the Copses'. His description began with the Dutch Garden, the Swiss Wood House, and the Cone House, all thought likely to predate Staunton and to date from the Garret period. He wrote that, 'This was the farthest point of the Garden and enclosed grounds, until the year 1821, when the late improvements were commenced'.



The Shell House 1833



The Shell House 2016

- 1.3.20 In 1824 he began work in the north of the estate, with the erection of the Temple of Friendship on the highest knoll, to house initially a monumental Urn commemorating his parents. In 1828 the Shell House and pathway were constructed just south of the Temple, followed by the construction of the Beacon in 1830 to the north east of the Temple, in High Field, renamed Beacon Lawn by Staunton. In 1828 work had begun on the Lake or 'Ornamental Water' with its enlargement, and the planting of a tree belt behind it 'adjoining the Thicket'. The c.1792-1800 Plan was annotated, with an outline of the intended lake drawn on, with notation stating land being taken 'out of Thicket Lawn', an area of Thicket Lawn being 'given cut', and another 'Enclosed'. The 'pond of a few yards in diameter' was to be 'opened out more'. In 1832 Staunton built the Kiosk or Chinese Summer House near the north west tip of the enlarged lake, and also erected behind it at the end of a natural clearing in Havant Thicket, an Obelisk in memory of George Canning. A new plantation was planted on Horndean Road, and the North and West Gardens, formerly shrubberies, were laid out.



The Beacon C1860

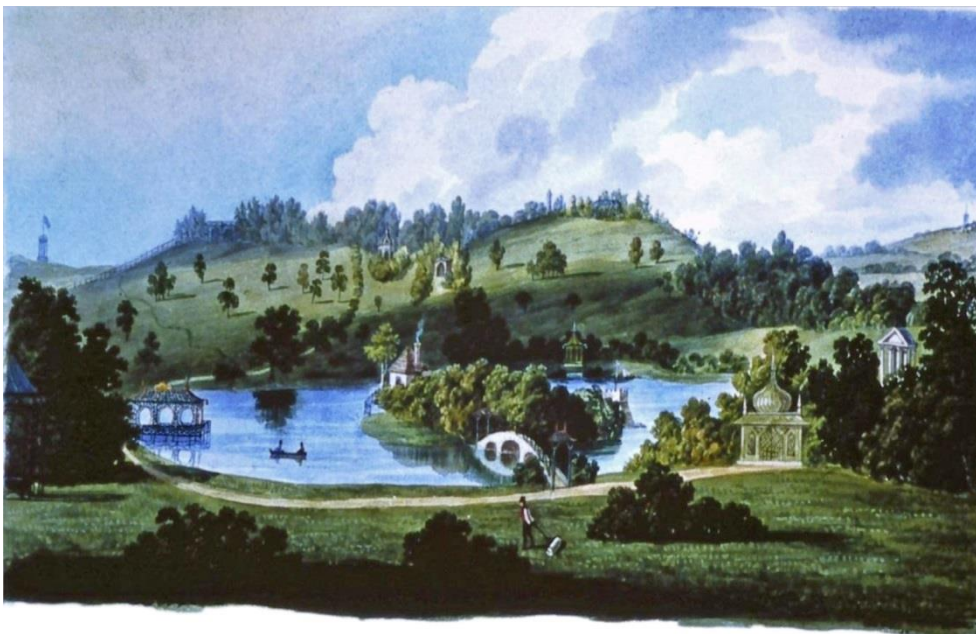


The Beacon 2016

- 1.3.21 The 1833 Charles Lewis Map of Havant, Warblington and Bedhampton shows these developments, with Staunton's 'principal walk' shown linking up with the ancient Middle Thicket Lane which led up to the cottage and newly enlarged lake. The area extending south of the Temple was wooded for some distance along the Middle Thicket Lane, described by Staunton as 'sunk between, and sheltered by, shrubberies, partly formed out of the hedges of an ancient road'. Also marked were the North and South Lodge, and the Well, later called a Fountain, in High Lawn.



JF Gilbert's view of the lake in 1833 showing the Corinthian Bridge, Fort, Obelisk, Cottage and Chinese Boathouse



JF Gilbert's view of the lake showing the Chinese Boathouse, Shell House, Chinese Bridge and Turkish Kiosk 1833

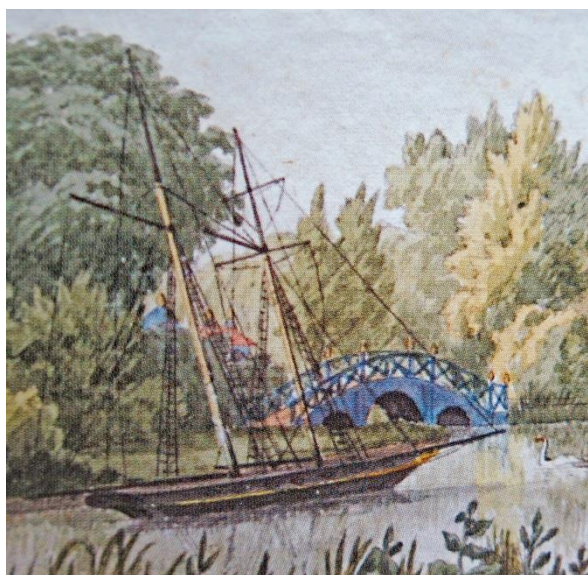
- 1.3.22 However this Map does not conform with the Joseph Gilbert (1792-1855) watercolour views of the lake also dated 1833, which show all the other features associated with the Lake present by this date. These included the Fort Island and Fort, the Swan island, the Cottage Island formed from the land surrounding the existing cottage and adopting the cottage as a feature in the landscape, the Chinese Bridge, the Green Arbour, the Corinthian Bridge, the Hexagon Chinese Summerhouse, and other linking bridges. The Charles Lewis Estate Plan of 1842 showed the fully enlarged lake, which had been completed by 1836, and was said to have been based on the 'Lake of Pekin'. The Plan provided a clear indication of the layout and the other features, such as the Cross House, the Moss House, and the Lookout built in 1836. On the Seven-oaks Lawns, the Double Seat built in 1836 does not appear, but reference is made to Dogs. The enlargement of the Pleasure Grounds in 1833 into Front Lawn, to give 'a continuous sweep to the Swiss House' is shown. Also indicated are the Cone House and Green trellis built in 1842, as well as the Swiss Wood, the Dutch Garden and extensive shrubberies.
- 1.3.23 After 1838 when Staunton became an MP, he took up more permanent residence, and was to continue to take a great interest in improvements to the estate. In 1845 The Gardeners Chronicle described the Pleasure Grounds as 'one of the most magnificent gardens in this country'. In 1848 Staunton was writing, presumably to the Bishop of Winchester's office, to express great concern of the intended cutting down of four hundred trees on Gammons Hill by the 'Bishop's Woodman' which 'will quite clear that brow and have the most injurious effect upon the view from my grounds', which went against a promise expressly given that this timber would be 'reserved'.
- 1.3.24 In 1850 he gave land at the bottom of New Lane for a new burial ground for the parish. One acre was for the Church of England, and one quarter acre for Dissenters. The Tropical Aquatic House was constructed in 1853. In the same year, with seed provided by Joseph Hooker, the Kew horticulturalist who had joined him in 1815 on an embassy to China as a plant collector, he managed to produce flower on the spectacular Amazon water lily, *Victoria Amazonica*.
- 1.3.25 On his death in 1859, the estate passed briefly to a relative, George Lynch-Staunton, before being put up for sale in 1860.



Auction notice 1860



The Chinese Bridge showing the Chinese gateways 1833 and the Turkish Kiosk



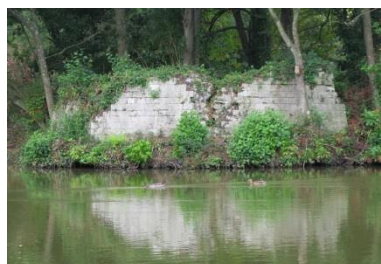
The Chinese Bridge c 1860



The Chinese Bridge 2016



The Fort c. 1833 - Note the roof of the gateway to the Chinese Bridge which can be seen behind the trees



The Fort 2016

Stone 1861 -1874

- 1.3.26 In 1861 the estate was purchased by W.H. Stone. An account in Trigg's Guide to Hayling 1867 states,

'Mr. Stone's estate comprises in all 2,500 acres, including Havernacke Thicket, which extended for 900 acres, and the garden and pleasure grounds, which occupy not less than 25 acres'.

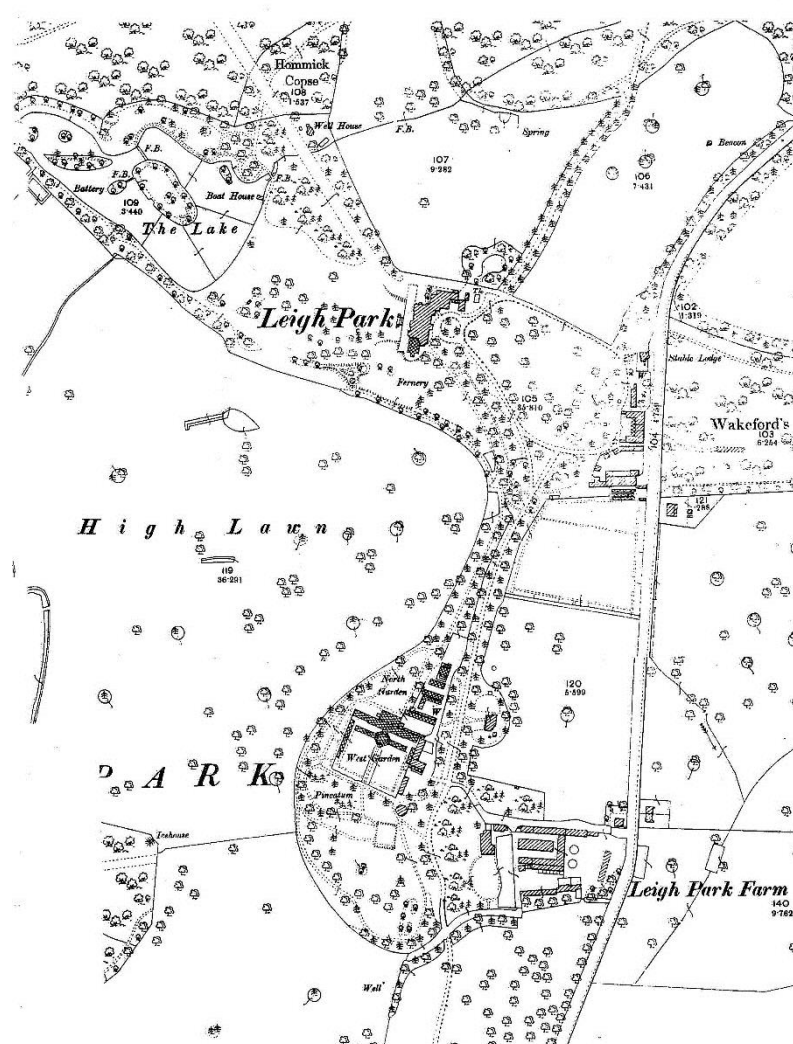
- 1.3.27 In 1863 Stone began construction of a *new* mansion 'of red brick with stone dressings' in the north of the grounds, described as 'a mansion in the pointed Gothic style...suited to the requirements of a family of wealth and position' on a 'more commanding site, from the designs of Mr. R.W. Drew, Architect, of London'. It included a promenade terrace overlooking the lake, and a new drive to the rear of the house with areas of flower bedding in the main entrance forecourt. The work was completed in 1865, and by then the Staunton stuccoed house was partially demolished. Also completed by this date was the enclosure by walls of a new Walled Kitchen Garden following the building of a new Gamekeepers House. The new yard area included dog-kennels, timber-yard, saw-pit, spare stable, small granary, work-shops, and store-rooms, all of which were screened behind a wooded belt.



The Stone Mansion 1865

- 1.3.28 Staunton's Rosary had been lost when the new carriage drive was laid out, the Iron House was put to use as a Pheasantry, and it is thought that most of the follies were removed during the years of Stone's ownership, although the Moss House is still present on the 1865 1st O.S.Map. An additional drive was extended north through Hammond's Land and the Copse to Rowlands Castle, and a broad Avenue established, leading out north-west into Havant Thicket.
- 1.3.29 Stone carried out improvements to the lake, with the north west end rounded off, and the lake edged with brick 'at a very considerable expense'. A new boat house was constructed on the eastern shores of the lake in 1874, and the balustrade of the Chinese Bridge was rusticated, as can be seen in the photograph by W. Scorer dated c.1888. The garden on Cottage Island was laid out as an American Garden. The Lawn was broken up by bedding displays and single ornamental trees scattered between and around the more mature plantings.

- 1.3.30 The Journal of Horticulture and Cottage Gardener in the June 18 1867 issue, included a description of a visit to Leigh Park entering 'from the Portsmouth turnpike road'. 'After entering this place, and following a carriage drive winding amongst "ancestral trees', the visitors 'came to a slight wire fence separating the shrubberies and the precincts of the house from the park without'. After visiting the extensive glass houses and the new Kitchen Garden, they passed through the shrubberies onto the 'new carriage drive, one side of which is a thickly planted border of Rhododendrons, and on the other a neat plantation of choice conifers on a well-kept piece of turf. They reached the new mansion by means of this 'winding and ornamental drive'. From a new conservatory built on the south side of the house, 'a narrow spiral staircase conducts to a vaulted corridor open to the west, on the lowest level of the west front. This is designed as a promenade on rainy days. From this corridor we passed on to the green turf before the house. Descending about 500 yards of gentle slope we came to the borders of a sheet of ornamental water. This miniature lake, 3 acres in extent, has an island in the centre nearly covered in the season with brilliant Rhododendrons'.
- 1.3.31 Their tour included crossing the 'rustic bridge connecting the mainland to the island', and enjoying 'some rustic shady retreats, a very pretty grotto, and a rockery, where hardy Ferns were flourishing amongst early spring flowers'. They then 'ascended the hill towards to the Conifer ground', and following 'one of the walks which wind through a part of the pleasure grounds, we passed one of the Rose gardens and along the south and west side of the fruit garden. Here we saw Camellias in full bloom trained to the walls'. The conifers were admired as being fine specimens and, in particular, two *Araucaria imbricata* and a *Pinea pinsapo*.



OS Map 1897



The Coach House



The Stable Block



The Stone Mansion Terrace

The 20th Century

- 1.3.32 By the 1930's the expense of upkeep and changes in social conditions made the running the estate extremely onerous. The original range of glasshouses had mostly disappeared by then. In 1936 Angela Fitzwygram sold 1,265 acres of land in West Leigh and Leigh Park to Portsmouth City Council.
- 1.3.33 In 1940, the estate was requisitioned by the Ministry of Defence and the Victorian mansion was taken over by the Royal Navy. Huts and structures were erected to service the naval occupation, and mines were tested in the lake.
- 1.3.34 The Fitzwygram family remained owners until the end of World War II. In 1944 Angela Wygram sold the estate in its entirety to Portsmouth City Council. The Council together with a consortium bought the estate in order to build a major housing scheme on the land.
- 1.3.35 John Studley, Director of Parks and Recreation, was responsible for the remaining estate, which was designated as parkland. He gradually brought the Pleasure Grounds and Walled Gardens under the control of the Parks department, and began rectifying the years of damage and neglect. The Walled Garden became used as a display space for allotment gardening, demonstrating different horticultural techniques. It was cultivated for 2 years in the 1940's by Harry Dodson, who was to become famous for his Victorian Kitchen Garden programme on the BBC.
- 1.3.36 By 1959 the Stone house had become too expensive to maintain and it was pulled down, and the glass houses, gardens and estate buildings began to decline. The original east boundary wall of Storeys Gardens was demolished when the Petersfield Road was widened in the 1960'S. Before the 1950's the main entrance had been on the Petersfield Road, opposite Wakefords Copse.
- 1.3.37 Havant Thicket and Bells Copse were occupied by the Forestry Commission, and in 1960 Thicket Farm was purchased by the Portsmouth Water Company.
- 1.3.38 During the 1970's all the leased parcels of land were returned under the control of the Director of Parks and Recreation, Peter Maunder, and following consolidation of the land holdings, it was opened as a new public open space. Within the Ferme Ornee, a major facility for the display and breeding of rare breeds was created, making it one of the first local authority farm parks. A collection of pigs, sheep, cattle, poultry and cart- horses was brought together.
- 1.3.39 In 1987 following the establishment of Staunton Country Park, control of the historic estate and surrounding lands passed to a joint Management Committee representing eight partner bodies. Thereafter work began on renovation and restoration of the Estate. The Park suffered significant damage in the great storm of 1987, when 87 specimen trees were lost, followed by a further 30 trees in the storm of 1990.
- 1.3.40 In 1994 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Hampshire Gardens Trust, the new glasshouse was officially opened by Prof. Prance, Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew.
- 1.3.41 In 1997 an HLF grant supported the restoration of the Ornamental Farm, the Stone Terrace, and the Coach House.
- 1.3.42 In 2007 an HLF grant supported the restoration of the glasshouses, the Gothic Library and Peacock Houses, and landscaping to the Terrace and Temple Lawn.

1.4 Timeline and Key Events

1800	William Garrett acquires the house and grounds
1802	House rebuilt
1820	Estate bought by George Staunton
1828	Shell House and pathway built. Enlargement of pond begins to form the lake. Ice house built. North and South lodges built. Approach road closed off and new road built to the east.
1829	The Beacon built
1832	Gothic Library built
1833	Fort, Chinese Bridge, Corinthian Bridge, boathouse, Chinese summer house, Cross House, and Moss House built.
1836	Lake completed. Look-out built.
1853	Tropical Lily House constructed
1859	Sir George Staunton dies and estate passes to Lynch-Staunton
1861	Estate bought by William Stone
1865	New mansion built. Kitchen garden enlarged.
1874	Victorian coach house built. The Avenue formed in Havant Thicket. Staunton house completely demolished. Estate bought by Frederick Fitzwygram
1904	Estate passes to Frederick Lofthouse Fitzwygram
1920	Estate passes to Angela Fitzwygram
1940	Leigh Park requisitioned by Admiralty Mines Dept.
1944	Estate bought by Portsmouth City Council
1959	Stone house pulled down
1987	Opened as Sir George Staunton Country Park
1993	Opening of the new glasshouse
1997	Restoration of Ornamental Farm, Coach House, Terrace, and sawmill.
2005	Restoration of the walled garden and the original pleasure grounds.
2007	Stone terrace landscaped. Gothic Library restored. Glasshouses restored.

1.5 Heritage Significance

Staunton Country Park is a rare example of a Regency ornamental landscape. The character and layout of Staunton's landscape were finely illustrated in the folio of watercolours entitled 'Leigh Park Scenery' produced by Joseph Gilbert in 1833. The grounds were intended as a landscape for pleasure both for him and his friends, and were his interpretation of the 18th century landscape park using the natural scenery coupled with a high degree of artistry and artifice, particularly to reflect his cultural interests and considerable knowledge of plants.

Staunton chose to adopt a combination of styles, grouping his buildings according to style in different parts of the gardens, so increasing their visual impact. His earlier association and knowledge of China was an obvious influence in his choice of style for the ornamental buildings around the lake, with, for the first time in England, many based on Chinese originals. His classical follies, a reminder of the 18th century, were placed primarily on the higher ground, while around his house the smaller buildings reflected a contemporary interest in rustic structures.

The surviving follies, ie the Beacon, the Shell House, the Chinese Bridge, and the Fort are therefore of high historic significance.

Staunton's pleasure grounds seems to have reflected the new ideas that gardening was no longer to be subservient to the natural landscape, but to be 'independent, imaginative and original'; reflecting Repton's views that 'Gardens are works of art rather than of nature'

Sir George Staunton employed no professional landscape designers but his garden reflects his own interests and expertise. It is therefore the expression of one man, a gifted amateur.

The remains of the Mansion Terrace and the Victorian Coach House are reminders of the Stone Period and are therefore important elements in the historic landscape.

The park is a unique example of an early 19th Century landscape, with the structure of a traditional 18th Century natural landscape combined with the picturesque introduction of small specialist gardens and follies. It is this fusion of styles which guarantees Staunton Park its position of national importance.

2.0 Assessment of Impact

2.1 Background

This application as described below, supplements the granted ifor the project to implement the final phase of the recommendations of the Staunton Country Park Conservation Plan and the adoption of a new Masterplan, which focuses on the northern part of the park and encourage greater access to this area. This will reveal the hidden and under-appreciated heritage through urgently needed landscape restoration works and conservation of the key historic features. Improved access combined with new interpretation and facilities will welcome visitors and users.

This project has been commissioned by the Head of Countryside, Hampshire County Council, with the support of a Second Round grant application to the Parks for People Heritage Lottery/BIG Lottery Fund.

2.2 Outline of Proposals

2.2.1 21st Century Folly – (Ref Drwg No.s 12.2.1 and 12.2.2)

The approach

- In Staunton's time the parkland had numerous follies and a new, 21st century folly has been designed to be installed as part of the park's renovation process.
- Each section of the folly structure is an icon represent part of the park's story – for example, a Chinese junk to represent Sir George Staunton's travel's to China, a flower of the Stauntonia plant to represent his success as a plant hunter and a teapot to show that he was responsible for the introduction of Earl Grey tea to the UK.
- These icons will then be used in other park interpretation and visitors will be able to follow the stories through and learn more.
- An artist has been commissioned to design and fabricate the folly and will work with a structural engineer to ensure safe installation.
- The folly will be located so that it is visible to visitors who are entering the park as pedestrians from the farm and also for those parking in the new car park making their way around the parkland or across to the farm.

The solution

- Site visit by designer and artist in late January 2020 confirmed that the location for the 21st century proposed and approved in APP/19/00472 – April 2019 is compromised by the proximity of a large tree.
- It is proposed that the location 21st century folly is moved a short distance to the other side (eastern side) of the main Serpentine path into the park.
- The new location, away from large trees will allow the folly to have a greater visual impact for visitors moving in both directions along the Serpentine path and will mean that the folly will have less impact on mature trees.

2.3 Impact of Proposals

Impact on historic fabric:	Low
Impact on setting of heritage asset:	Low
Overall impact on significance:	Low
Extent of impact:	Low

Potential heritage benefits: The 21st century folly will be a piece of public art and will also be a form of interpretation, introducing the important stories of the park through the use of icons.

3.0 Mitigation

3.1 Medium Impacts;-

The assessment of the impact of the proposed works has identified that the proposals will have a low impact on the significance of the park and its buildings.

3.2 Positive Impacts;-

The proposals provide new interpretation to welcome visitors and site users. However, the works are relatively insignificant and simply supplement the main proposals granted , to restore and conserve the landscape and key historic features.

4.0 Bibliography

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