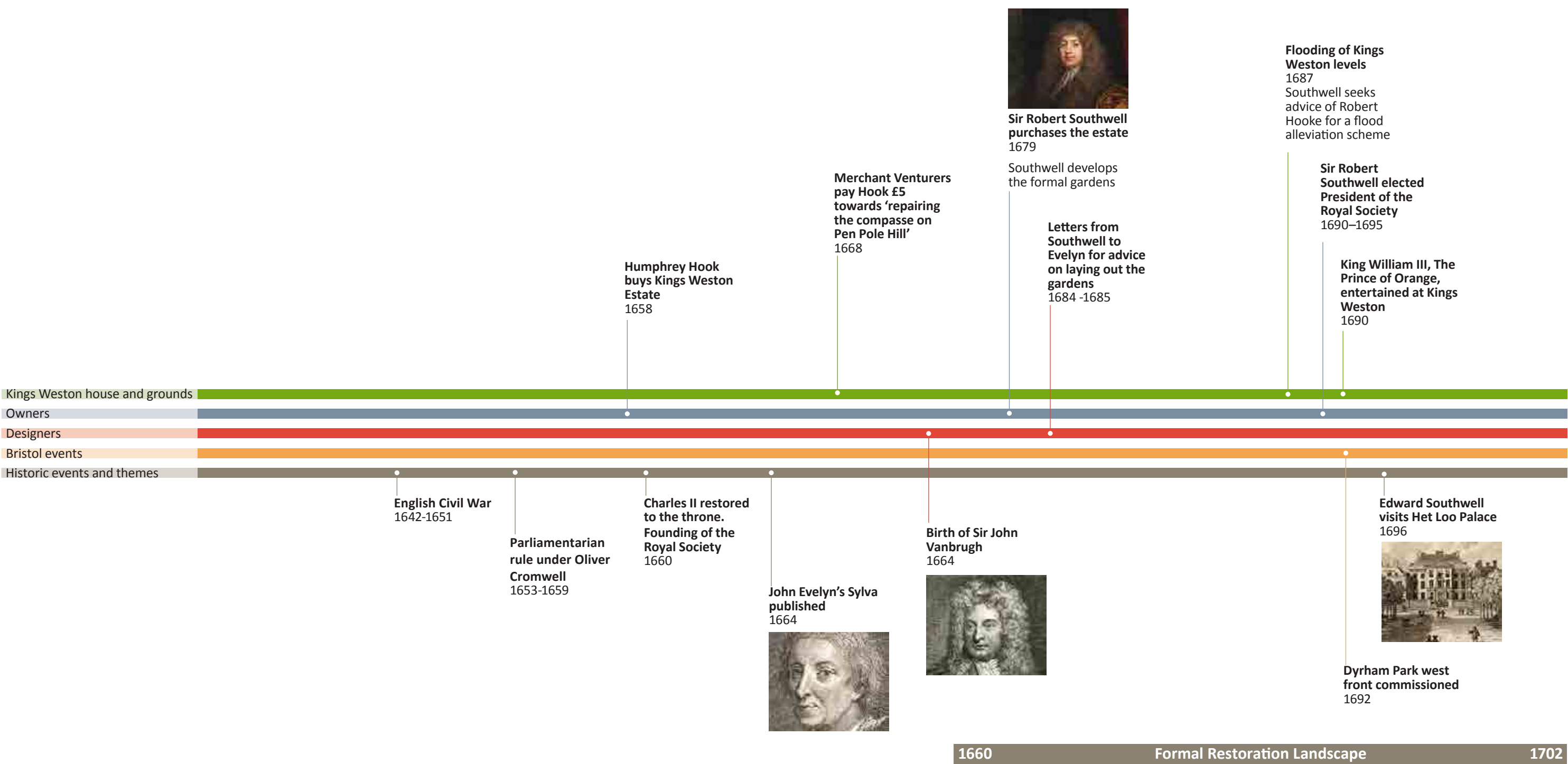


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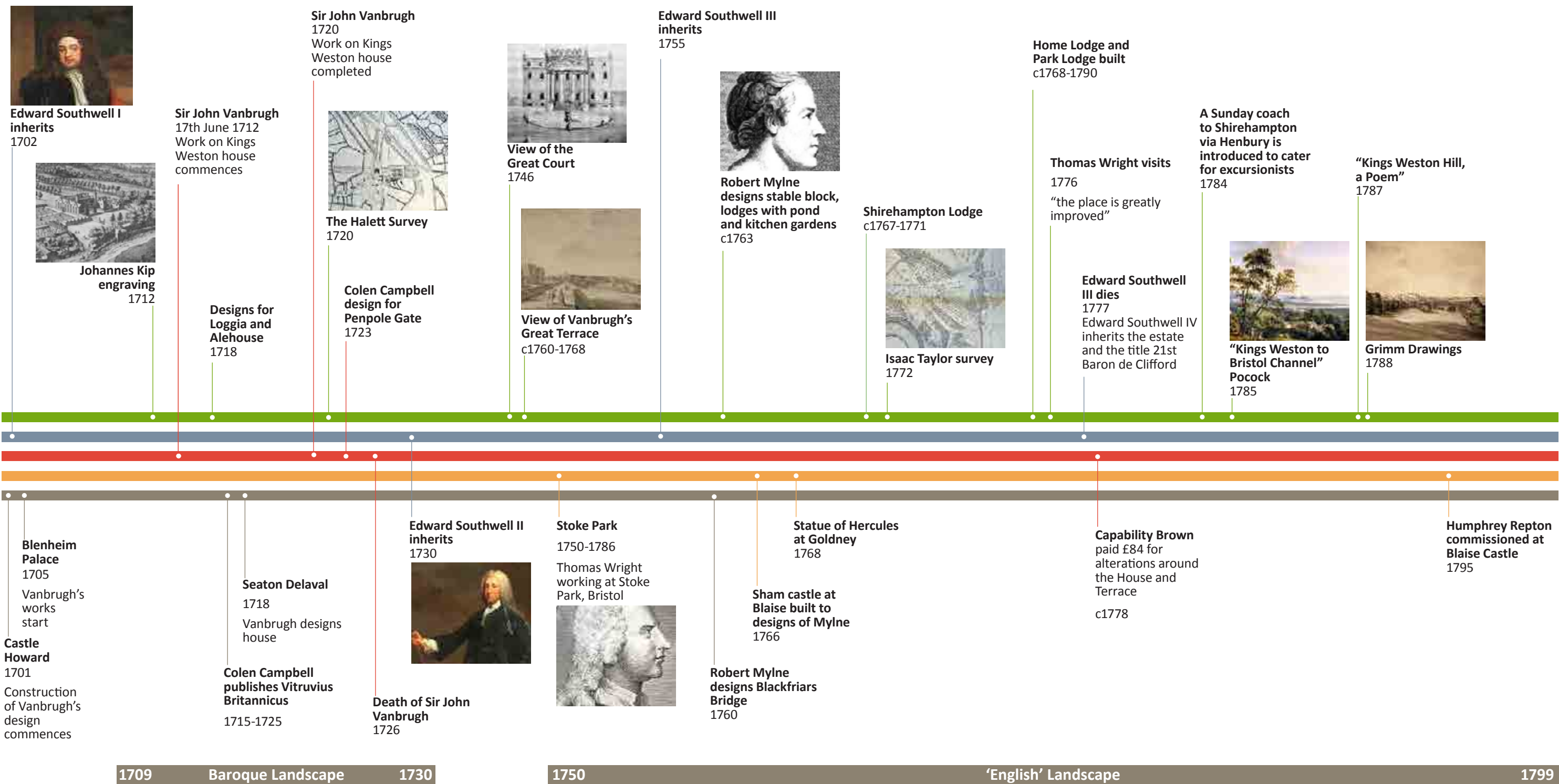
Understanding the History



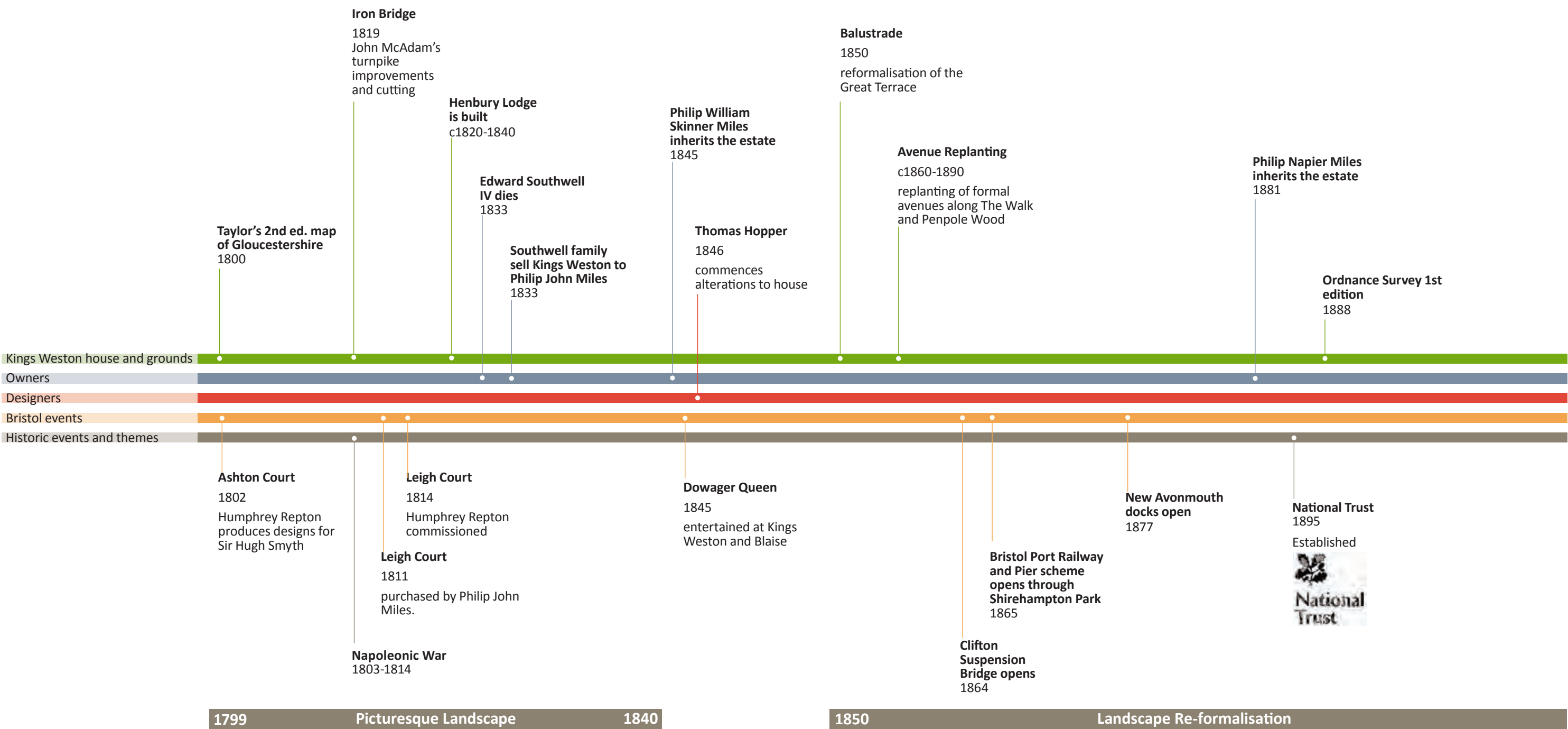
17th Century



18th Century



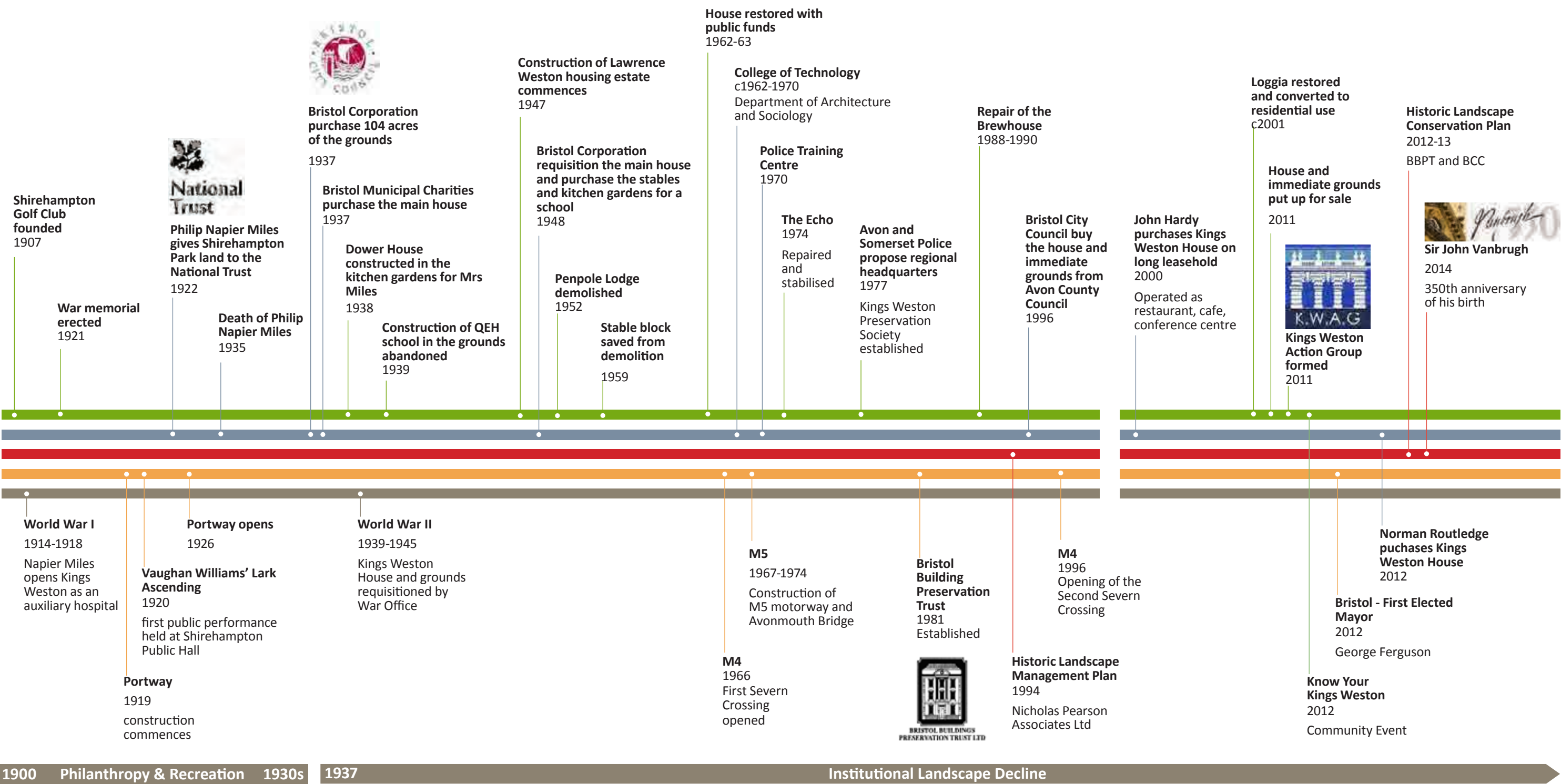
19th Century



2. Understanding the History

20th Century

21st Century



2. Understanding the History

Early History

Evidence for the early settlement and development of the Kings Weston landscape is limited to archaeological finds from excavations in the local area and interpreted within the regional context. Excavations during the 20th century of the prehistoric round barrows (1), enclosures (2) and hill forts (3) on the Kingsweston ridge suggest late bronze age and iron age settlement.

Close to the lowest crossing point on the River Avon, and on a key route between Somerset and Gloucestershire, and between Bristol and Aust, Kings Weston’s location is likely to have been a strategic consideration for settlers.

The Roman settlement of Abona (4) at Sea Mills was established in the first century as a supply port and military depot on the banks of the Avon. Linked by Roman road to Aquae Sulis (Bath), the only sizeable town in the region, Abona would have played a significant role as a port for the region. The presence of a Romano-British villa (5), farm (6) and windmill (7) around Kings Weston indicate a settled Romanised farming existence in the area by the fourth century (8). A 1966 excavation for a gas pipeline on Kingsweston Hill uncovered a possible early Christian cemetery dating to the period 400-700AD (9).

Covered with a fine calcareous sward, the thin soils of the Kingsweston limestone ridge were not suited to cultivation, and were probably used for animal grazing. It was the land between the ridge and the Severn Estuary which would have provided richer opportunities for farm crops. There is some evidence for early field patterns on Shirehampton Park (BCC HER 1954M and 1742M).

By 1086 the tithing of Kings Weston was recorded in the Domesday Book (10) as having ‘Seven hides and one virgate in Westone belong to Berchelai’. Berchelai, or Berkeley as we now know it, was crown land belonging to King William. In 1779, Samuel Rudder (11) accords the name of Kings Weston to being ‘the King’s ancient demesnes and lying farthest westward of any part of the Berkeley hundred, of which it is a member, tho’ far detached from the continent of that hundred’.

King Henry II went on to grant the lordship and district of Berkeley, including the outlying Kings Weston demesnes, to Robert Fitzhardinge. The Manor passed through successive generations of the Fitzhardinge and Berkeley families before it was sold by Sir William Berkeley to Sir William Wintour in 1570 (11). His son, Edward Wintour, sold Kings Weston to Humphrey Hook, an alderman and merchant of Bristol. Kings Weston was inherited by his grandson, Sir Humphrey Hook.

In 1668 the Society of Merchant Venturers voted to pay Hook £5 towards repairing “the compasse upon Pen Pole Hill the rest to be made good at his charge.”

When Sir Humphrey died in 1677, heavily indebted, his trustees Hugh Smith and William Cooke sold the estate to Sir Robert Southwell in 1679 (12)

Documentary evidence for the layout of the Kings Weston Manor during the tenure of the Berkeley, Wintour and Hook families is limited. However, on the basis of other estates of the period and later evidence, its likely that:

- a formal landscape of productive and ornamental gardens and courtyards surrounding the house
- these may have provided the structure for the subsequent more extensive layout of the late seventeenth century (13)
- the manor estate was the administrative centre of a larger tenanted agricultural landscape, which crossed the low lying levels and wrapped around the lower slopes of the ridge
- with the possible exception of parts of Penpole Wood, the ridge would have formed an open skyline to the estate

References

- 1 BCC Historic Environment Record (HER) 1746M
- 2 HER 1748M and 1758M
- 3 HER 1757M and 1753M
- 4 HER 1762M
- 5 HER 1739M
- 6 HER 2323M
- 7 HER 1747M
- 8 Michael Aston and Rob Iles (1987)
- 9 HER 1750M
- 10 HER 1954M and 1742M
- 11 The Domesday Book, (1086)
- 12 Rudder, A New History of Gloucestershire (1779)
- 13 Henning (1983)
- 14 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)

2. Understanding the History

1660-1702:
The Robert Southwell Restoration Phase


Between 1625 and 1660 England was beset by the strife of civil war and subsequent Parliamentary rule. The restoration of Charles II to the throne heralded a period of relative stability and rapid economic and cultural change followed throughout the country. A number of underlying themes operating during this period can be seen to influence the ongoing development of landed estates generally and Kings Weston specifically:

- a growing interest in the science of the natural world, coupled with an increasing belief in Man’s ability to understand and influence nature.
- advances in printing technology allowed for the widespread dispersal of knowledge including horticultural science
- the desire of landowners to display their culture, status, wealth and modernity through the landscape expression of their estates
- the Grand Tour; an educational rite of passage undertaken by wealthy landowners to the great cities and gardens across France, Holland and Italy
- inspired by classical poetry, and as an escape from civil disorder and the precarious allegiances of Parliament and the Royal Court, owners sought rural retirement and a simpler life at their country estates
- a growing interest in agricultural improvement and estate self sufficiency
- the collection of plants from North America and other British colonies

In 1679 Sir Robert Southwell acquired Kings Weston as a country retreat during a lull in his political career (2,3). Conveniently located between Southwell’s political interests in London and his inherited estates in southern Ireland, Kings Weston was an estate of convenience, prospects and potential: its elevated position offered expansive views south-west across the Severn Estuary and south-east towards Bristol. Conversely, it could be readily seen by all those entering and departing the port of Bristol; an unequivocal expression of Robert’s wealth and status.

Sir Robert Southwell (1635-1702)

Diplomat, Politician, MP. Well travelled and well educated Sir Robert was admitted to the Royal Society in 1663. Presenting numerous scientific papers to his Fellows, including ‘Several Experiments concerning preserving of flowers Fruits etc in their Colours’, he also served as President Elect from 1690 to 1695 (1). Sir Robert Southwell held the post of Secretary to the Lords of Trade and Plantations which was influential in bringing new species of plants and trees to Kings Weston. His appointment as Secretary of State for Ireland indicates his political importance at the national level.



28th April 1679, Bristol

Yesterday my brother and I went to visit Kings Weston, where we found a great deal of very good land, an old house, low built, but very convenient, though at your arrival I believe you will make some alteration therein; many things, especially some of the park wall, will cost you money in the reparation thereof.....the land is capable of improvement, and the situation is altogether as delightful as any I ever saw, and I hope you will live long to enjoy it and make the best thereof.

John Perceval to Sir Robert Southwell

‘I am neither in office or dare desire it; but am resolved to pass my life between Virgil’s Georgics and Mr. Evelyn on trees, as quiet and contented as I can’ (4)

Robert Southwell to Mr Sidney, 1680


Central to understanding Kings Weston’s landscape development during this period is Southwell and his friendship and correspondence with John Evelyn. In a series of letters, he seeks and receives the advice of his friend Evelyn on planting the gardens at Kings Weston.

References

- 1 Royal Society, Archives
- 2 Henning B D (ed.): The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1660-1690 (1983)
- 3 Niall Phillips Associates (1985)
- 4 Southwell, R: Letter to Mr Sidney (4th January 1680)
- 5 Southwell R: Letter to Evelyn (3rd November 1684) – refer Appendix B
- 6 Southwell R: Letter to Evelyn (8th January 1685) – refer Appendix B

John Evelyn (1620-1706)

Diarist, Writer, Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1664 the newly established Royal Society published its first two books, Robert Hooke’s *Micrographia* and John Evelyn’s *Sylva, or A Discourse on Forest-Trees and the Propagation of Timber in His Majesty’s Dominions*.



Evelyn’s *Sylva* championed the trees and forests as a vital strategic timber resource for England’s ship building; promoting the responsibility of the nation’s land owners to plant trees and forests for the future defence and economy.

‘Pardon, I pray, the impertinency of a young Planter, who, having the honour of your book, and that in gift, is encouraged to bring his doubts and scruples to you.’ (5)

Robert Southwell to John Evelyn, 1684

The Southwell-Evelyn letters clearly show Sir Robert’s interest in horticulture and that, with Evelyn’s advice, he was directly responsible for laying out the gardens at this time.

2. Understanding the History

1712: The Kip Engraving

The details within the Southwell-Evelyn letters are reinforced by the existence of a Johannes Kip engraving within Sir Robert Atkyns’ 1712 folio ‘The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire’ (1).



‘My parlour-garden has a fair opening into my orchard, and in the middle of this there is a space left of 120 yards long and 20 feet broad, in which I designed a walk of the black walnuts, but now I resolved to take rather what is at hand, and to erect in this place a close walk of yews, which, if I can arrive to, it will be the only close winterwalk that I have here.’ (6)

Robert Southwell to John Evelyn, 1685

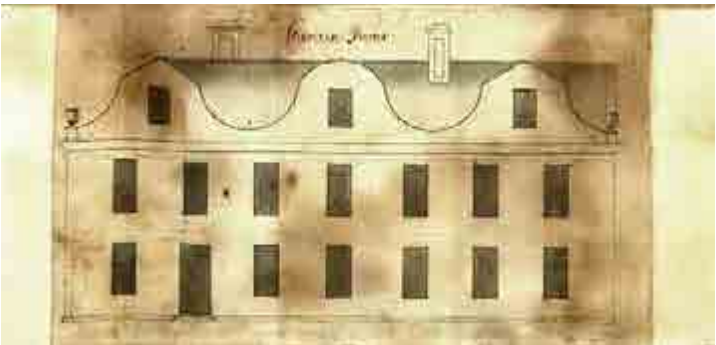
The engraving records an extensive formal landscape which, despite the 1712 date of publication, is understood to largely represent the aspirations and achievements of Sir Robert Southwell (2) working with the benefit of John Evelyn’s advice. From an abstract, elevated viewpoint looking west it shows a Tudor or Elizabethan u-shaped mansion, approximately sited on the position of the existing Vanbrugh house (b), and approached from the main gates (a) through three courtyard spaces; a stableyard (b), a large walled outer court (c) and a smaller inner court (d). The old house is recorded within the Kings Weston Book of Drawings.(3) The spatial sequence from Kings Weston Lane appears to be a main entrance route to the house. A second route is visible leading towards Shirehampton at the edge of the avenue (s).

Across the stableyard, a gated pavilion marks the entrance to a narrow, enclosed bowling green or skittle alley (e) following the north edge of the outer court, and terminating at a small, hipped-roofed banqueting house (f), built 1707 adjacent to a laundry building, and offering views across the estuary to the north and west (3). A gated track leaves the outer court (c) and curves along the edge of a walled productive garden (g).



An axial path from the south east front of the house crosses two formal enclosed garden spaces. The first garden is walled, and laid to a double *parterre à l’Anglaise* with grass and topiary (h). Beyond this a second larger garden (i), is laid to an elaborate bosquet, terminating at a raised terrace path along the eastern edge, centred on a small pavilion structure with a hipped roof (j). The space between the parterres and Kings Weston Lane is indicated as kitchen garden and domestic yard (k) and an enclosed orangery court (l). A formal grove of trees (m) separates the larger formal garden from the wider open parkland. A long list of fruit trees (5) offers useful insights into Southwell’s interest in developing his gardens.

A wide double avenue of trees (n) extends across the Home Park from the house. The central avenue is the same width as the house front and terminates in a *claire-voie* gate (o) set within a wall, beyond which there is a *rond-point* of trees and a further avenue extending to a second *claire-voie* gate. A small building is visible within a stand of trees in the Home Park (o)



- 1 Kip Engraving c1709
- 2 Design for the old house - ‘front to the avenue’ BRO 33746 116
- 3 Design for the old house - ‘garden front’ BRO 33746 117

Some distance west of the main avenue, across open parkland (p) and behind a gated wall, lies Penpole Wood (q) occupying approximately half of its current extent. There is no direct formal visual connection between the main house and Penpole Wood. The wood appears enclosed by boundary wall with a lodge structure and gate on its furthest edge. Penpole Point (r) clearly shows a T-shaped structure that is assumed to represent the existing Dial monument. Rough quarry ground (s) can be seen on the lower slopes of the wood. The estate land falls away to the west to an agricultural hedged field pattern (t) beyond which can be seen shipping at the mouth of the Avon on the ‘King Road’ (u).

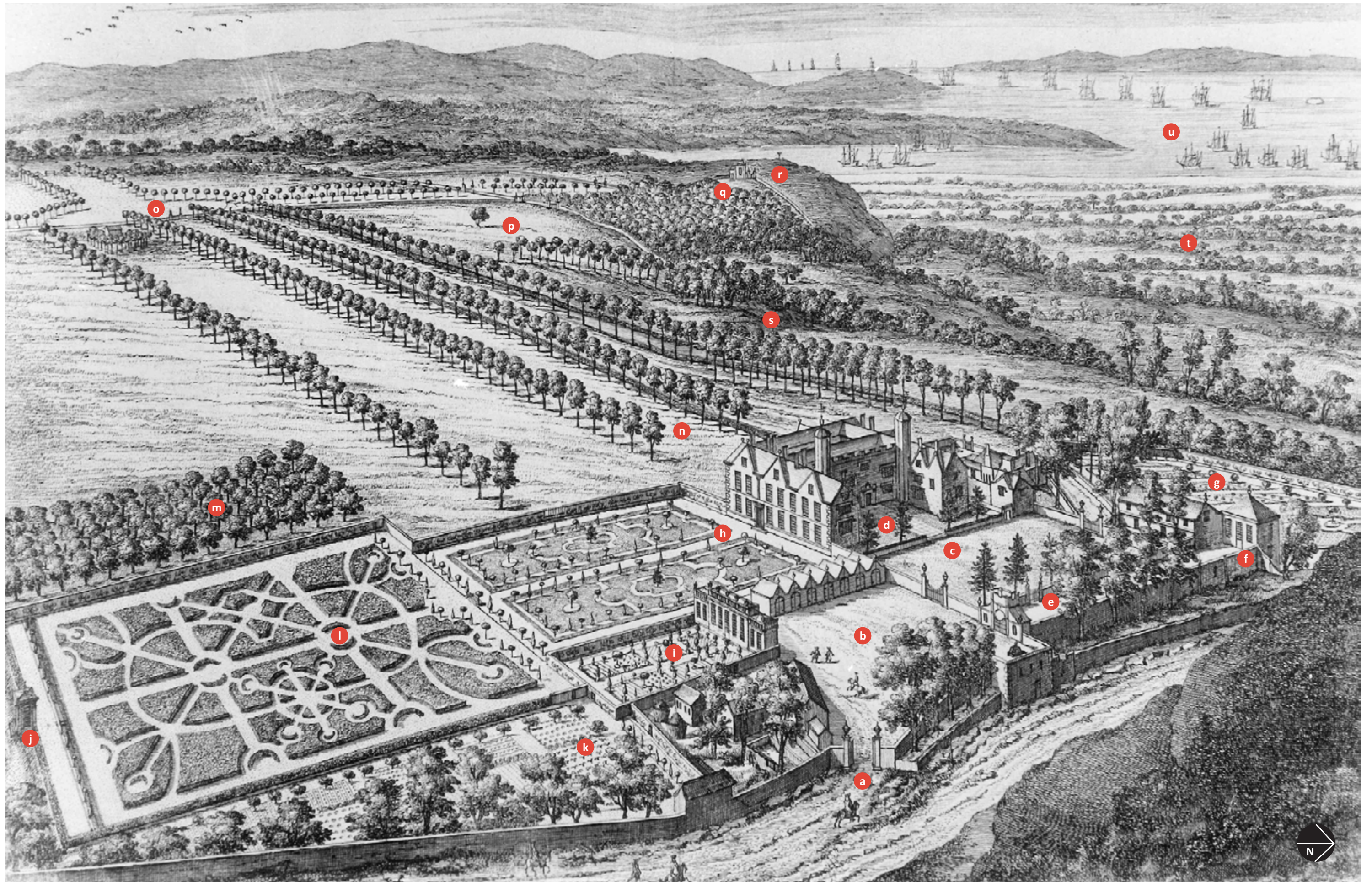
The Kip engraving and Atkyns’ description clearly demonstrate Kings Weston’s geometric layout, typical of late 17th century gardens, and the extensive panoramic views across the estuary afforded by the topography.

‘He hath a pleasant seat with delightful gardens, and a full prospect over Kingsroad, the harbour of the City of Bristol and over the Severn Sea into Wales’

Sir Robert Atkyns, 1712

References

- 1 Atkyns, R (1712)
- 2 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)
- 3 Niall Phillips Associates (1985)
- 4 Kings Weston Book of Drawings BRO 33746
- 5 BRO 12964/1/folios 16 -22



1660-1702:
The Robert Southwell Restoration Phase

Sir Robert Southwell’s letters to John Evelyn clearly show his aspirations for his gardens. In fact Southwell maintained a number of other key friendships and connections that helped influence the Kings Weston landscape.

Reports from Edward Randolph, England’s administrator for the North American colonies , in 1685 include promises that he will send Southwell seeds and plants from America (1).

27th Nov 1685

‘I shall not trouble you with any plants or produce from New England but such as will grow in Kings Weston and of those I shall send all the variety that country affords: but my going so late will prevent me getting any till next yeare.’

Edward Randolph to Robert Southwell

The notion of collecting plants from around the world was well established by the late seventeenth century, and resulted in the introduction of many tree and shrub species which would have been of new interest to English landowners.

Two years later Randolph shipped twelve small locust (Robinia) trees and a barrel of ‘acorns, chestnutts and walnutts’ to William Blathwayt at Dyrham, requesting ‘if you do not make use of all the Acorns, pray send what you can spare to Sir Robert Sowthwell’ (2).

In 1687 Southwell also received ‘countless’ North American plants from Colonel William Byrd I of Virginia including ‘flowering shrubs, Virginia Wild Bassill, Judas Tree, Locust, Water Mellon’ and ‘ the fine Tulip bearing Lawrel tree which has the pleasantest smell in the world’ (3).

Sir Robert was key in assisting the 1686 marriage between Anna Wynter, heiress to the nearby Dyrham estate, and William Blathwayt. Blathwayt subsequently developed an extensive Anglo-Dutch garden at Dyrham, and the influence between the two estates suggests that the development of their formal gardens may have happened in parallel (4). The association between Dyrham and Kings Weston continued with the marriage of Sir Robert’s son Edward to Blathwayt’s daughter in 1716. Sir Robert’s close acquaintance with Blathwayt is further evidenced his appointment of Blathwayt as joint under-secretary to the Lords of Trade and Plantations.

In 1687 the low lying areas of the estate were inundated by a particularly high spring tide leaving them vulnerable to future flooding. Southwell sought the advice of his Royal Society Fellow, Robert Hooke. Hooke, a natural philosopher, scientist, architect and polymath, advised and assisted Southwell in the design of a flood defence, drainage and wharfage scheme on the estate levels below Kings Weston (3). Hooke went on to prepare designs for the work and to draw up the timber contract for Southwell for which he was paid twenty guineas. It is not clear if any of the drainage scheme survives in what is now industrial Avonmouth and Severnside. In 1701 Hooke wrote to Southwell criticising a design by a Mr Gillmore for Southwell’s new fountain at Kings Weston, although the location for this is uncertain.

Further evidence from the Bristol Record Office archives (6) gives additional insight into Southwell’s estate during this period. A list of fruit trees (dated 1695) supplied to the estate suggests that Kings Weston’s formal gardens were both ornamental and productive. It is possible that the fruit trees were destined for Southwell’s London garden at Spring Gardens. Hand written directions copied from Evelyn’s Sylva show his direct interest in Evelyn’s principles. These, together with the suggestions made by Robert Neale for fertilising the land with lime, and other lists of Kings Weston improvements, suggest that Southwell was as keen to improve the productivity and usefulness of his estate land as the visual amenity.

2.	Of the L rd Nottingham's list white Eggs	00-03-00
1.	Or-Lance Plum Tree	00-00-08
1.	American noir de Four	00-00-08
1.	Portian Medlarine	00-02-06
3.	Orange Apricocks	00-03-03
2.	Masculine Apricocks	00-02-06
2.	Turky Apricocks	00-02-06
4.	Brussels Apricocks	00-06-00
2.	Early Newington Peaches	00-04-00
1.	Great Newington	00-02-00
2.	Nutmeg Peaches	00-04-00
2.	White Magdalen Peaches	00-04-00
1.	Early read Cluster grape	00-01-00
2.	Burre Dulhay pears	00-02-00
2.	Amber Cherry trees	00-01-04
2.	White Heart Cherries	00-01-04
2.	Admirable Peaches	00-04-00
12.	Large Lime Trees	00-06-00
	Carriages of all to Reading	00-04-00
		03-07-03

List of fruit trees supplied to Robert Southwell, 1695 (6)

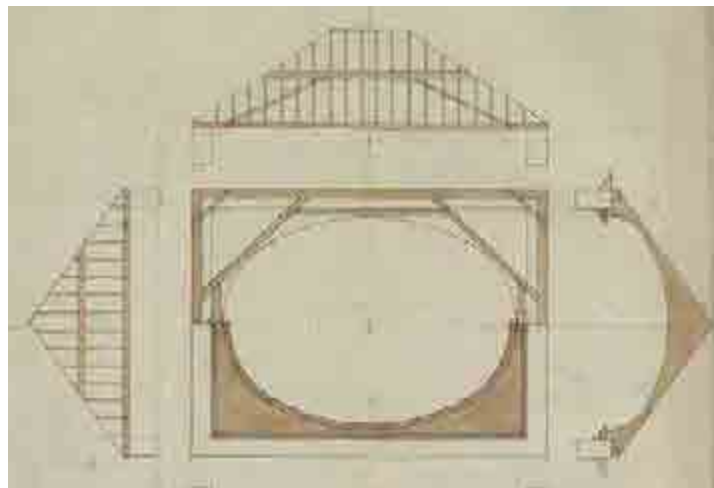
References

- 1 Randolph, E: Letter to Robert Southwell, 23 Oct 1685
- 2 Randolph, E: Letter to William Blathwayt 23 Nov 1687
- 3 Inwood, S: The Man Who Knew Too Much (2011)
- 4 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)
- 5 List of fruit trees, 16th Nov 1695 (BRO 12964/1/31)
- 6 BRO 12964/1/folios 16 -22

2. Understanding the History

1709-1730: Edward Southwell I and Sir John Vanbrugh

On Sir Robert's death in 1702 his son, Edward, inherited Kings Weston (1) and proceeded to undertake modest improvements to the estate. The small hip-roofed banqueting house, seen in the Kip engraving next to the laundry building, was built in 1707 'after the model of the Duke of Ormond's at Richmond' (2). A letter and drawing from one Mr Gilmore in 1708, outlines designs for a cold water bath house, a hexagonal pavilion, although the proposed location is not certain (3).



Roof and ceiling of the banqueting house, 1707 (2)

However, it was after the death of his first wife in 1709, Lady Elizabeth Cromwell, heiress to a moderate estate, that Edward began making more significant alterations to the Kings Weston layout recorded in the Kip engraving (1).

In c1710 Edward Southwell commissioned Sir John Vanbrugh, a distant cousin, to transform the modest U-shaped Tudor home into the Kings Weston mansion that we understand today; a modern house more befitting his position. Comparison of the estate plans (5) indicates that the new house did not occupy exactly the same footprint; allowing the old house to remain in use as building work proceeded.

Some have suggested that the new walls may have been in place as early as 1711 (6), but here is no clear evidence for the construction of the house prior to 29th April 1712. A letter from Vanbrugh to E Southwell dated 28th Sept 1713 notes chimneys being put up on his "chateaux". It was not until 1714 that the roof and masonry was completed. Work on the interiors and staircase continued beyond to at least 1719 (1).

Tuesday 29th April 1712, Doddington
(Gloucestershire)

"Kingsweston

- 1 The house pulled down
- 2 Upwards of 60 men preparing stones and digging the foundation of the new house"

Journals of Edward Southwell 1684-1715

Edward Southwell I (1671-1730)

Secretary of State for Ireland,
Member of Parliament, Clerk
of the Privy Council

Like his father, Edward was well educated and widely travelled. In 1696 he toured the Netherlands as part of William III's entourage, recording his travels within his diary. His visits to royal palaces and gardens at Het Loo, Dieren and Doesbourg would have informed and influenced his aspirations for the Kings Weston estate.



Through his correspondence and patronage of Vanbrugh, and later Colen Campbell, Southwell clearly held an active interest in architecture, although no 'very strong partisan views in the conflict between Baroque and Palladianism (4). Colen Campbell referred to Edward Southwell as "The Angaranno of our age" in his seminal "Vitruvius Britannicus"

Sir John Vanbrugh (1664-1726)

English dramatist and Baroque architect.



English playwright and architect, a leading exponent of the English Baroque. In 1699 John Vanbrugh took over the design of Castle Howard, from William Talman, and worked with Nicholas Hawksmoor. The two men also designed Blenheim Palace. As a former stage designer, he always had an interest in the combination of architecture and landscape. Vanbrugh worked with Bridgeman at Stowe and Claremont.

Vanbrugh's 'intuitive feeling for the setting of his architecture - the 'conduct of the background' as Sir Joshua Reynolds called itcan be seen in the belvedere at Claremont, the monumental bridge at Blenheim, or the skyline at Kings Weston....they share a visual concern with the landscape setting that justifies Reynold's description of him as 'an architect who composed like a painter (7)'

References

- 1 Mowl, T (1985)
- 2 Kings Weston Book of Drawings BRO 33746/42
- 3 Kings Weston Book of Drawings, BRO 33746/86
- 4 Downes, K (1987)
- 5 Russell, J: Avon Gardens Trust (2007)
- 6 Gomme, Jenner & Little (1979)
- 7 Jellicoe, Goode & Lancaster (1991)

2. Understanding the History

1709-1730:
‘Sir John Vanbrugh’s Designs for Kings Weston’

‘Sir John Vanbrugh’s Designs for Kings Weston’ comprises a collection of 130 drawings mounted within a gilt titled book and held at the Bristol Record Office (BRO 33746).

Originally held at Kings Weston House ‘for the extent of living memory’, it was donated by the late Mrs Napier Miles to the Trustees of the Bristol Municipal Charities in 1937 on sale of the house (1).

The book was extensively analysed and catalogued by architectural historian Professor Kerry Downes, and his 1967 paper, The ‘Kings Weston Book of Drawings’ remains a definitive assessment of the collection, and the expression of Kings Weston.

The Kings Weston book of drawings comprises 130 drawings pasted within the blank pages of the book. The compiler of the collection is uncertain and Downes cautions against assuming that it was Edward Southwell himself.

The majority, but not all, of the drawings are of the Kings Weston estate. They cover a wide range of dates within the Vanbrugh period and, whilst there are no drawings by Vanbrugh’s own hand, a number are from his office (1). The designs and details for the main house and interiors, Loggia, an Alehouse and Penpole Lodge can be directly attributed to Vanbrugh. There is a drawing for the ‘East garden door’ which is stylistically similar to the Echo. Many of the other drawings reflect his designs and vision for the estate. The drawing dates suggest that the early design work focussed on the main house. Designs for the garden buildings and courtyard spaces followed from c1717 to 1724. Vanbrugh’s design for the Alehouse possibly represents Kings Weston Inn rather than the Brewhouse. Not all of the designs within the book were realised.

The collection is further supported by Vanbrugh drawings held at Elton Hall and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

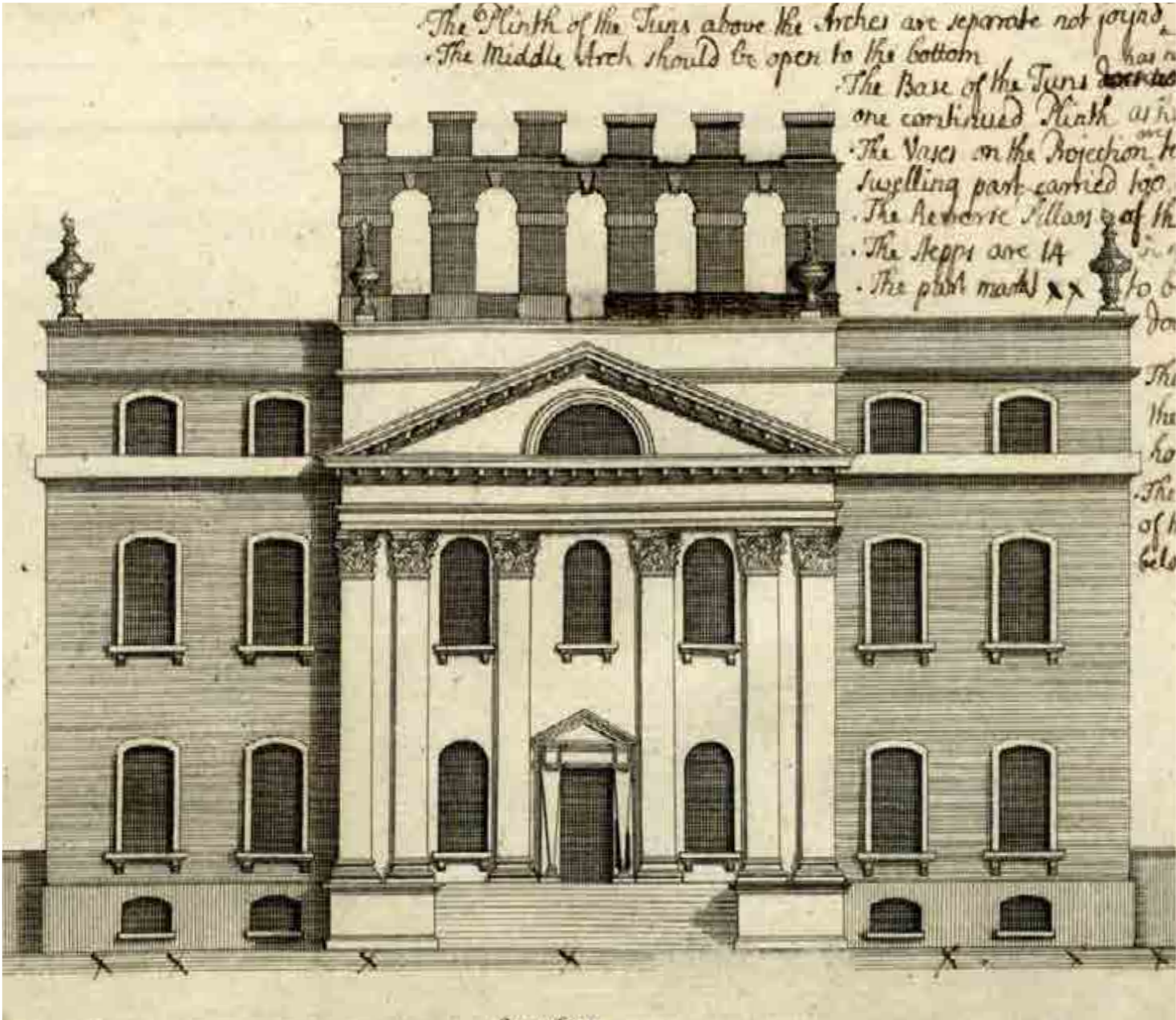
It also includes an alternative design for Penpole Lodge by Palladian architect Colen Campbell (BRO33746 37). Campbell included Vanbrugh’s floor plans and design for the entrance front within his *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715-1725). However, it was Vanbrugh’s design for Penpole Gate that was ultimately commissioned.

Chronology of ‘Sir John Vanbrugh’s Designs for Kings Weston’ (BRO 33746)			
1712	Designs for the main house (continuing to c1719)	1719	J Henley’s design of fence stones for Kingsweston (No. 76)
1717	Plan and elevation of forecourt gate for Kings Weston (Nos. 17 & 46)	1720	Diagram of levels in Kings Weston garden (No. 43)
1717	Copy of contract and drawing for urn on north front Kings Weston (No. 19)	1720	Design for stables at Kings Weston by Mr Price (No. 04)
1717	Design for dairy front, Kings Weston by George Townsend (No. 38)	1722	Design for east garden door, Kings Weston (No. 16)
1718	Design for the loggia north-west of Kings Weston (Nos. 30,31 & 53)	1723	Mr Campbell’s design for Penpole Gate (No. 37)
1718	Plan and elevations for an alehouse at Kings Weston, Vanbrugh office (No.32)	1724	Site plan for a view-point at Conger Hill (No. 109). Plan for Longcomb Lodge or Congerhill (No. 24)

References
1 Downes, K (1967)

2. Understanding the History

1709-1730:
Kings Weston House



- 1 The south west frontKings Weston Book of Drawings BRO 33746
- 2 Undated engraving c 1720, Bristol Central Library (now lost)

‘The main front faces SW. It is no more than five windows wide. Yet Vanbrugh’s spacing is so bold that a monumental effect results. The three middle bays project and have giant Corinthian pilasters, paired at the ends. The pediment has a small semi-circular window. Semicircular arches to the windows, whereas those of the first and last bays are segment-headed. The windows have broad, completely flat, demonstratively unelegant frames. The parapet with two vases at the corners is not the completion of the facade; for it rises Vanbrugh’s crazy ornament, the six big chimney-stacks connected by heavy arches - a monumental arcade of no use on the roof. The arcade continues on the NW and SE fronts creating the effect of a raised castellated centre for the whole house’ (1)

‘Vanbrugh designed several severe houses but Kings Weston is his most severe. It is a simple cubic block, cut into by the service court on the east. The scanty bits of ornament are almost irrelevant. This is an architecture of flat planes at right angles to each other and very little else. The notable external feature is on the roof; where the external chimneys are linked into an arcade forming three sides of a square, but even this is reduced to the simplest geometrical elements, simply another cubic block. The planes of the house combine to create a sensation of enormous repressed force. This is essence of Baroque.....As one walks around, the effect, especially on a misty morning, is extraordinary: the few vertical planes clustered together look like a great group of buildings, constantly changing as one’s viewpoint moves’ (2)

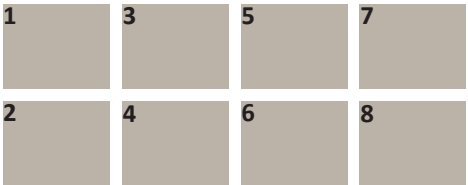


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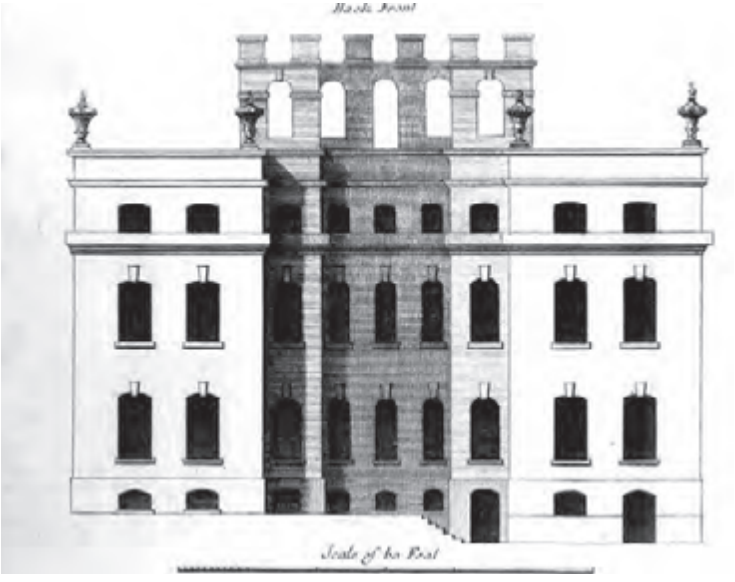
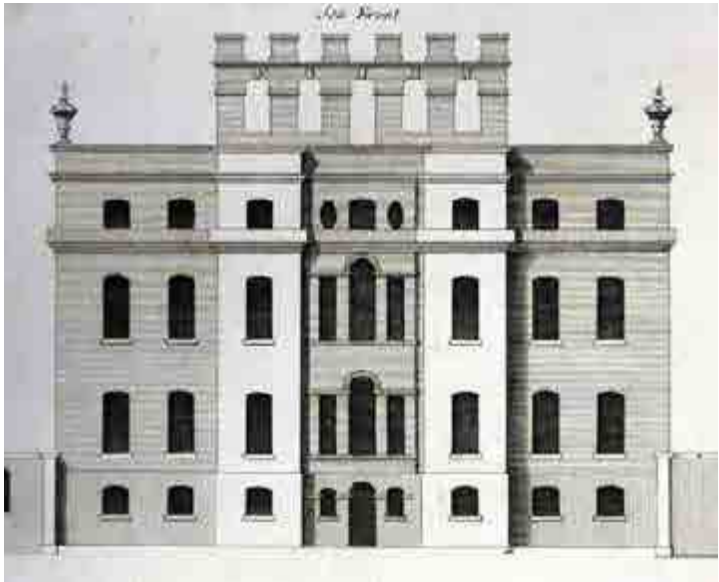
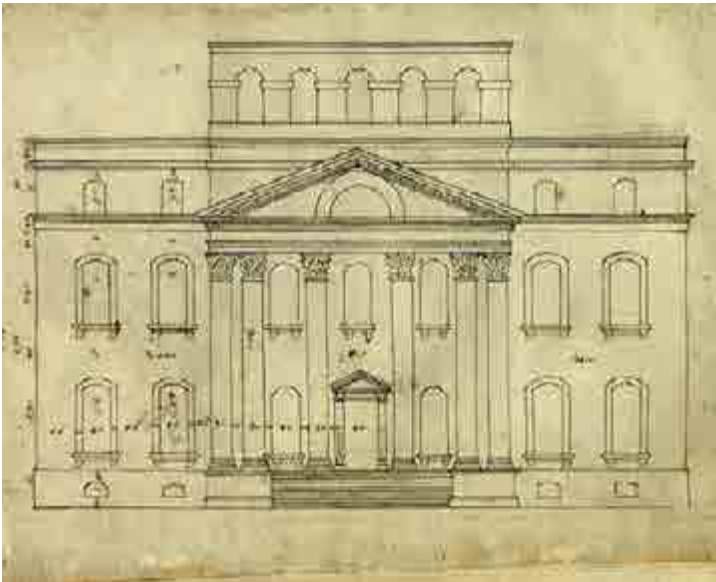
- 1 Pevsner, N (1958)
- 2 Gomme, Jenner & Little (1979)

2. Understanding the History

1709-1730:
Kings Weston House

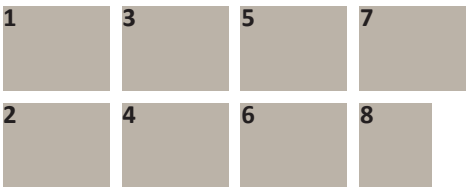


- 1 Dimensioned drawing of the south west front, Kings Weston Book of Drawings BRO 33746
- 2 South west front, photograph 2012
- 3 Drawn south east front © V&A Museum, London
- 4 South east front, photograph 2012
- 5 Engraved north west front, Mariette 1724. BRO
- 6 North west elevation, photograph 2012
- 7 Engraved north east front, Mariette. BRO
- 8 North east front, photograph 2012

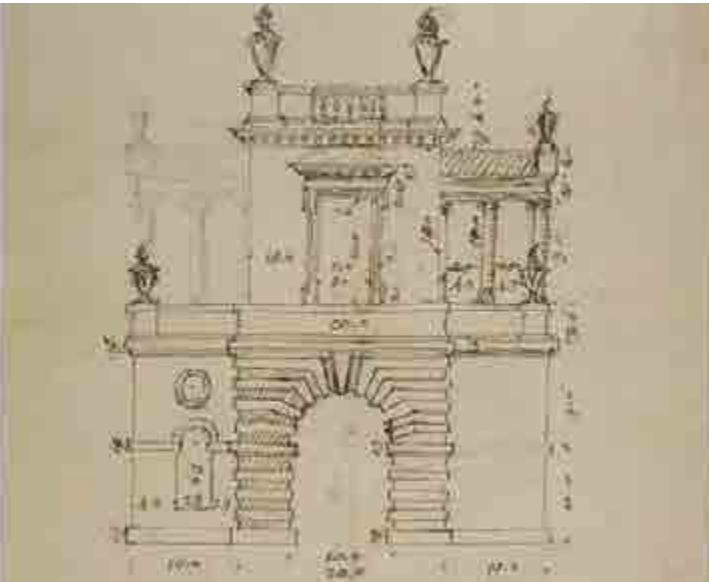


2. Understanding the History

1709-1730:
Kings Weston Garden Buildings



- 1 Vanbrugh’s drawing for the Loggia BRO 33746 53
- 2 The Loggia, 2012
- 3 Vanbrugh’s drawing for the ‘alehouse’ BRO 33746 32
- 4 The Brewhouse, 2012
- 5 Design for East Garden Door BRO 33746 16
- 6 The Echo, 2012
- 7 Vanbrugh’s drawing for Penpole Lodge © Victoria and Albert Museum, London
- 8 Penpole Lodge c1950 prior to demolition, Nationam onulment record

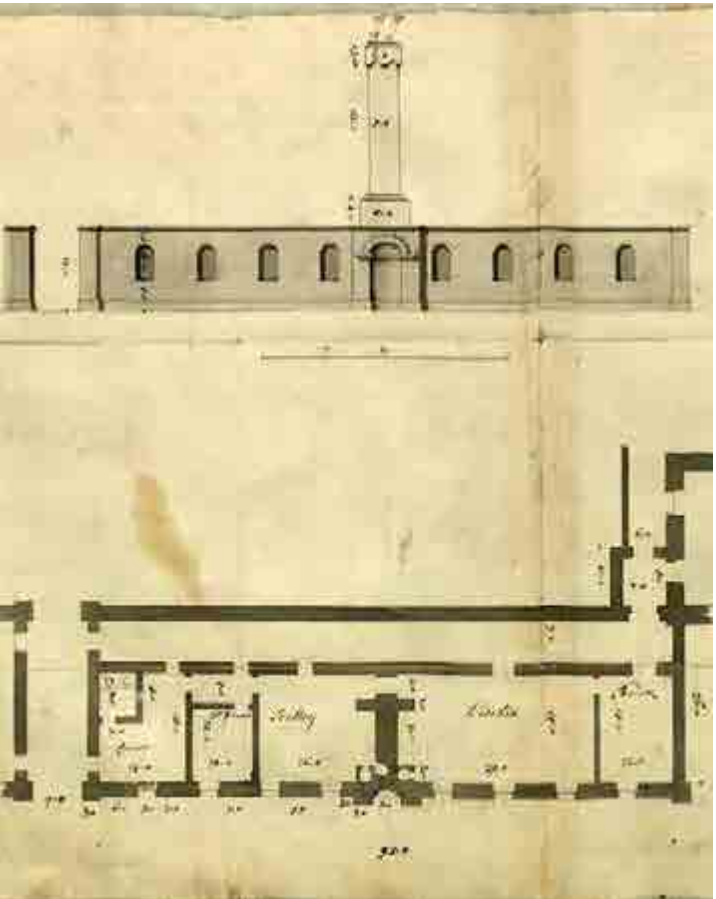
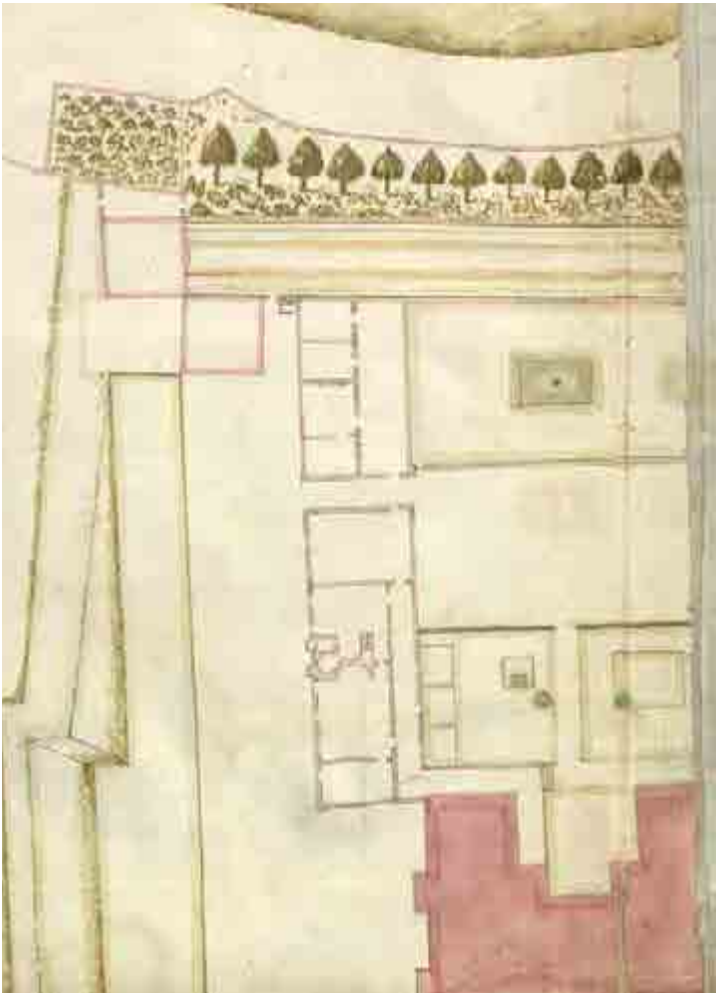
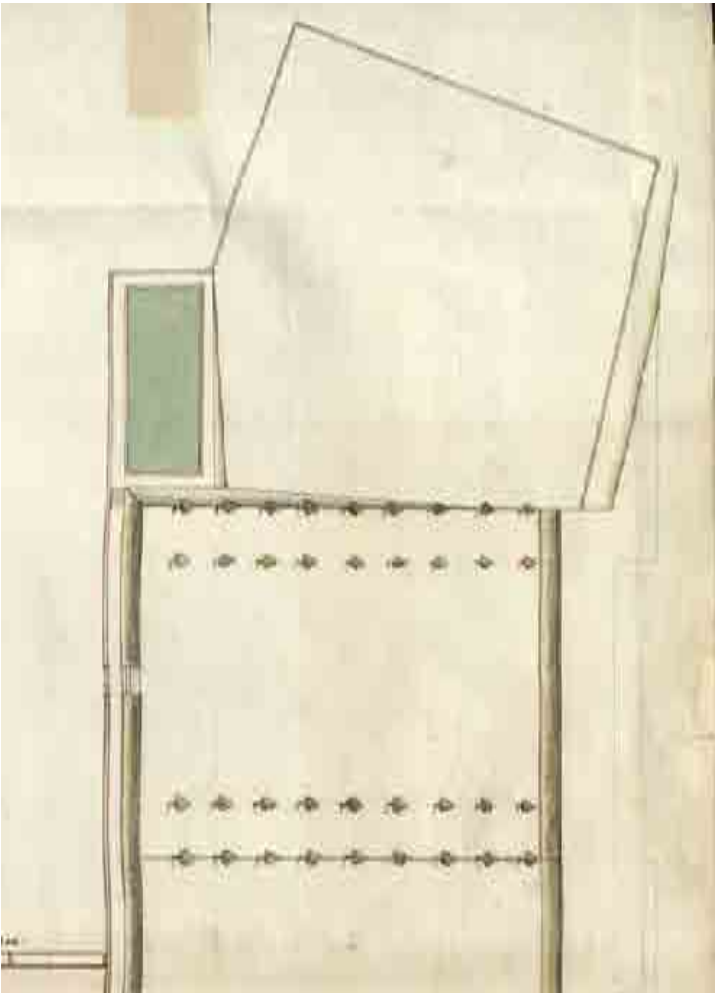
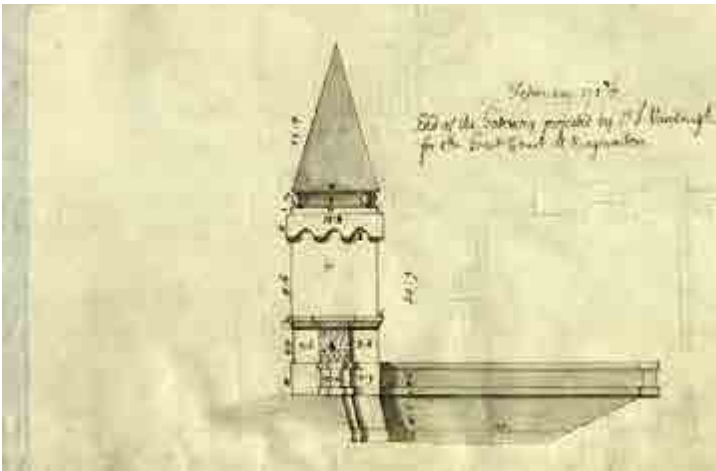
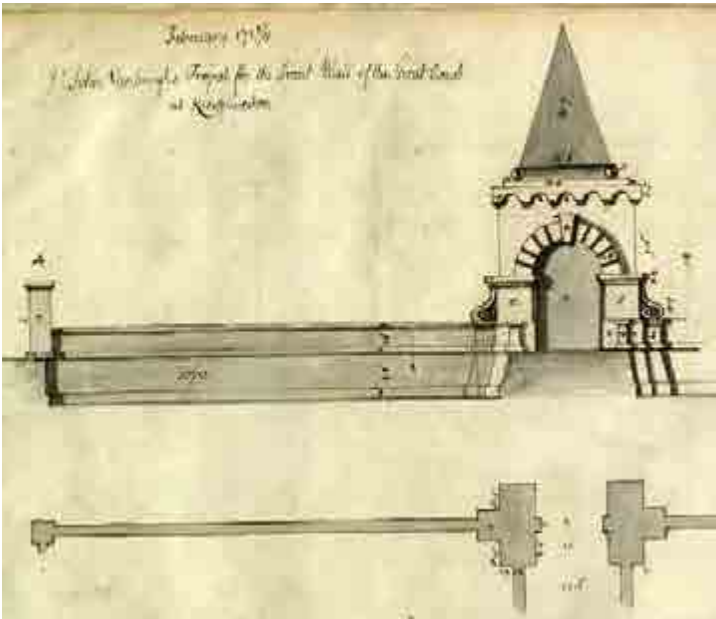


2. Understanding the History

1709-1730:
The Terrace and Courts

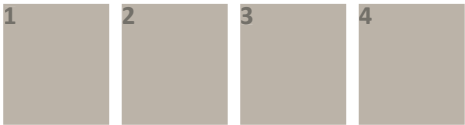


- 1 Plan and elevation of The Great Court for Kings Weston 1717/8 BRO 33746 17 (not realised)
- 2 End elevation of forecourt gate a fosse for Kings Weston 1717/8 BRO 33746 66 (not realised)
- 3 Survey plan of north west garden and Great Terrace BRO 33746 127
- 4 Survey plan of north west garden and Great Terrace, Kings Weston BRO 33746 52
- 5 Plan and elevation of kitchen wing for Kings Weston BRO 33746 34

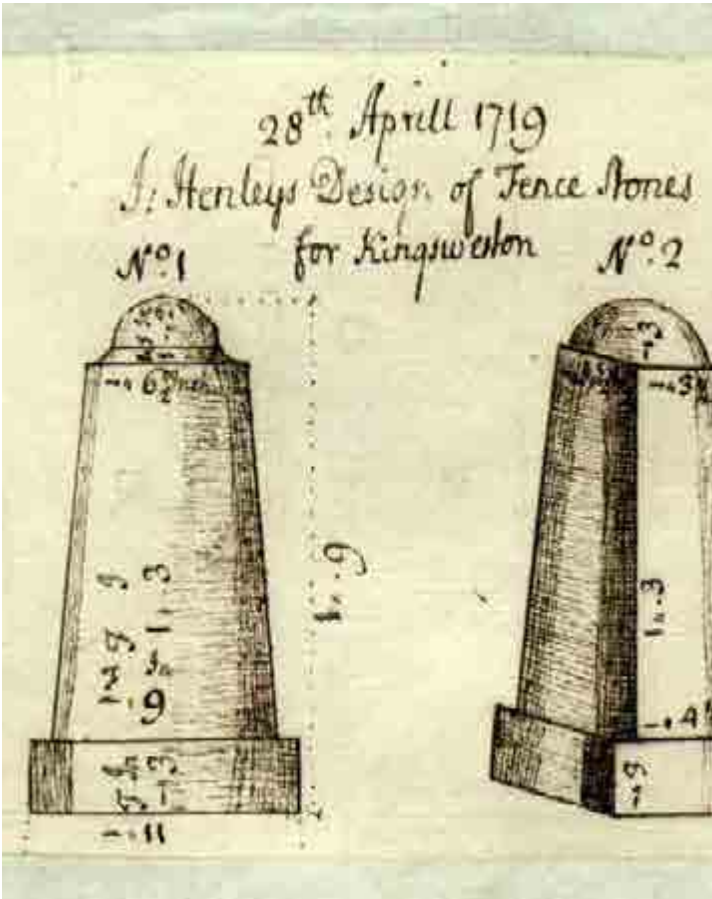
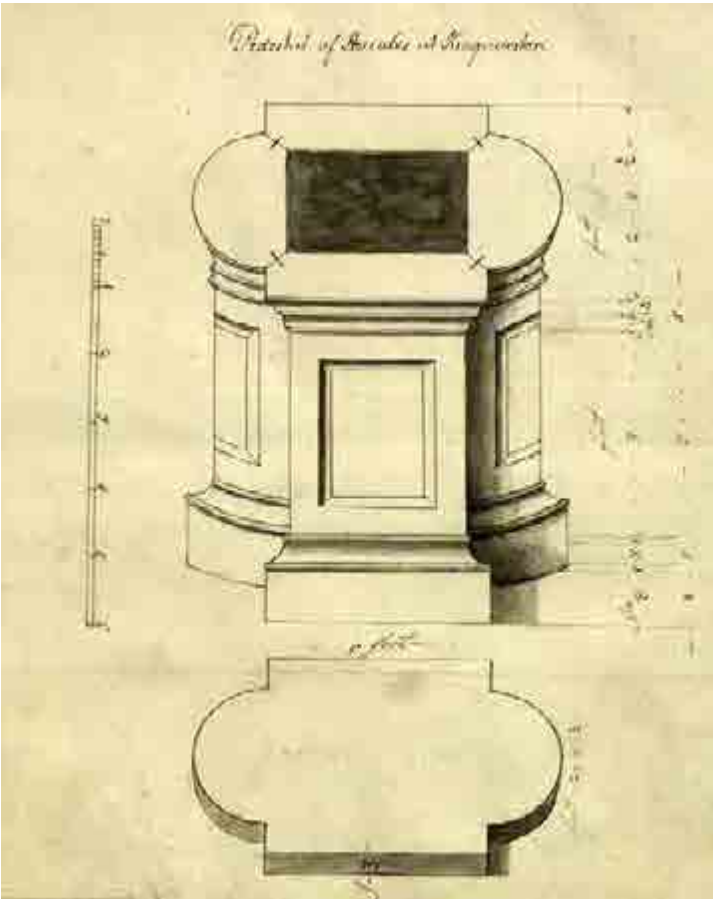


2. Understanding the History

1709-1730:
Detail and Ornament

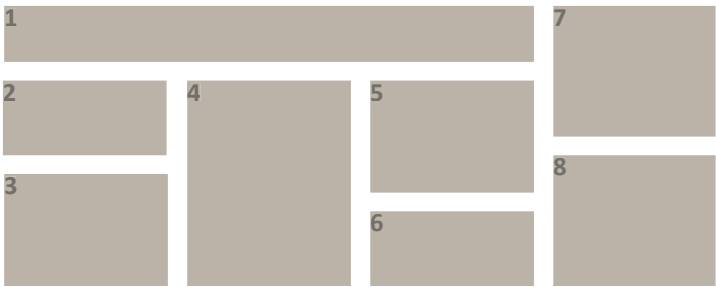


- 1 Copy of contract and drawing for urn on North Front, Kings Weston 1717 BRO 33746 019
- 2 Design for a sphinx 'For the Cheeks of the Great Stepps at Kingsweston' BRO 33746 008
- 3 'Pedestal of Hercules at Kingsweston' BRO 33746 22
- 4 Detail from 'J Henley's Design of Fence Stones for Kingsweston' 1719 BRO 33746 76



2. Understanding the History

1709-1730:
Further Designs



1 Diagram of Levels in Kings Weston Garden 1720
BRO 33746 43

2 Plan and Elevation of Kings Weston Alehouse
BRO 33746 36

3 Design for Stables at Kingsweston by Mr Price 1720
BRO 33746 04

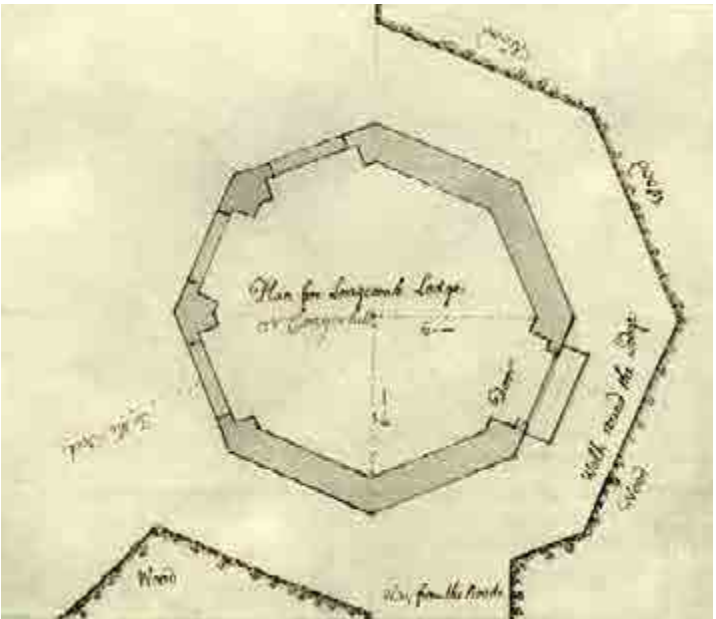
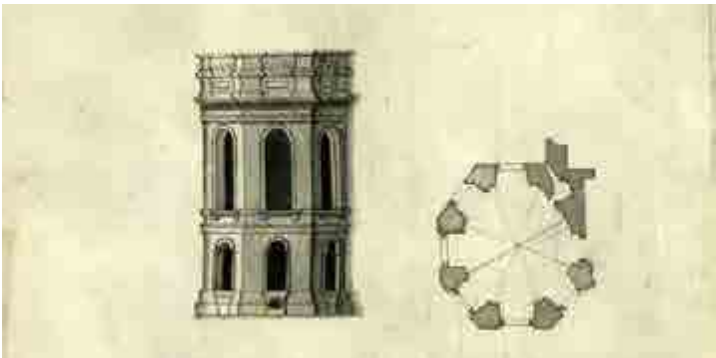
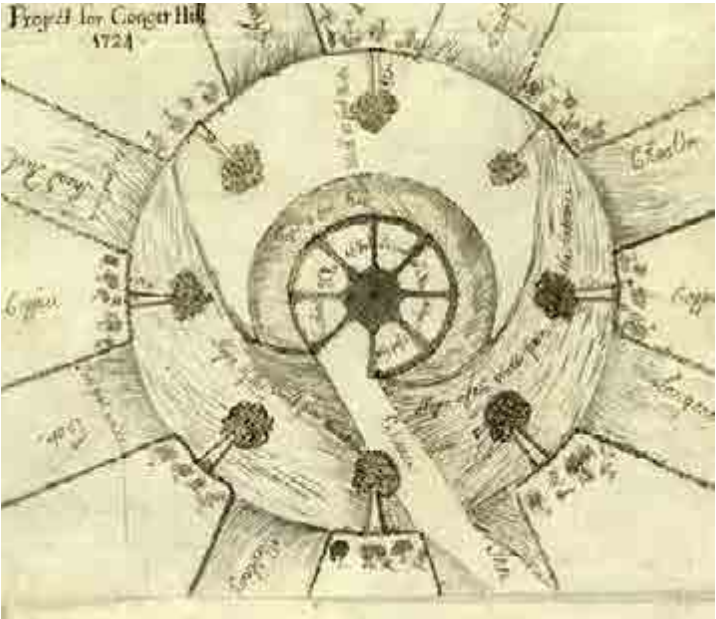
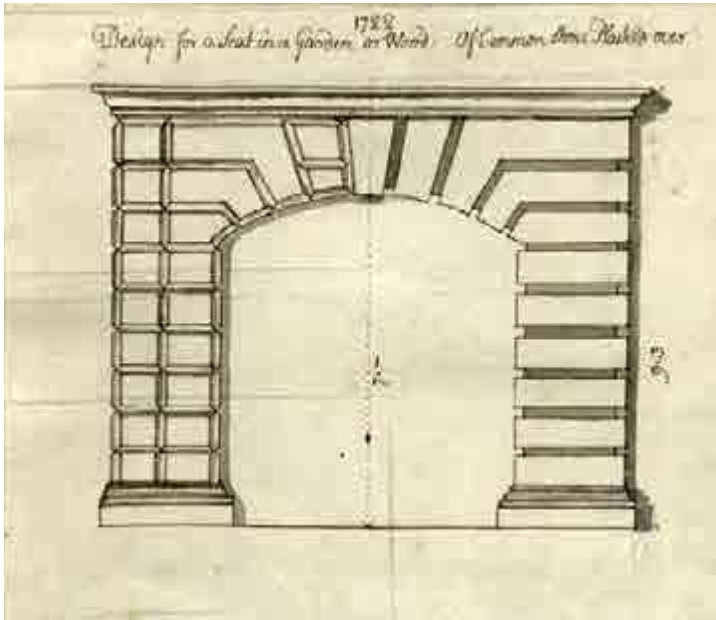
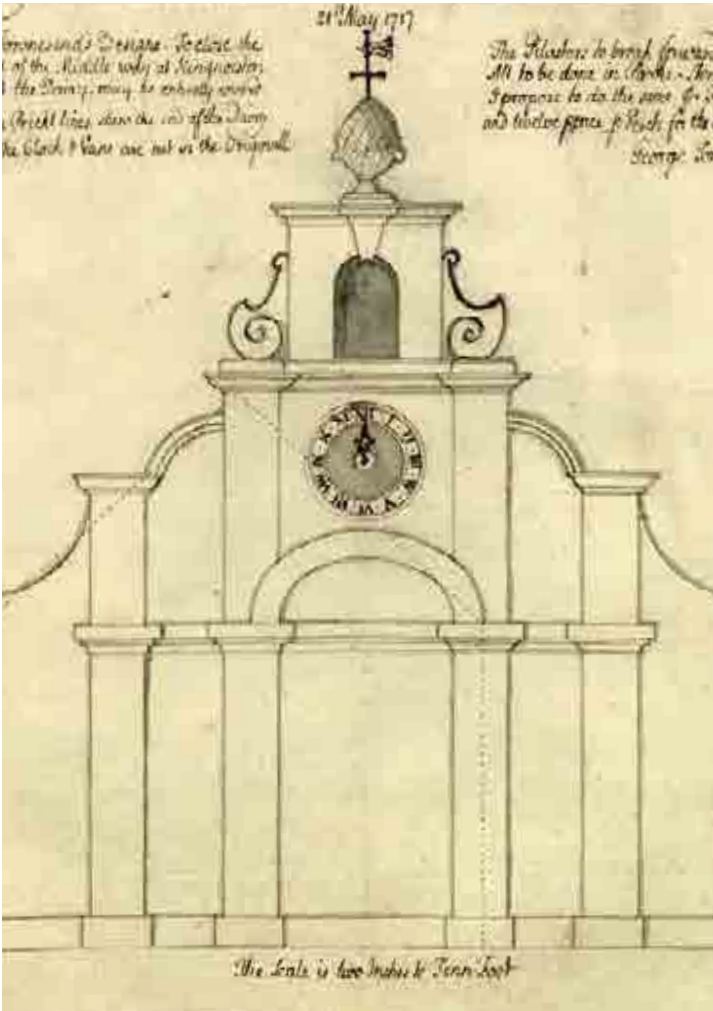
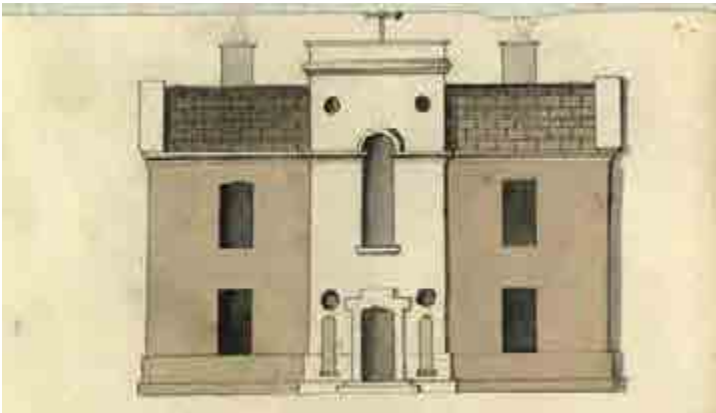
4 Design for Dairy Front, Kings Weston by George
Townsend 1717 BRO 33746 38

5 Plan and Elevation of a Garden Alcove Seat in a Garden
or Wood 1722 BRO 33746 50

6 Plan and Elevation of an Octagonal Pavilion
BRO 33746 82

7 Site Plan for a view-point at Conger Hill 1724
BRO 33746 109

8 Plan for Longcomb Lodge or Congerhill
BRO 33746 24



2. Understanding the History

1

2

1 Mercury and Argus, Print After Claude © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

2 The Great Annual Sacrifice at the Temple of Apollo, Print After Claude © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The English Landscape Movement

In the early eighteenth century, inspired by nature, art and antiquity, English landscape design started to move away from the geometric, formal gardens typical of France, Italy and the Netherlands towards an informal or ‘natural’ style. Nikolaus Pevsner described this English style as ‘the most influential of all English innovations in art’ (1); a change in interest from the ‘*nature of the world*’ to ‘*the world of nature*’ (2).

The English landscape movement is often described as having two key phases of development. During the early phase, landscape designers such as William Kent sought to create idealised landscape visions of Arcadian or Elysian antiquity as represented within the paintings of Claude Lorrain (1600-1682) (3) and Gaspar Poussin (1615-1675).

Claude’s mythologically themed paintings, showing pastoral and coastal landscapes dotted with classical ruins, evoked a timeless, poetic world. Land owners aspired to create Claudean themed visions through the design and position of buildings within the landscape, and the utilisation and control of existing landform, views and vistas. The Southwell family are known to have owned a number of paintings by Claude and Poussin.



In the second stage, pioneered by Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown, geometric formality was swept away in favour of flowing landscapes in which the house and park were united amidst belts and clumps of trees, smooth landforms and the serpentine lines of water bodies.

The English landscape movement evolved and culminated, at the end of the eighteenth century, in the Picturesque; a style of landscape design which sought to make romantic landscapes in the manner of pictures, particularly imitating the rough, intricate complexity of nature in the foreground.



Though never a professional landscape gardener Vanbrugh has been claimed as an early pioneer of the English Landscape style. Architectural partner to Bridgeman and Wise on a number of major landscapes including Blenheim, Eastbury, Stowe and Claremont, he worked within a social circle of influential clients which included Earl Carlisle and Viscount Cobham.

It was through these influences and partnerships that Vanbrugh’s attitude to garden design evolved. His 1709 correspondence with the Duchess of Marlborough, advocating the retention of the Old Woodstock Manor within the Blenheim landscape, has long been claimed as a nascent awareness of the picturesque potential of architecture and landscape (4).

‘A typical Claude landscape has great trees in the foreground, picturesque buildings -medieval or classical, in the middle distance and an interpenetration of water or hills in the background. Ships often feature on the water. Kings Weston had everything except picturesque buildings. When Edward Southwell and Vanbrugh had finished the park nothing was lacking and this Claudean achievement was widely recognized.’ (5)

References

- 1 Pevsner, N 172 (1955)
- 2 Turner, T (2005)
- 3 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)
- 4 Lancaster, M, The Oxford Companion to Gardens (1986)
- 5 Mowl, T (1985)

2. Understanding the History

The Halett Survey 1720

Our understanding of the Edward Southwell I estate is further supported by an estate plan held at the Bristol Record Office. Inscribed W Halett in reverse in the a cartouche, and dating to 1720, there is a close corroboration with the layout of the Kip engraving. It is not clear who produced the plan and whether it was simply a survey of the physical estate or included aspirational proposals.

The survey shows the newly built Vanbrugh house (a) with access from Kings Weston Lane through an enclosed courtyard which possible includes the Vanbrugh Brewhouse (b). The first and second parterres from the Kip (c, d) are shown, although the first parterre is simpler. A third parterre garden (e) has been added and the axial pavilion, if it ever existed, removed or possibly relocated to the south west corner. The new house is not centrally aligned with the axial garden path, at the head of which there is an loosely indicated structure, possibly the Echo, aligned to the new house and a half exedra of trees below. The formal gardens are separated and sheltered from the wider parkland by a formal grove of trees (f).

The bowling alley and banqueting house (g) are shown to the north of the house although other buildings in this area have been removed and replaced by a double terrace (h) running across the front of the house. An avenue of trees, aligned on the house front, runs north west from the terrace to the Tump (i).

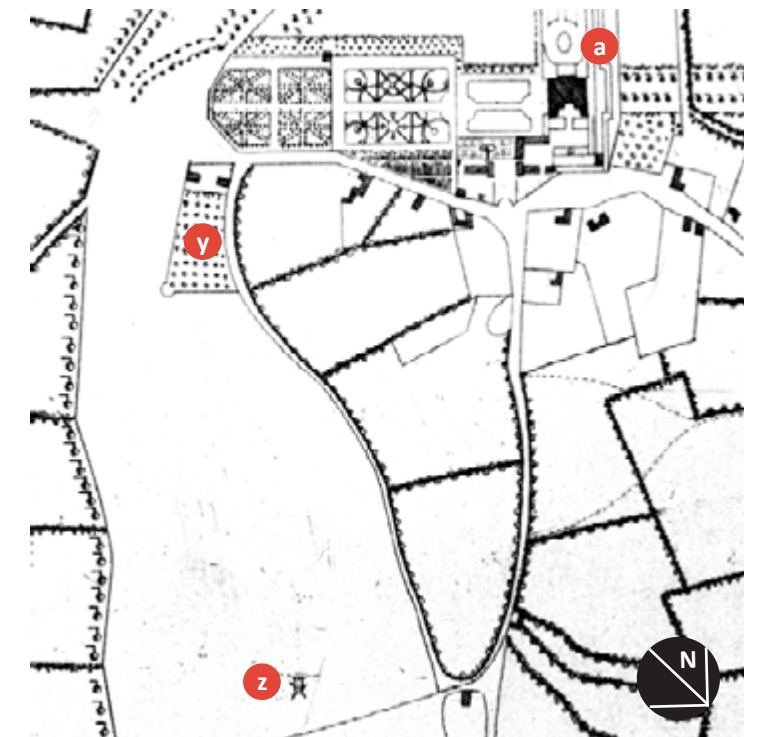
A newly added Great Court (j) provides the immediate setting to the house on the south west side. A double avenue of trees (k) leads across the parkland to a full rond-point (l) on the ridge line, which is itself marked by double avenues running east and west. The main avenue from the house is tighter than that shown in the Kip drawing. The avenue continues beyond (l), as a single avenue, to the current junction of Penpole Lane and Shirehampton Road (m) with a building of unknown purpose shown.

A single avenue, directly centred on the Great Court, leads from the lower slopes (o) to a hexagonal building (r) which possibly represents the lodge shown in the Kip engraving, although does not resemble the Kip depiction or the Vanbrugh building. Penpole Wood is enclosed and accessed from the parkland through a gated entrance (p). A system of woodland rides radiating from a series of glades or 'saloons'(q).

Enclosures (s) and quarries (t) are shown within the parkland in the spaces between the avenues. Whilst likely to be functional the purpose of the enclosures is not certain. To the south of the parkland the Longcombe woodlands (u) are set within an agricultural field pattern beyond which lies the River Avon (v). A rectangular plantation of conifers is indicated above the river.

Kings Weston Lane, forming the eastern edge of the house and gardens, is lined with a linear settlement of farm buildings. The current stable block at (w) and the walled gardens at (x) are as yet unbuilt. A walled orchard (y) is laid out behind Kingsweston Inn. There is an indication of a demi-bastion in the eastern corner which may have provided views across the estate. A windmill (z) is suggested on the summit of Kingsweston Hill corresponding with the archaeological record (HER 1747M).

The Halett plan suggests that whilst the Vanbrugh house was being built, Edward Southwell retained, adapted and extended his father's formal restoration landscape. The main house (a), the Echo (e) and the hexagonal building (r) represent key points around which the landscape is structured. The Halett plan occurred immediately prior to the dated garden structures being planned, and therefore it likely represents the parkland on the eve of reconstruction. Shirehampton Park is not yet part of the landscaped park and that proposals post-dating 1720 suggest that this was also incorporated shortly after Halett's plan.



Extract from the Halett Survey 1720 BRO4196-1

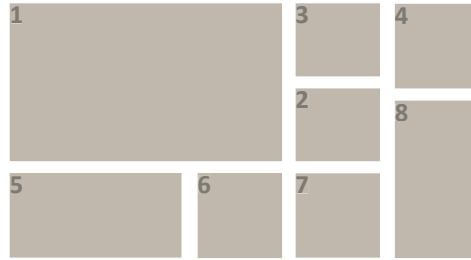
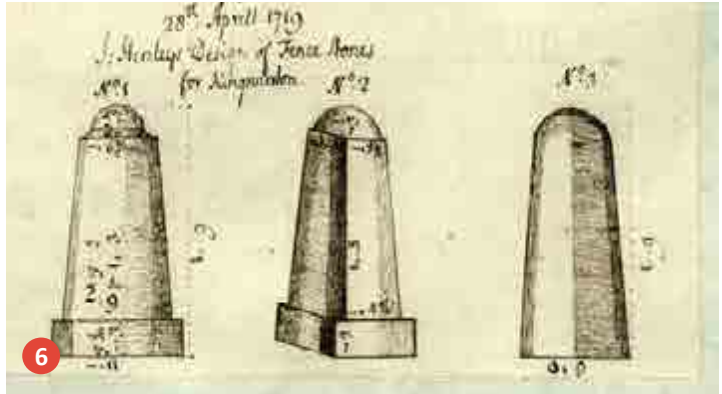
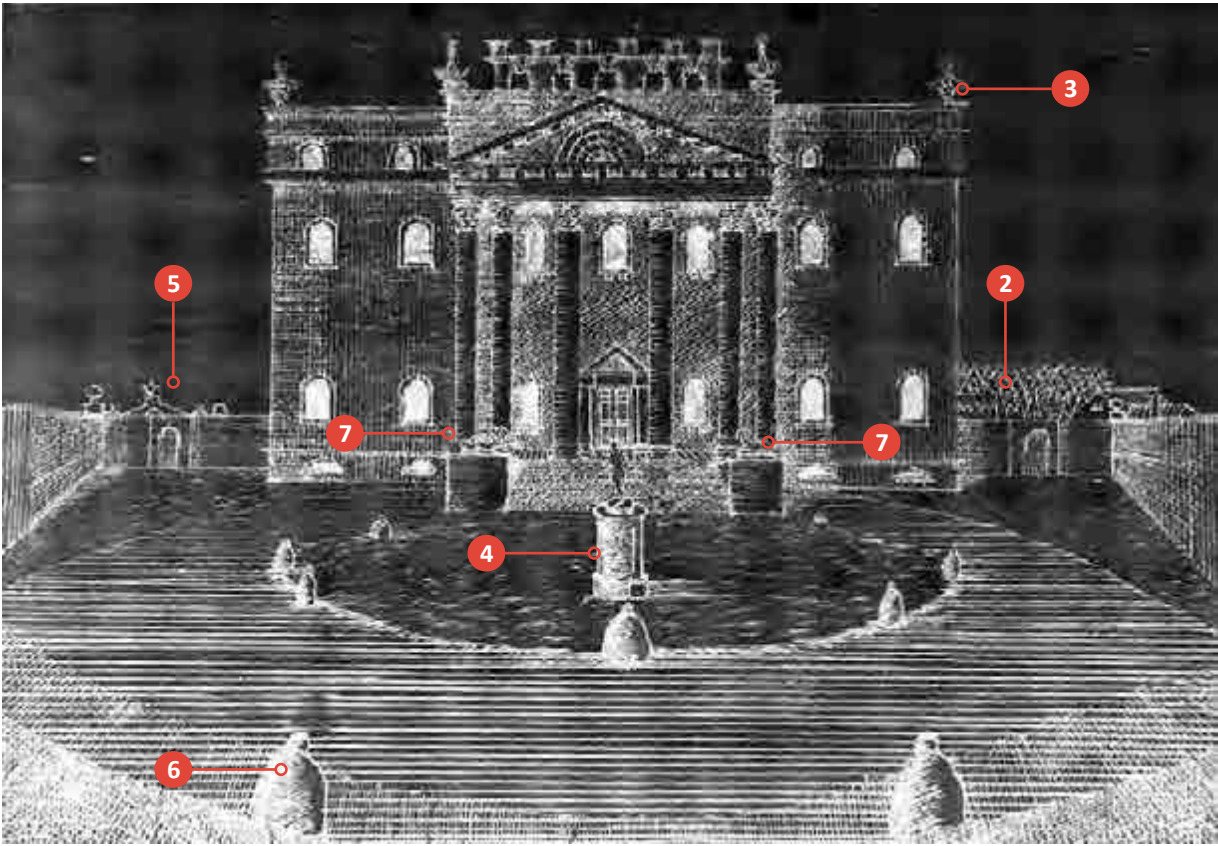
Opposite:

The Halett Survey 1720 (M170) Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.
Orientated with reference to the 1712 Kip and 1772 Taylor plans



2. Understanding the History

1746:
The Stewart Drawing



- 1 The front view of Edward Southwell Esq's seat at Kings Weston, Stewart J (1746)
- 2 Vanbrugh's drawing for an Alehouse BRO 33746 32
- 3 Copy of contract and drawing for urn on North Front, Kings Weston 1717 BRO 33746 019
- 4 'Pedestal of Hercules at Kingsweston' BRO 33746 22
- 5 Vanbrugh's drawing for the Loggia BRO 33746 53
- 6 Detail from 'J Henley's Design of Fence Stones for Kingsweston' 1719 BRO 33746 76
- 7 Design for a sphinx 'For the Cheeks of the Great Stepps at Kingsweston' BRO 33746 008
- 8 Statute of Hercules, Goldney Hall, Bristol (KWAG 2012)

Edward Southwell I died in 1730 and the estate was inherited by his son, Edward Southwell II (1705-1755). Edward followed his father and grandfather's political careers; sitting as Irish MP for Downpatrick and succeeded his father as Secretary of State for Ireland in 1730. His memoranda of 1750-54 record his direct interest in the designed landscape, but it is a drawing of the house which provides a key confirmation of Vanbrugh's work at Kings Weston.

In 1746 James Stewart, a Bristol schoolteacher, recorded the Vanbrugh house with its formal forecourt setting. It shows an oval drive and lawn enclosed within two side walls.

The centre of the court is marked by a statue of Hercules, standing club in hand, on top of a stone plinth closely matching the drawing within the Kings Weston book of drawings and that at Goldney Hall, Bristol (1). The lead figure at Goldney has been likely attributed to John Nost the Elder and was at Goldney by c1767 (1).

Vanbrugh's Loggia and Brewhouse garden buildings are visible above the end walls of the court. The steps up to the house are flanked by stone plinths bearing symmetrical sphinx figures. The cherubs shown in the book drawing are absent. The design appears to be a close copy of Jean LePautre's 1676 engraving of Louis Lerambert's marble sphinx at Versaille .

References

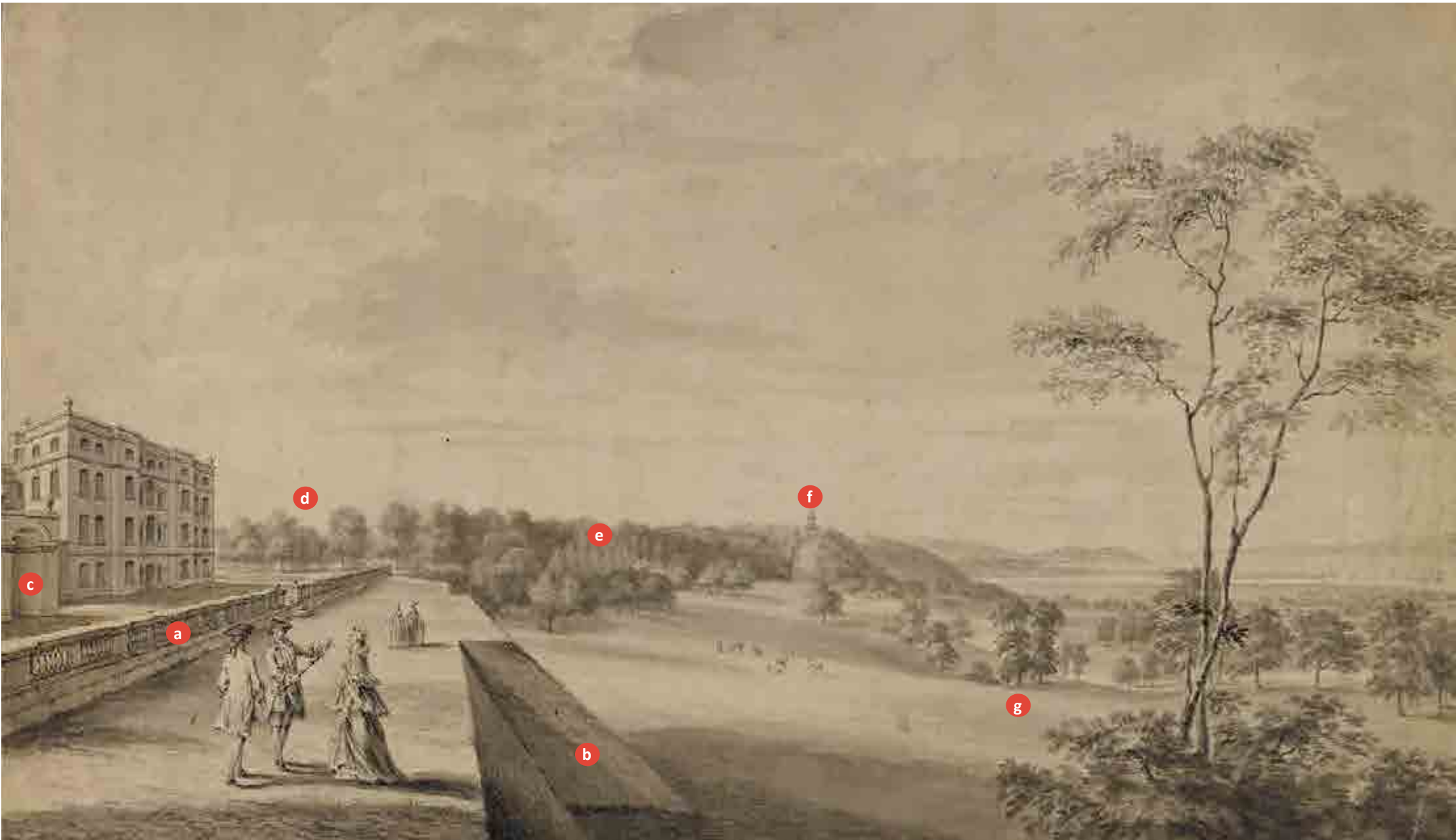
- 1 Merritt, D (2002)
- 2 Greenacre, F (2011)
- 3 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)

2. Understanding the History

1760-1768:
The Great Terrace



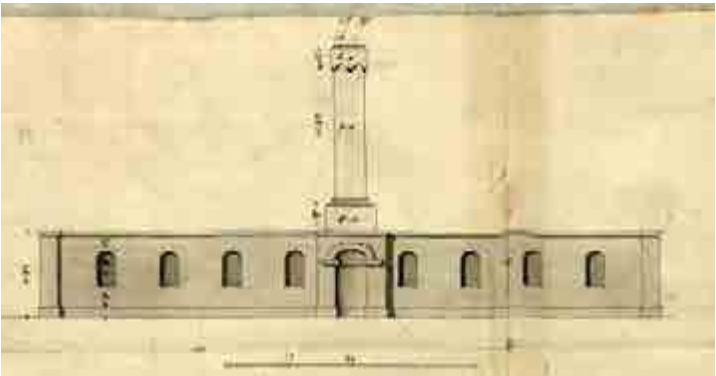
- 1 'Topographical drawing of the garden side overlooking a lake' Insc: (on mount): Southwell. Sir John Soane's Museum (Drawer 69.1. 15) by courtesy of the Trustees of Sir John Soane's Museum. Photo Ardon Bar-Hama
- 2 Elevation of kitchen wing for Kings Weston BRO 33746 34



Undated and unattributed, the watercolour in the collection of Sir John Soane's Museum shows Kings Weston estate in the mid eighteenth century. Showing the period before the formal layout was swept away, the details suggest a date around 1760-1768.

The view is to the south west along the Great Terrace from the Loggia. Vanbrugh's original north front is seen behind his 'Great Terrace'. The terrace is balustraded (a) and retained above an informal parkland landscape by the crisp geometric form of a turf bank (b). On the far left Vanbrugh's kitchen wing, a single storey building, is just visible (c).

A double avenue (d) leads from the house across the parkland in the direction of the rond-point, but the walls of the Great Court, as drawn by Stewart, have gone. Below the terrace a viewing allée runs from the parkland up the hill towards Penpole Lodge (f) which is visible on the skyline. Distinctive tree planting is visible in Penpole Wood around the site of the quarry and lime circle (e). The Severn Estuary and distant coastal hills provide the backdrop. This is the first drawing showing the Great Park integrated within the estate (g).



2. Understanding the History

1750-1799:
The Landscape Park


The mid-eighteenth century marks the second phase of development of the English Landscape movement and led by the landscape designer Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown. At Kings Weston the period is well documented through collections of survey, pictorial and written evidence. The 1772 estate survey undertaken by Isaac Taylor shows probably shows both changes to, and proposals for, the estate landscape.

The 1750-1754 memoranda of Edward Southwell II show that he was undertaking further landscape improvements around the estate including additional tree planting in the park. The reference to a seat at Long Combe confirms that outlying areas of the estate were increasingly the subject of designed improvements. Mr Berkeley is likely to be Norborne Berkeley the owner of Stoke Park at Stoke Gifford; patron of the landscape designer Thomas Wright. Southwell and Berkeley were both subscribers to Wright's Arbours (1) ,and Wright is known to have visited Kings Weston in 1776.

Edward died in 1755 and the estate passed to his son, Edward Southwell III (1738-1777), who was responsible for the major phase of landscape deformalisation during this period and commissioning Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown to give advice. An account entry within Capability Brown’s own records confirms his commission to undertake ‘Alterations about the House and Terras’ at Kings Weston.

Brown made three visits to Kings Weston. Whilst little more is know about the exact timing and detail of his work, the 1772 Taylor plan certainly shows an informal relationship between the house and the landscape; a typical Brownian design approach. The account suggests that he did not advise more widely across the estate. Brown’s account book suggests his involvement in 1777 and the Southwell’s account books state 1778 for payment (4)

Edward Southwell II (1705-1755)
MP for Downpatrick from 1727 until his death MP for Bristol 1739-1754. He married Honorable Catherine Watson in 1729 and a year later succeeded his father as Secretary of State for Ireland. In 1732 he was appointed to the Privy Council of Ireland.



Edward Southwell III (1738-1777)
MP for Bridgwater 1761-63 and Gloucestershire 1763-1777. He married Sophia Campbell in 1765. In 1776 he succeed to the title of 20th Baron de Clifford.

- “Plant on the hill in the Park: Beech, Chestnut, New England Oak..Black (and) Scarlett
- 275 Perches of Lawrence Weston East Reen to be thrown
- 3 trees at Mill Pill Bridge
- To cut down the trees advised by Mr Berkeley
- Do. the elm tree advised by my wife, next to the chestnut tree
- The ash trees as seat in Long Combe
- To fill up the great old hollow place in the park with earth taken from the lake for Shirehampton
- The walk around the Park for my wife
- More trees to be planted in the semi circle
- Half the ash trees on the hill to be taken away....Beech...
- Pots for all the Gates into the Park or tops of brickwalls in the garden to be mended immediately”

- “To fill up the Terras and an Ice House”
October 1750

*extracts from Memoranda of the Hon. E.D.W Southwell
1750-1754*

References

- 1 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)
- 2 Cooke R: West Country Houses (1957)
- 3 Gomme & Jenner: Bristol an Architectural History (2011)
- 4 BRO

Capability Brown (1716-1783)

Landscape designer and architect. Proponent of the new English style of landscape design. He was responsible for the design of more than 170 parks across England including Croome Court, Blenheim, Bowood House, Prior Park and Longleat. His approach is often described as a ‘sweeping away’ of the typically formal landscapes of the 17th century. His style of smooth undulating grass, which would run straight to the house, clumps, belts and scattering of trees and his serpentine lakes, were a new ‘gardenless’ form of landscape design.

Account for Edward Southwell Esq. Kings Weston Gloucestershire	£ s d
a Journey there in [blank space]	
a Survey of Kings Weston taken by M J Spyers containing 286 Acres & a clean drawing	21-0-0
a General Plan for the Alterations	
a Plan for the Alterations about the House & the Terras. Separate & after the above	63-0-0
there myself three times	
Paid June the 3rd 1778 By G.V. Vernon Esq.	84-0-0

2. Understanding the History

1750-1799:
The Landscape Park

Edward Southwell III initiated a new phase of building activity. In 1763 he appointed Robert Mylne to design a stable block and undertake alterations to the house (1) whose diary records numerous drawings and models presented to his client over an eleven year period. Mylne relocated the service buildings across Kings Weston Lane, leaving the main house largely free and unencumbered from the associated domestic buildings. He added a new kitchen block replacing the formal courtyard to the north east of the house. His stable block and courtyards, H-shaped in plan, were complemented by walled kitchen gardens, fronted by a formal pool and two lodges, and a hot house.

Mylne turned his attentions to the main house. He reworked the interiors, replaced Vanbrugh’s single storey kitchen range and altered Vanbrugh’s north front. He remodelled the entrance steps on the south and east fronts, removing the sphinx-mounted, low flank walls either side of Vanbrugh’s ‘Great Steps’ (2). Mylne continued to be employed until at least 1772 designing Shirehampton Lodge and a ‘tea room’ for the estate (3).

Robert Mylne (1733-1811)
Scottish architect and civil engineer. Designer of Blackfriars Bridge in London. Surveyor to St Pauls Cathedral. Mylne’s Bristol commissions included Blaise Castle and designs for the Floating Harbour.

Thomas Wright (1711-1786)
Mathematician, astronomer, landscape designer, architect.
His principal patron was the Duchess of Beaufort at Badminton, and his commissions for buildings and layouts included some 30 estates including Shugborough and Stoke Park.
Whilst he designed in various styles, including Gothic, Chinese and classical forms, he is most often associated with the rustic style; notably for grottoes and arbours.
At Stoke Park he designed the house and a classical landscape described as ‘Epic Space’.



Mylne’s steps to the south west front (2012)

“the house of Kingsweston is much mended from what it was and the place in general greatly improv’d.....[but] wants much yet to be done.....I like the hothouse very well and the kitchen garden is very spacious, I think much more so than at present can be watered..... I have advised of many trees to be taken away and some alterations and other designs with regard to buildings, and today possible some more remarks may take place”

Thomas Wright to the 4th Dowager Duchess of Beaufort

Edward Southwell IV (1767-1832)
21st Baron de Clifford, politician and last of the direct Southwell line

In 1776, four years after Taylor’s survey, the landscape designer Thomas Wright visited Kings Weston. In a letter to the 4th Dowager Duchess of Beaufort he briefly describes his visit (4). The indication is that Wright offered suggestions for improvements to the landscape, but there is no firm evidence of what form these took. It is possible that he reworked Wood Lodge at Penpole Lane; the rusticated features can potentially be attributed to Wright (5). He may also have advised on the development of Penpole Wood as an ornamental woodland.
Edward Southwell III died in 1777 and was succeeded by his ten year old son Edward IV.

References

- 1 Diary of Robert Mylne, RIBA Archives
- 2 Gomme & Jenner: Bristol an Architectural History (2011)
- 3 Cooke R: West Country Houses (1957)
- 4 Badminton Muniments, Badminton Estate Archives
- 5 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)

2. Understanding the History

1772: The Taylor Survey

Isaac Taylor, a Herefordshire surveyor and map maker, was commissioned by Edward Southwell III to produce a new survey of Kings Weston and its surrounding land holdings.

In direct contrast with the formal geometric landscape shown of the earlier Kip and Halett drawings, the Taylor survey of 1772 shows an extensive informal parkland landscape. The legend, laid out along the bottom margin, suggests that elements of the plan are 'intended' rather than implemented. The estate is fenced into four separate divisions. Shirehampton Park is largely represented by the first and second divisions. The main house and gardens, the walk and Penpole Wood form the third division whilst the lower parkland and the Tump form the fourth. The estate is shown enclosed within a boundary belt of tree planting or 'verge'.

The main house (a) is approached from an estate entrance (b) at Kings Weston Lane. The house sits prominently in open parkland, from which it is separated by a fence (l) to control grazing stock. The Great Court is no longer evident and it would appear that the main access to the house crosses the front of the former parterre gardens. The parterre gardens (c,d,e) have been 'swept away' but the axial view to the Echo (f) remains whilst a serpentine path runs through the trees to the north. This is the first drawing clearly showing the site of the Echo. Whilst the site of the first parterre garden (c) is open parkland, the second (d) and third (e) form a planted grove of trees and shrubs. A wall and *Terras* (terrace) (g) forms the southern boundary of the woodland setting to the Echo, and provides elevated views south across the first division of the parkland towards the Avon Gorge.

Around the main house the landscape has been further simplified. The Loggia (h) remains although the Brewhouse and its courtyard relationship with the main house appears ambiguous.

Vanbrugh's grass terrace (a) has been reshaped and smoothed, and the avenue to the Tump (i) removed. The Tump, clearly expressed within the map shading, has an open summit and its slopes are dotted with informal groups of trees. In the lower park (j) the earlier field pattern is loosely expressed as lines of tree planting; suggesting that the hedges were thinned and grown out, and supplemented with new specimens. Below the Loggia (h) a serpentine path leads through a mixed plantation towards the Home Farm and a 'menagerie' (k).

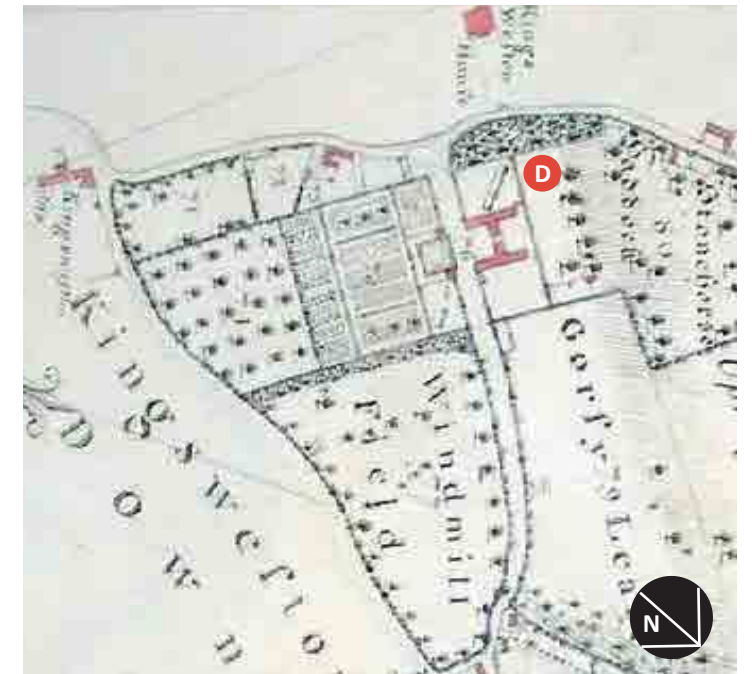
From here the double avenues leading owards the rond-point (m) appears largely removed although a short section edging Penpole Wood, together with some relict specimens in open ground, remain. The rond-point is more loosely structured due to the surrounding informal tree planting. An avenue continues from the rond-point (m) towards an estate drive (n) marking the modern day junction of Shirehampton Road and Penpole Lane.

With entrance lodges at either end (w), this drive follows the line of the modern day Shirehampton Road through the Kings Weston parkland. Kings Weston Inn is marked near Park Lodge. A carriage drive (q), previously shown as an avenue, loops through the rond-point and along the remnant avenue to the main house (l). An avenue drive (n to v) marks the line of Penpole Lane.

The ridgeline is marked by an avenue walk of trees (p), crossing the park from Echo Wood (g) to the corner of Penpole Wood via the rond-point. Oval-shaped stands of trees (o) are planted within quarried ground.

Previously open ground between the main avenue and Penpole Wood is scattered with parkland trees (r) and, along the lower edge, a new looped path meanders through a planted quarry garden towards the wood. Penpole Wood is fenced and gated (s) and shows a network of paths. The upper path is the largest of these and runs through a series of glades (t) to Penpole Lodge (u).

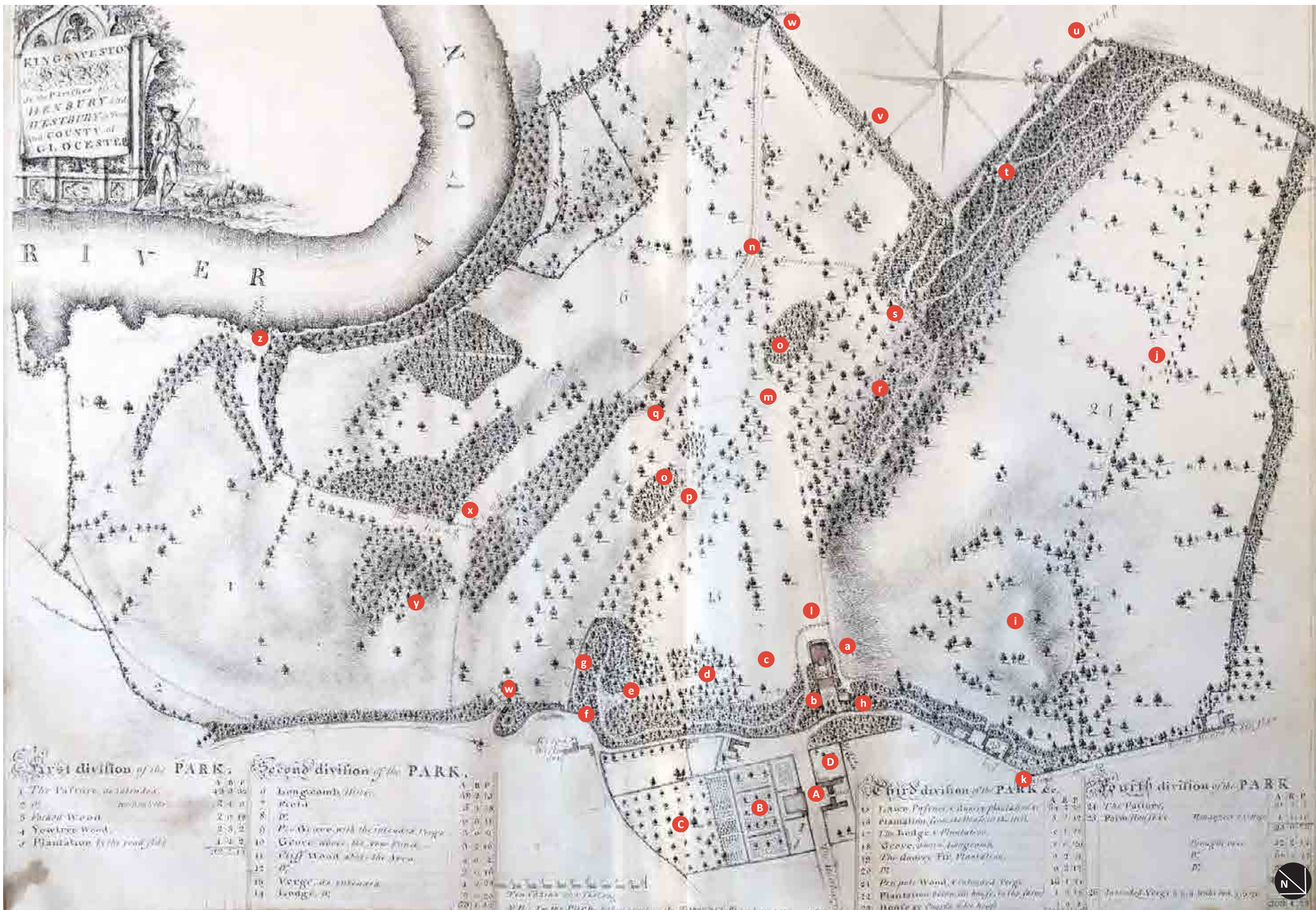
A pasture landscape planted with trees and small copses extends across Shirehampton Park to the River Avon, at the centre of which is 'Long Comb' (x); an L-shaped valley with wooded sides and rectangular pond. The northern edge of the 'Long Comb' is formed by a prominent mound (y) marked 'Yewtree Wood' and showing a simple path system. This small hill is the likely site for the 'Conger Hill' proposals bound into the Kings Weston Book of Drawings (BRO 33746 24 & 109). The valley winds southwards to Crabtree Slip (z) on the banks of the river which may have operated as the Southwell's private mooring facility as an alternative to the Passage Inn at Lamplighters Marsh. small structures relate to the slip and were possibly ornamental in nature. Rides have been cut through the fir plantation above the River Avon in the Little Park.



Extract from Isaac Taylor's Survey of The Home Farm, 1772 (BRO 27570)

The Taylor survey provides the first evidence for the Mylne-designed H-plan stable block with ponds and lodges (A), and the kitchen gardens (B,C) across Kings Weston Lane from the main estate. A smaller plan within the same folio confirms a south facing hothouse (D), constructed at an angle, adjacent to the stable block. The main survey drawing records 'Site of an Old Church' to which Bewys Cross possibly relates.

Opposite: Isaac Taylor's Survey of Kings Weston, 1772 (BRO 27570)



The Grand View: Artists and Tourists

Following the Southwell’s improvements, Kings Weston was widely celebrated as a noble estate with a spectacular landscape setting. This was due in part to the proximity to the spa resorts of Bath and the Bristol Hot Wells but it followed a 1758 Act of Parliament approving a new turnpike road to improve access between Bristol, Shirehampton and Aust.

Kings Weston could be toured within a day’s excursion from Clifton. The picturesque qualities of the adjoining Blaise estate, and the intervening Downs and Avon Gorge landscapes, added interest to what was becoming an essential tour for visitors to Bath, Bristol and the West. Visitors to the estate sought the grand Claudean views across the Severn Estuary, before touring the grounds and gardens and viewing the famous paintings hanging within the house. Kings Weston’s sunsets were particularly celebrated.

In 1768 the Austrian Count Karl von Zinzendorf visited Kings Weston and admired the park, but not the arcaded chimneys. His English tour included Stourhead, Stowe, Blenheim and Castle Howard; suggesting how well Kings Weston ranked among them. Other notable visitors included John Wesley and Mrs Hannah More.

It was on account of Kings Weston’s ‘popularity with fashionable visitors to Bath that Jane Austen, in her novels ‘Northanger Abbey’ and ‘Emma’, made reference to the estate as a carriage excursion.

Picturesque tourism continued to increase well into the nineteenth century. Kings Weston featured in many contemporary accounts, travel guides and poetry of the time.

a very particular park valued at £ 8000 in rent, to Mr Southwell. The house is ridiculously surmounted by arcaded chimneys, the park is pretty sloping and green. From two hills there is offered a much more beautiful view than at Lord Botetourt’s (Stoke Park). All around you here are enclosed fields, green, well cultivated,. . .

Count Carl Von Zinzendorf (11th Sept1768)

.....the dark headland of Portishead encloses the home scene and curtains of eminences rise gently in the back ground finely broken and diversified by soft woods or picturesque structures especially on the Gloucestershire side where the heights of Kings weston and Blaize Castle compose a Claude like scene As a sunset view it is perfect

CF Cliffe (1847)

The estate was well established for receiving sightseers with refreshments available from Kings Weston Inn and Shirehampton Lodge (1). For those visiting late and returning to Bristol the next day accommodation was available at Shirehampton village. In 1784 a Sunday coach service to Shirehampton via Henbury was introduced to cater for day tourists.

Visitors to the Hot-wells derive great advantage and equal pleasure from the number and variety of rides and walks the neighbouring country affords. Durdham-downs, King's-Weston hill, and the banks of the Severn, are the situations most resorted to.....The walk across the fields from Durdham-down, by Pitch and Pay farm, to lord de Clifford's, is preferable to the high road.

The time allowed by his lordship for the admission of strangers to see the pictures, when he is resident there, is from ten in the forenoon, till two in the afternoon; when he is absent, they are shewn at all times. The gardens belonging to this seat are laid out with suitable taste, and may be seen at any time, a gardener attending expressly for the purpose of conducting strangers.

Ibbetson (1792)

Through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Kings Weston was the subject of numerous landscape paintings by artists such as Samuel Grimm, Nicholas Pocock, Muller and Francis Danby. These paintings frequently show the views from the rough, open ground at Penpole Point and Kings Weston Down, with the main house visible through, or rising above, the canopied parkland setting.

References

- 1 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)
- 2 Appendix B: Written Accounts
- 3 Ibbetson, J.C (1792)
- 4 Gomme & Jenner: Bristol an Architectural History (2011)

Nicholas Pocock’s watercolour (c1785) displays this idealised Claudean view from the open, grazed summit of Kings Weston Down. The recently constructed Mylne stable block and hothouse sit prominently in the middle ground, with the house visible just behind. The house and Penpole Lodge are visible through the foreground trees with water, shipping and the Welsh hills visible in the distance.

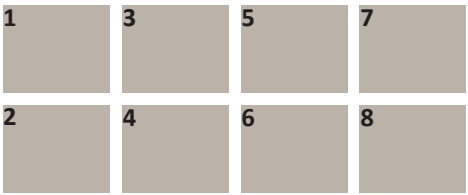
In 1788, through a series of sketches, Samuel Grimm records the estate’s details, including the lodges, Penpole Point and the approach to the house through the parkland. In a drawing mirroring Pocock’s he also shows the rear wall of the hothouse next to Mylne’s stable block. Grimm’s drawing of the approach from Shirehampton Park towards the house shows the chimney arcade appearing above the rising ground of the avenue rond-point. The carriage drive, now Shirehampton Road’ peels off to the right of the picture before returning back to the rond-point where the full view of the house would be revealed.

Opposite:
View over King’s Weston to the Bristol Channel Watercolour
Pocock (c.1785) Bristol Museum & Art Gallery

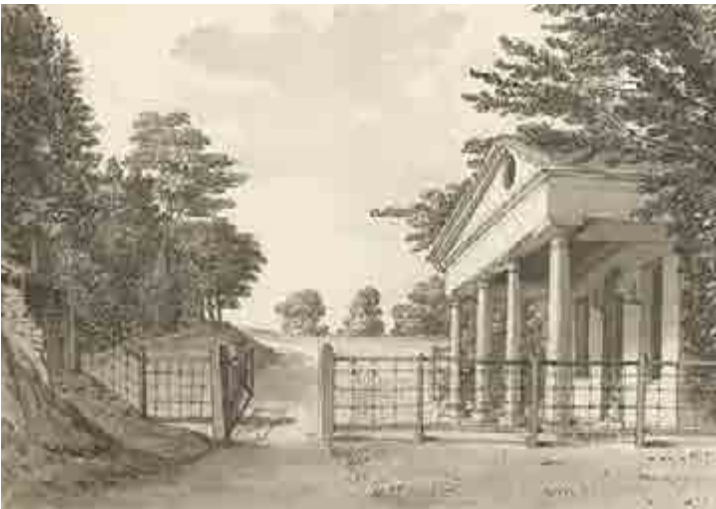


2. Understanding the History

1788:
Samuel Hieronymous Grimm

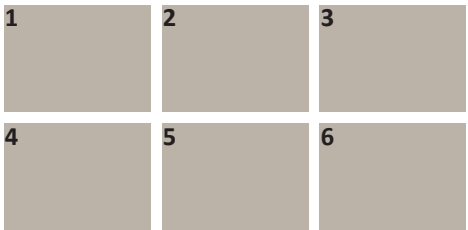


- 1 Penpole Dial. ‘The Pillar at Weston Point’ (British Library Ms15541)
- 2 Penpole Point. ‘View from Weston Point’ (BL Ms15541)
- 3 View from Penpole Point. ‘Weston House and Lodge’ (BL Ms15541)
- 4 Shirehampton Lodge. ‘Weston Park’ (BL Ms15541)
- 5 View of Kings Weston House from Shirehampton Road. ‘Weston House’ (BL Ms15541)
- 6 Penpole Lodge. ‘Weston Park’ (BL Ms15541)
- 7 View from the Terrace towards Penpole Lodge. ‘View of the Park’ (Bristol Museum & Art Gallery M3719)
- 8 View from Kings Weston Down (Bristol Museum & Art Gallery M3719)



2. Understanding the History

1800-1845:
Artist Views



- 1 Looking towards the mouth of the Avon, Horlor J. (K485) Bristol Museum and Art Gallery c1832
- 2 The Avon looking towards Portishead, Horlor J. (K487) Bristol Museum and Art Gallery 1840
- 3 View from Kings Weston Hill, Danby F. 1823 Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
- 4 View of Kings Weston House from the Great Park, Private Ownership (BAL_465358b)
- 5 The Seat of Lord de Clifford. Mackenzie. c1800 Bristol Library
- 6 Kingsweston Park, Muller W J c 1800 (K152) Bristol museum and Art Gallery



2. Understanding the History

1800-1845:
The Nineteenth Century Park

Philip John Miles (1774-1845)
Owner of Leigh Court at Abbots Leigh.
Merchant banker, MP for Bristol, Director of the Great Western Steam Ship Company, promoter of the Royal Western Hotel, art collector. At his death in 1845 the Western Chronicle recorded Miles as Bristol’s first millionaire.

Kings Weston remained in the Southwell family until Edward Southwell IV’s death in 1832 (1). It was sold the following year to Philip John Miles, owner of Leigh Court, for the then substantial sum of £210,000. Miles had sixteen children from two marriages and purchased Kings Weston as an additional family residence and for the inheritance of the children of his second marriage.

The renowned Scottish engineer John Loudon McAdam records improvements to the turnpike road being carried out between 1819-1821 including ‘lowering hill and building walls.....at Kingsweston Hill’ (2) to form the road cutting through the ridge with the installation of an iron bridge. Other estate work included the construction of Henbury Lodge c1820-1840 and remodelling of the appearance of several other lodges with ornate barge boards, bay windows and tiled roofs (1)

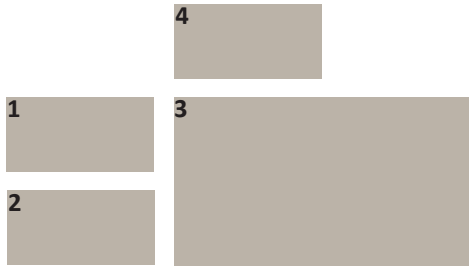
Paintings of the period show the house set within an informal, grazed parkland landscape. The great steps to the south west front are flanked by tall, evergreen shrubs, which serve to screen and soften the monumental form of Vanbrugh’s house.



Together with the 1841 tithe plan, these paintings show Kings Weston house set against a maturing backdrop of broadleaved and coniferous trees, probably including yew, Norway spruce, Scots pine and larch. The expression of the Great Avenue (a), leading south west from the house, is minimal and the rond-point (b) practically eliminated. The view west from the main house towards the Tump (c) is open but dotted with parkland tree planting.



- 1 Kings Weston, engraving published Sherwood Jones & Co 1825, (Mb6266) Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
- 2 Print, Kingsweston Gloucestershire, Walker J after F Nicholson, c1800 (M347) Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
- 3 Extract from Tithe Map, 1841
Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
- 4 The Iron Bridge. Undated Postcard> Bristol Record Office



The flanks of Kingsweston Hill (d), bare in the 1720 Halett plan, were planted with a mixed plantation; probably of yew, holm oak, Scots pine, Cedar of Lebanon, larch, beech and sweet chestnut, and an understorey of laurel, box and holly (3).

Like other local estates including Blaise and Clevedon Court, this represents the period of Picturesque landscape development in which the smoothness of the late English landscape parkland was often developed towards an expression of the rugged beauty of nature.

The ridgeline on Kingsweston Down (e) remained an open sward whilst carriage drives and paths along the summit and flanks allowed visitors to appreciate the notable Picturesque qualities of the west Bristol landscape.

References
1 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)
2 McAdam, J L (1825)
3 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)



2. Understanding the History

1845-1899:
The Nineteenth Century Park

Philip William Skynner Miles (1816-1881)

MP for Bristol (1837-1852) and businessman, Miles headed and helped finance The Bristol Port and Pier Railway Company, building the rail line through Shirehampton Park between Hotwells in Bristol and Avonmouth which opened in 1865. He also chaired the Bristol Port Channel Dock Company which built the Avonmouth Channel Dock, opening in 1877.

Thomas Hopper (1776-1856)

Architect

Noted for his works to country houses including Leigh Court, Penryn Castle and Windsor Castle



In 1845, Philip William Skynner Miles, the second son from his father's second marriage, inherited Kings Weston. In August of the same year the Dowager Queen and her entourage visited Kings Weston and expressed that she was 'very highly delighted with the scenery'

The following year Miles appointed the architect Thomas Hopper who, in 1811, had previously advised the family on rebuilding Leigh Court. Hopper sought to improve the Miles family's experience of living within Vanbrugh's building. To the detriment of the design of the north east front, Hopper projected the elevation forward into the service court, creating space for an additional landing on the fourth side of the internal stair cage. He remodelled the kitchens, extended the wings of the north east front and, to improve natural lighting, added roof lights above the stairwell (1).



Hopper's work at Kings Weston marked a new phase of development in which elements of the estate landscape were reformed. In 1847 he provided a quote for rebuilding Mylne's steps 'as in the original design of Sir J Vanbrugh's' although this was not undertaken. Some four years later, designs for balustrading of the Great Terrace were prepared and implemented in an approximation of Vanbrugh's scheme. This is earlier than the salvage of balustrades from Bristol Bridge which were transported to Kings Weston c1868-1875, but can be seen discarded at the edge of the Home Park and Penpole Wood. From about this time, and serving as further evidence of a formal revival, a number of the original parkland avenues were replanted; generally with limes but also with more fashionable species including Atlas cedar, Bishop pine, broad-leaved lime and horse chestnut (2,3).

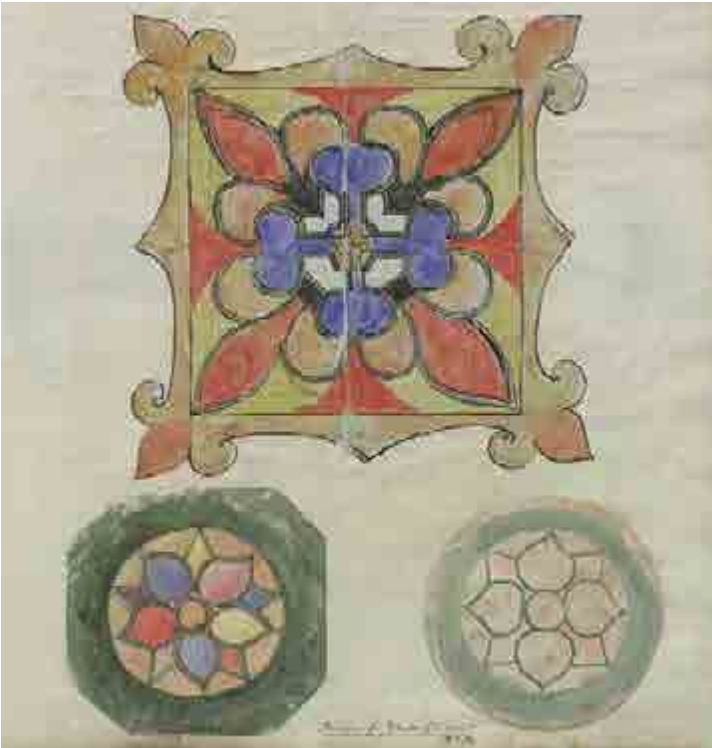
A collection of drawings in Bristol Record Office (BRO41965-1) contains a number of planting designs including the 'Rope Walk in Show Garden, Kings Weston'. It is likely that these were intended for the formal garden spaces around the house and the details are typical of the ornamental bedding parterres of the period. The pond structures within Echo Wood are likely to date to this time or the early years of the 20th century.

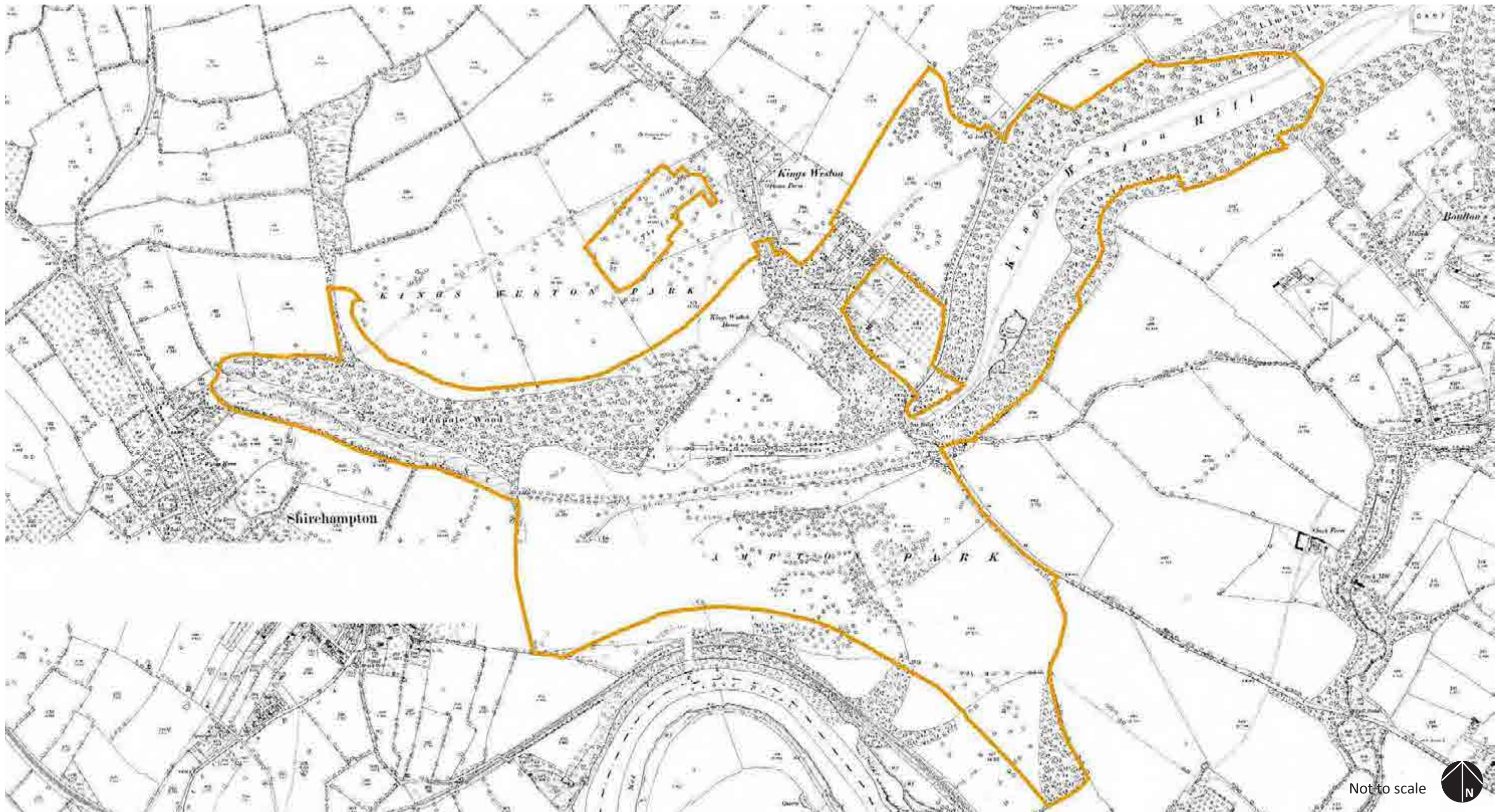
References

- 1 Pevsner and Foyle (2004)
- 2 Nicholas Pearson Associates (1994)
- 3 Chambers, T (2008)



- 1 View of south west front. Kings Weston, after J P Neale c1823 (M1481) Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
- 2 View of north west front. Print, Kingsweston Gloucestershire, after F Nicholson c1800 (M347) Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
- 3 Avenue replanting. Undated postcard (c1900), Shirehampton Park (courtesy of KWAG)
- 4 Bedding layouts 'for the Winter Garden', Kings Weston BRO4196-1 p19b

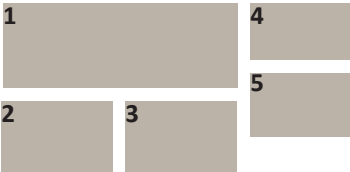
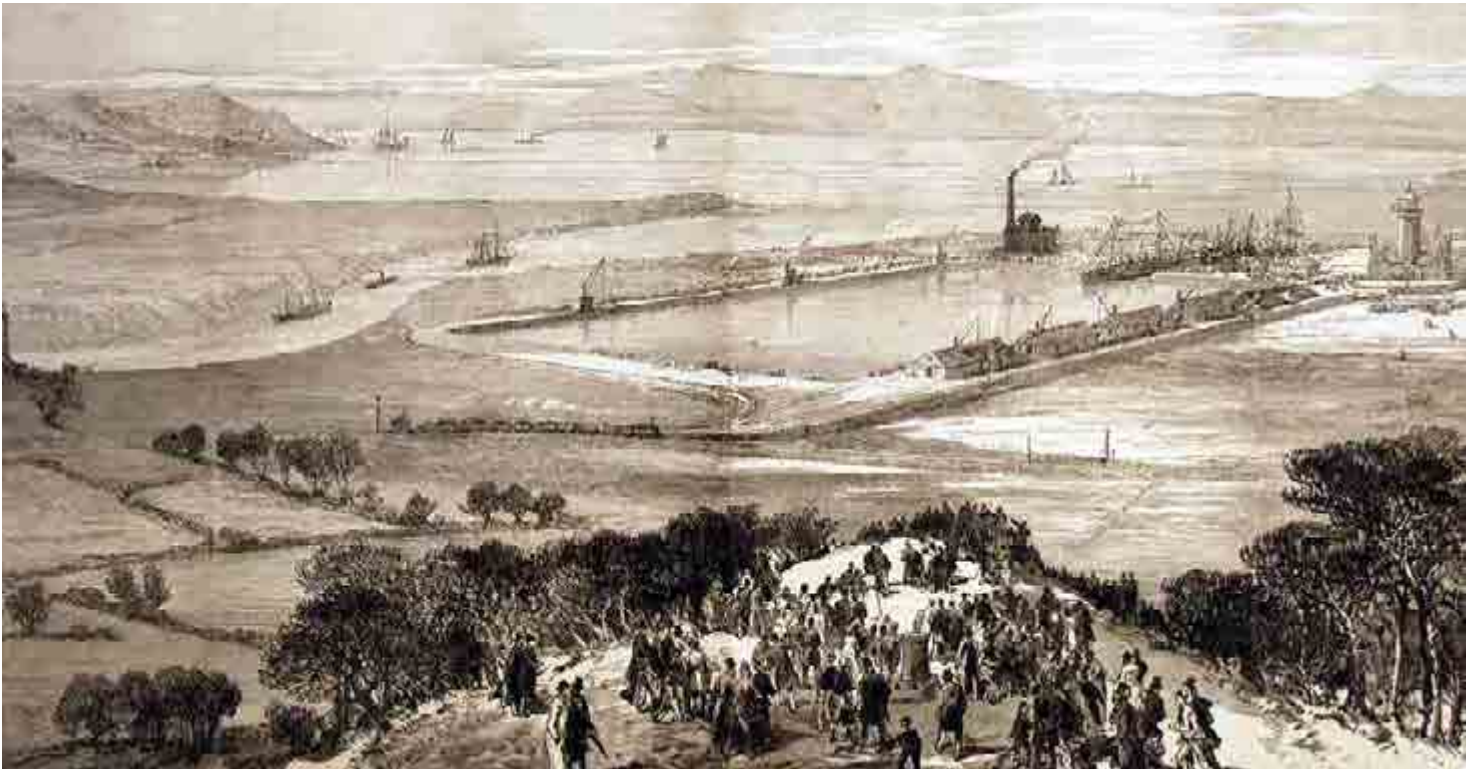




Ordnance Survey First Edition, 1888

2. Understanding the History

1845-1899:
The Nineteenth Century Park



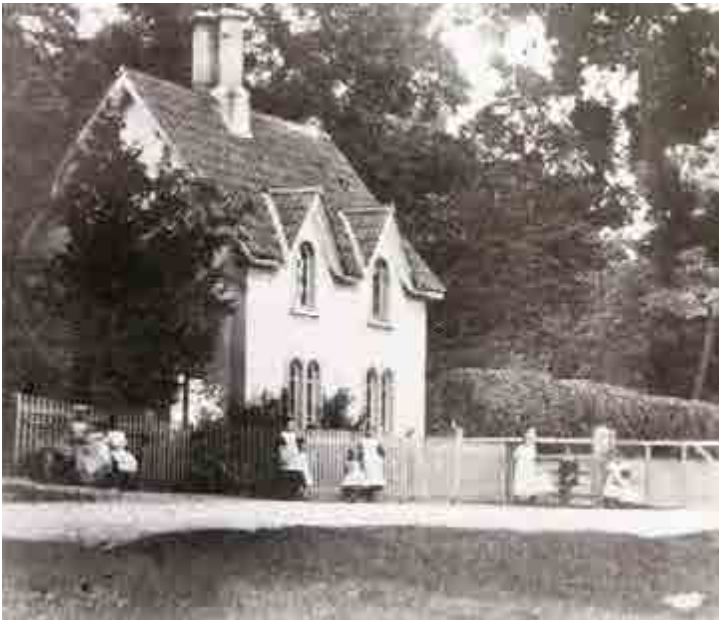
- 1 The opening of the new Avonmouth Dock. Illustrated London News 1877 (KWAG)
- 2 Kings Weston Inn. Undated postcard. Courtesy of Know Your Kings Weston.
- 3 Bristol Port Railway line. Opened 1865. Undated glass slide. Bristol Central Library.
- 4 The south west front. Undated postcard (BRO 43207-9-44-086)
- 5 Park Lodge, undated photo c1870 (KWAG)



Shirehampton Cricket Club was established on the estate in 1858. Newspapers of the time also suggest that the estate was frequently used for agricultural fairs and demonstrations.

In 1865 Miles’ Bristol Port Railway and Pier opened, linking the mouth of the Avon with Bristol. Cutting along the edge of Shirehampton Park, the rail line heralded the forthcoming industrialisation of Avonmouth, and expansion of Shirehampton and the surrounding settlements. The New Avonmouth Dock opened in 1877.

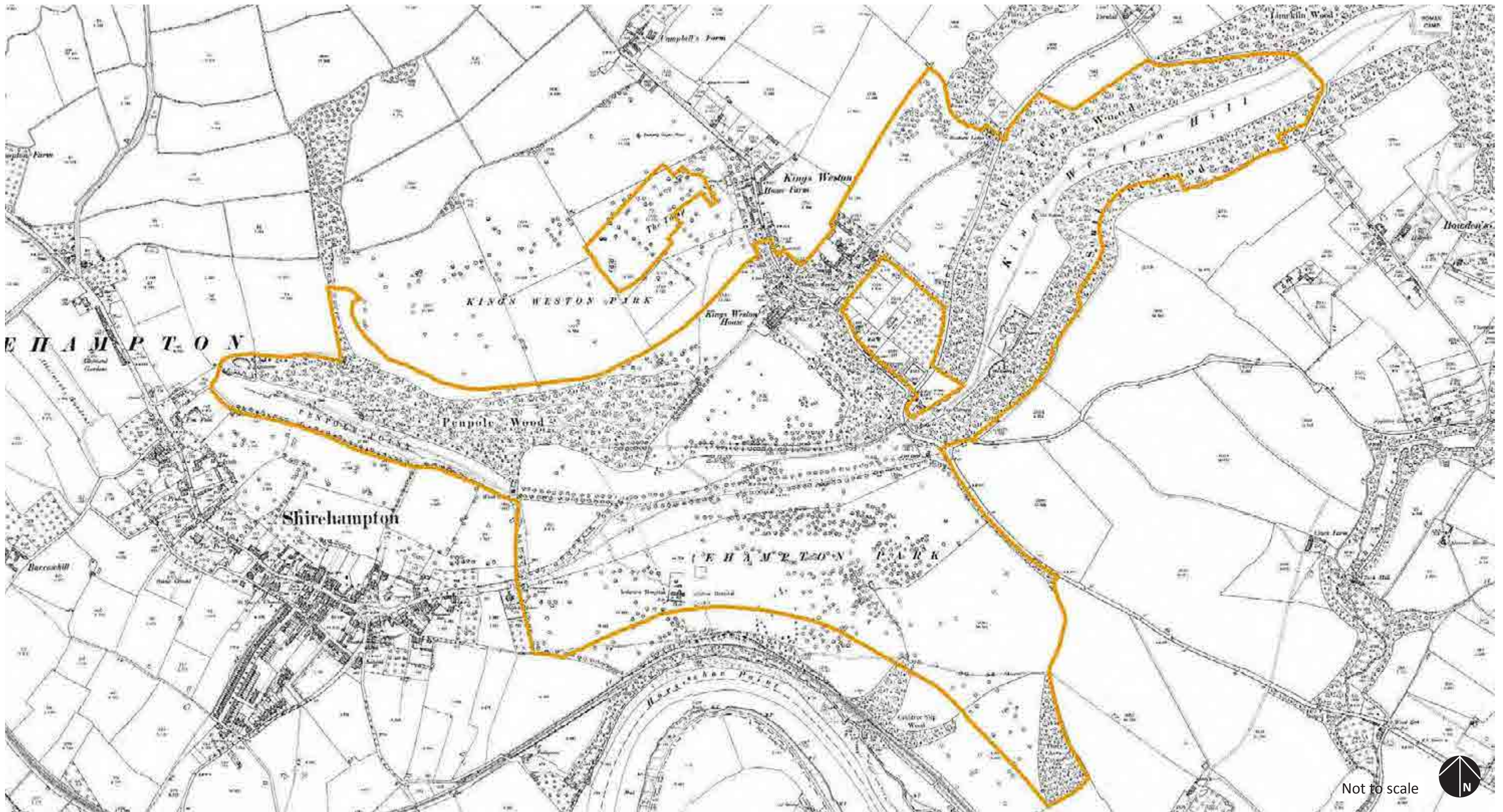
Philip William Skynner Miles died in 1881 and was succeeded by his son Philip Napier Miles.



Dr Philip Napier Miles (1865-1935)

Composer, philanthropist

The only son of Philip William Skynner Miles he was known as the last squire of Kings Weston. Studying music under Hubert Parry, and friends with Ralph Vaughan Williams, he composed a number of works and operettas including *Westward Ho!*



Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1903

2. Understanding the History

1900-1938:
Early Twentieth Century

Bristol’s suburban expansion of outlying villages such as Shirehampton increased demand for social and leisure facilities. In 1902 Napier Miles offered Shirehampton Parish Council land and funding towards the building of Shirehampton Public Hall. Plans were prepared by the architect Frederick Bligh Bond and the building opened in 1904. Bligh Bond also designed Kings Weston’s Estate Office which opened in 1906 but was later demolished in 1952. Other estate works included alterations to the Home Lodge and the Fives Court.

Shirehampton Golf Club was established in 1904 on land at Shirehampton Park leased from the estate. Napier Miles agreed in 1918 to donate the remaining 98 acres of Shirehampton Park to the National Trust with the continuance of golf, cricket, tennis and open space uses key within the legal agreement. The land was finally transferred to the National Trust in 1922. Napier Miles further agreed to sell 205 acres of the estate to Bristol City Corporation for the express purpose of the laying out of a Garden Suburb. Bristol was addressing the need to provide ‘Homes Fit for Heroes’ returning from the First World War. Napier Miles placed restrictive covenenants on the sale of the land requiring that no part of it be used other than as a Garden Suburb, with a density of bewteen 8-12 houses per acre. Three Acre Covert was given to the Corporation as a ‘Public Pleasure Ground’ for the Sea Mills Garden Suburb and was physically separated from Shirehampton Park by the construction of Sylvan Way. Construction of the Portway road scheme, linking Bristol with Avonmouth, commenced in 1919 and created a further substantial cutting through the lower Shirehampton Park, with complete removal of the historic fir plantation.

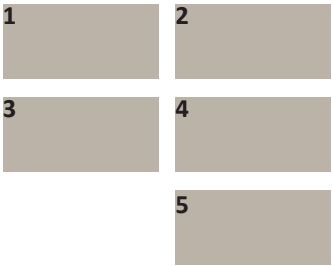
As a patron of the arts and a composer in his own right, Dr Napier Miles entertained numerous famous composers and musicians at Kings Weston. The composer Ralph Vaughan Williams stayed in 1920, and with the assistance of the violinist Marie Hall completed his work 'The Lark Ascending' for solo violin and piano whilst staying there. This work received its first public performance in December 1920 at the Shirehampton Public Hall played by Marie Hall, to whom it is dedicated.

In World War 1 Mr and Mrs Napier Miles converted Kings Weston House into the Bristol/10 Kings Weston Auxiliary Hospital for the convalescence of wounded servicemen. Postcards of the period show wounded servicemen recuperating in the formal gardens around the house. At the same time German prisoners of war were housed in huts at Penpole. Shirehampton Park and Penpole were part of Shirehampton Remount Camp; stabling and shipping large numbers of horses to the western front, and grazing the estate pastures. The war memorial at the junction of Shirehampton Road and Penpole Lane was laid in 1921.

In 1935 Dr Napier Miles died and, in order to pay death duties, the estate was sold at auction the following year. Bristol Municipal Charities bought the house and 44 acres of its surrounding grounds for £9,800. 104 acres (43 hectares) of woodland and open spaces of Kings Weston Downs were bought by Bristol Corporation for £11,764. His widow, Mrs Sybil Marguerite Miles, retained the walled kitchen gardens and ordered the building of ‘The House in the Garden’ incorporating a number of doors, fixtures and fireplaces from the main house .



Bristol Municipal Charities planned for the main house to accommodate Queen Elizabeth's Hospital School (QEH) from its Jacobs Wells Road site in central Bristol. Work included the demolition of the 19th century kitchen range, and construction of buildings within the formal gardens. This was abandoned in 1938 with the outbreak of war. The remains of the QEH building are still evident today. Penpole Woods were also leased to the Bristol Scouts as a camping ground between c1935 and the 1950s.



- 1 The Great Terrace. Auxiliary Hospital, Kingsweston 1914-1918. Postcard (BRO)
- 2 The formal garden, 1914-1918. Postcard BRO)
- 3 The south east front, 1914-1918. Postcard (BRO)
- 4 The Echo walk, 1914-1918. Postcard (BRO)
- 5 German prisoners of war, Penpole Camp 1914-1918



References
1 Kings Weston site record, Parks and Gardens UK (2007)

2. Understanding the History

1900-1938:
Early Twentieth Century



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- 1 View from Penpole (towards Avonmouth) c1910. Postcard. Courtesy of KWAG c/o Know Your Kings Weston

2 War Memorial c1921, Shirehampton Park . Postcard courtesy of Know Your Kings Weston contributors.

3 Remount horses grazing at Shirehampton Park c1915. Postcard courtesy of KWAG c/o Know Your Kings Weston

4 The Club House, Shirehampton Golf Club. Postcard courtesy of KWAG c/o Know Your Kings Weston

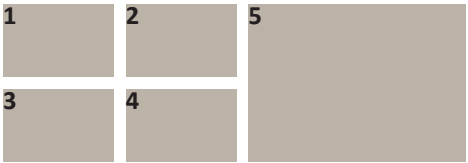
5 Bligh Bond's Kings Weston Estate Office,constructed 1906. Postcard courtesy of Know Your Kings Weston contributors

6 Portway, Shirehampton. Postcard c1926. Postcard courtesy of KWAG c/o Know Your Kings Weston

7 Kings Weston House Cricket Club. Undated photograph courtesy of Know Your Kings Weston contributors

2. Understanding the History

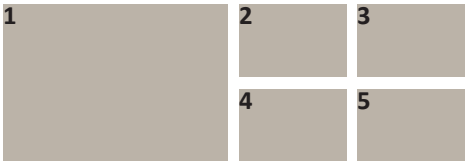
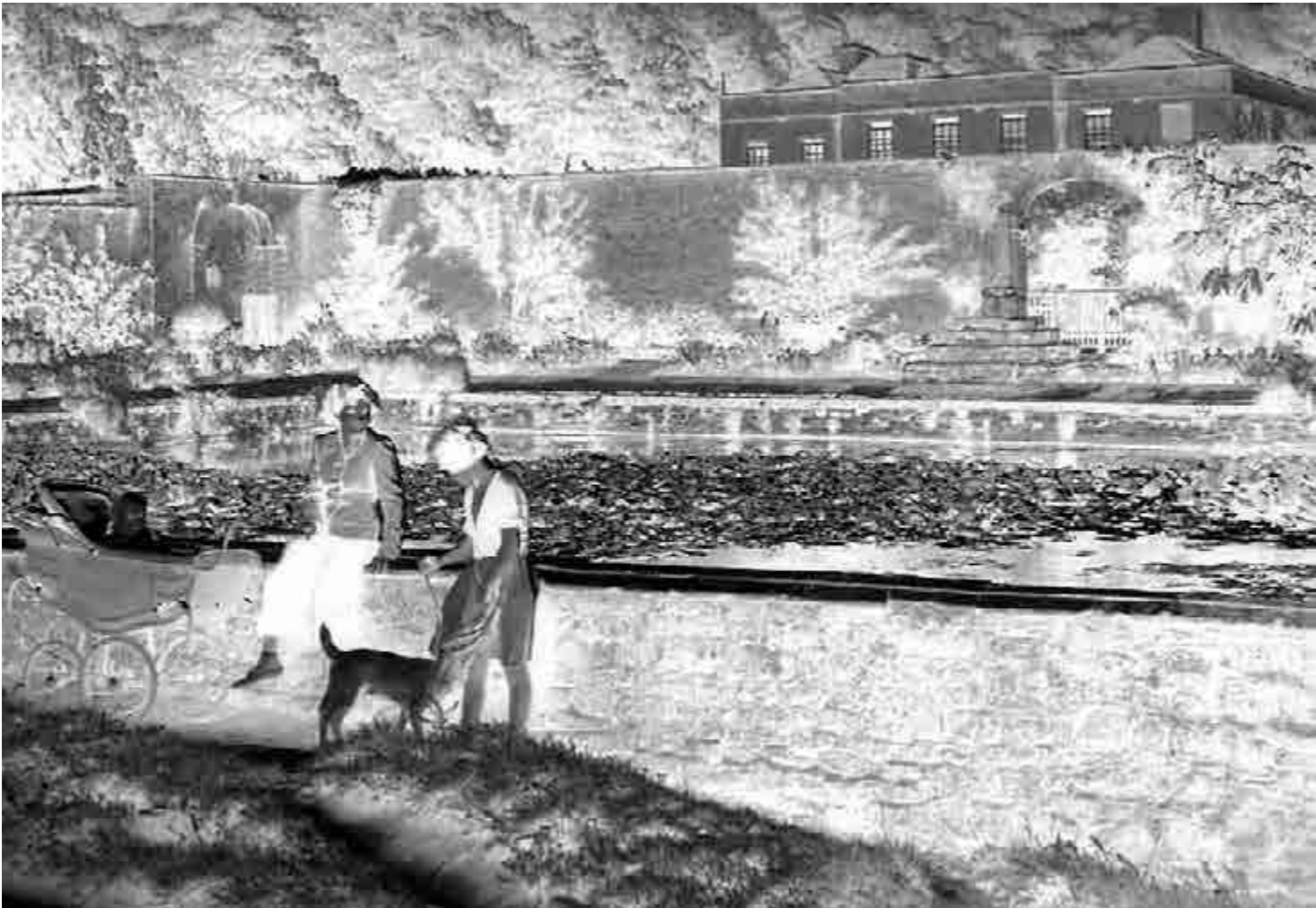
1927: Country Life



- 1 The north west front and terrace, 1927 (Country Life)
- 2 The chimney arcading, 1927 (Country Life)
- 3 Gate piers and Brewhouse 1927 (Country Life)
- 4 The Great Terrace 1927 (Country life)
- 5 The Echo 1927 (Country Life)

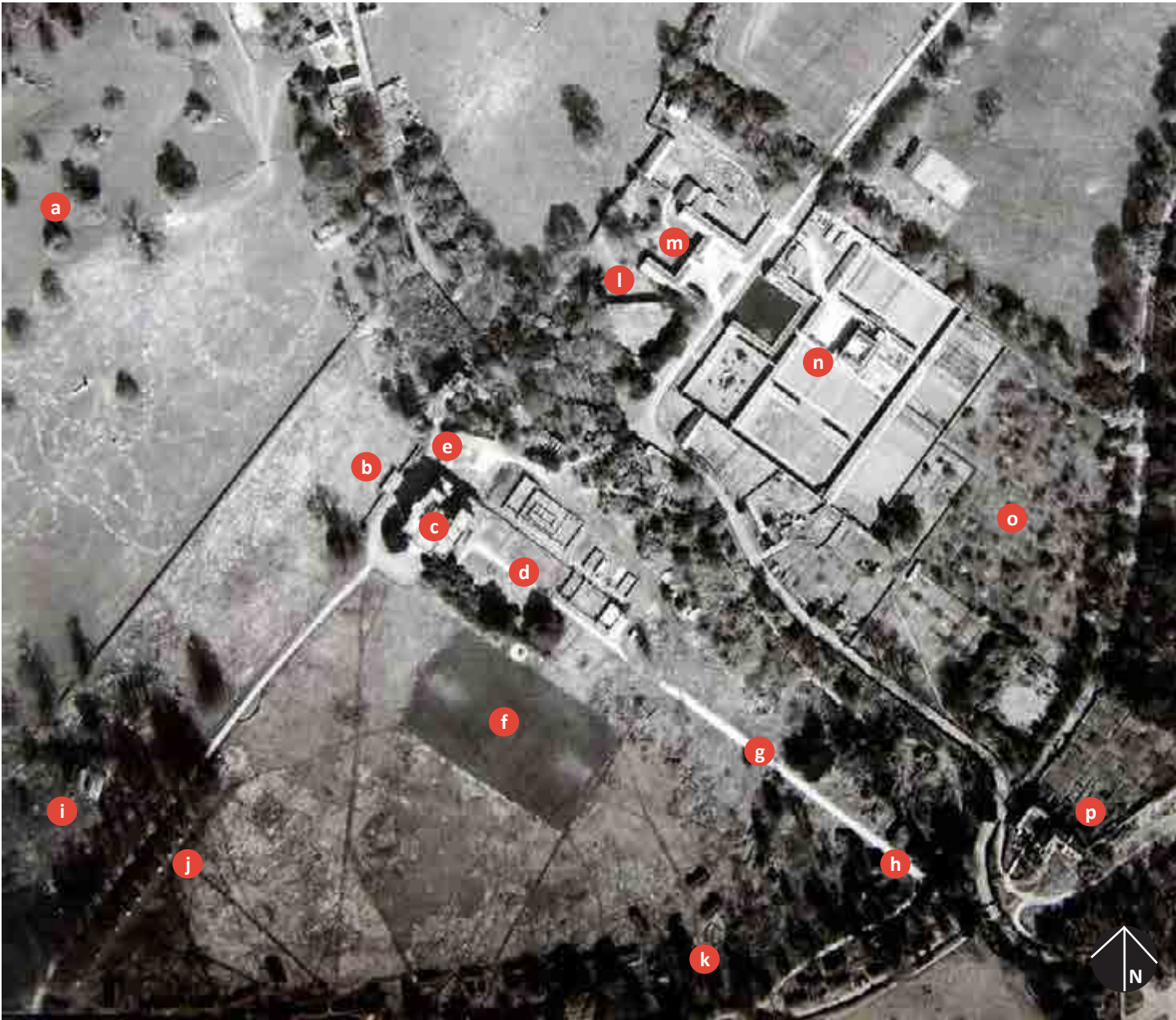


1938: The House in the Garden



- 1 The House in the Garden c1950 Photograph courtesy of Kingsweston School
- 2 The House in the Garden c1950 Photograph courtesy of Kingsweston School
- 3 Walled Garden c1950 Photograph courtesy of Kingsweston School
- 4 The Lily Pond and Lodge c1950 Photograph courtesy of Kingsweston School
- 5 Walled garden c1950 Photograph courtesy of Kingsweston School

1939-1945:
World War II Encampment

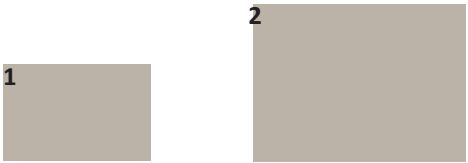


On 29th September 1939 Kings Weston estate was requisitioned by the War Office, Southern Command. A 1946 Royal Air Force aerial photograph records the estate during this period. The House (c) was used by both the Army and the Navy.

The Tump (a) lies within an enclosed agricultural field pattern largely unchanged since the 1712 Kip engraving. The House (c) and great terrace (b) are visible, but the 19th century kitchen range (e) has been demolished although the lines of the walls can just be made out. The abandoned remains of the QEH school building (d) can be seen alongside the location of the first parterre garden. The Home Park lawns are being used for football (f). Along the Echo Walk much of the woodland has been cleared for timber (g) although the Echo (h) remains within a wooded setting. Nissen huts were located under the cover of the woodlands (h,k,) along the ridge. The concrete foundations and manholes for these huts are still visible today either side of The Walk. The 18th century lime avenue (j) and a further wartime structure (i) can be seen at the edge of Penpole Wood. To the north of Kings Weston Lane lie Mylne's hothouse (l) and stable block (m) with the newly constructed House in the Garden (n) set within the walled kitchen gardens and adjacent orchards (o). Kings Weston Inn (p) can be seen at the foot of Kings Weston Hill alongside allotments.

From 1942-1944 Shirehampton Park was used as an U.S. Army Camp with huts erected along the edge of Shirehampton Road (u,w). The camp extended to include the grounds (r) between Penpole Point (q) and Shirehampton village (t). The golf course remained in use throughout the war although with a reduced number of holes.

January 2014 (version 1.0)
City Design Group



1 Aerial photograph 1946 (National Monument Record)
2 Opposite: Composite aerial photograph 1946 (NMR)



Shirehampton Camp, Shirehampton Park c1939-1945 (BRO)

The summit of Kings Weston Hill (o) is open. The Long Combe and lower parts of Shirehampton Park (x) do not appear to have been laid to encampment. The new Portway cutting (v) and Sea Mills Garden Suburb (y) are clearly visible.

References

- 1 Kings Weston site record, Parks and Gardens UK (2007)



2. Understanding the History

1945-1977:
Institutional Landscape Decline

After 1945 the military encampment remained in use for sometime, with many of the huts occupied by local families made homeless during the course of the war. Nationally there was an urgent need for new housing and jobs for returning servicemen. In 1947 to help meet these needs an extensive programme of housing construction commenced at Lawrence Weston. In 1948, following the death of Mrs Napier Miles, Bristol Corporation purchased the House in the Garden and leased Kings Weston House for temporary use as a school for Lawrence Weston’s planned suburban community. The Great Park below Kings Weston House was developed for housing, leading to the discovery of the Roman villa at Long Cross. Eventually the east and west camps at Shirehampton Park were dismantled and the golf course repaired. Foundations for many of the buildings were left in situ. A social club building known as Fairways occupied, with associated parking, the current site of the Karakal warehouse.

However, at a time of national austerity and national rebuilding, Kings Weston’s garden buildings and heritage structures were a low priority. Unmaintained they progressively fell into disrepair. In 1950, following vandalism, Bristol Corporation Housing Committee elected to demolish the derelict Penpole Lodge. Seven years later public outcry prevented demolition of Mylne’s stable block.

When Lawrence Weston’s schools had been constructed, the House was surplus to the Corporation’s requirements. However, a restoration of the house was undertaken with public funds and the stable block was converted to police station use. In 1963 the house was sold, together with 38 acres of grounds, by Bristol Municipal Charities to the newly formed Bristol College of Advanced and Technology (CAT) for their Departments of Architecture and Sociology.

The Bristol CAT was to eventually become the University of Bath at Claverton Down. However early consideration was given towards developing an extensive campus across the Kings Weston estate. The Department of Architecture remained at Kings Weston until 1969. Anecdotal reports from past members of the School suggest that the fallen statue in the Echo was moved to the main house at this time and may have eventually been disposed of below the main terrace.

In 1970, with the aid of a 50% grant from the Home Office, Bristol Corporation bought the house and its surrounding grounds for £305,000 with the intention of establishing a Police Training School. The stable block was converted to police residential accommodation. Responsibility for the house and grounds were transferred to the Avon and Somerset Police Authority in 1974 following local government reorganisation. Works to repair and stabilise the Echo as a roofless shell were undertaken at this time.

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- 1 Penpole Lodge c 1950 (National Monument Record)

2 The Echo. c1958 (National Monuments Record)

3 View from the Echo, 1973 (Bristol and Avon Local History Society)

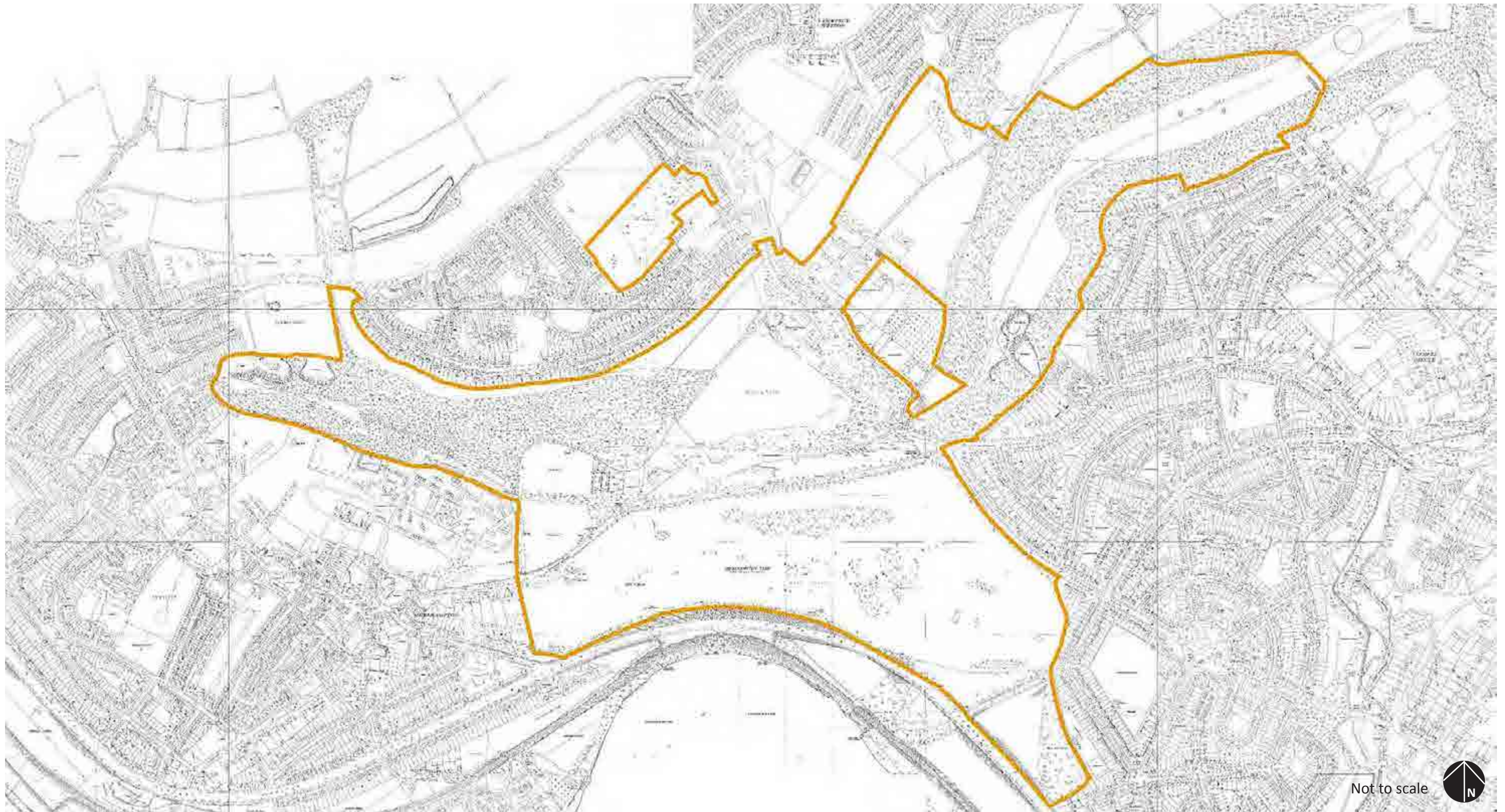
4 The Echo Walk, 1973 (Bristol and Avon Local History Society)

5 The Terrace, 1973 (Bristol and Avon Local History Society)



References

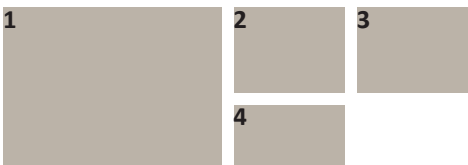
1 Kings Weston site record, Parks and Gardens UK (2007)



Ordnance Survey 1953

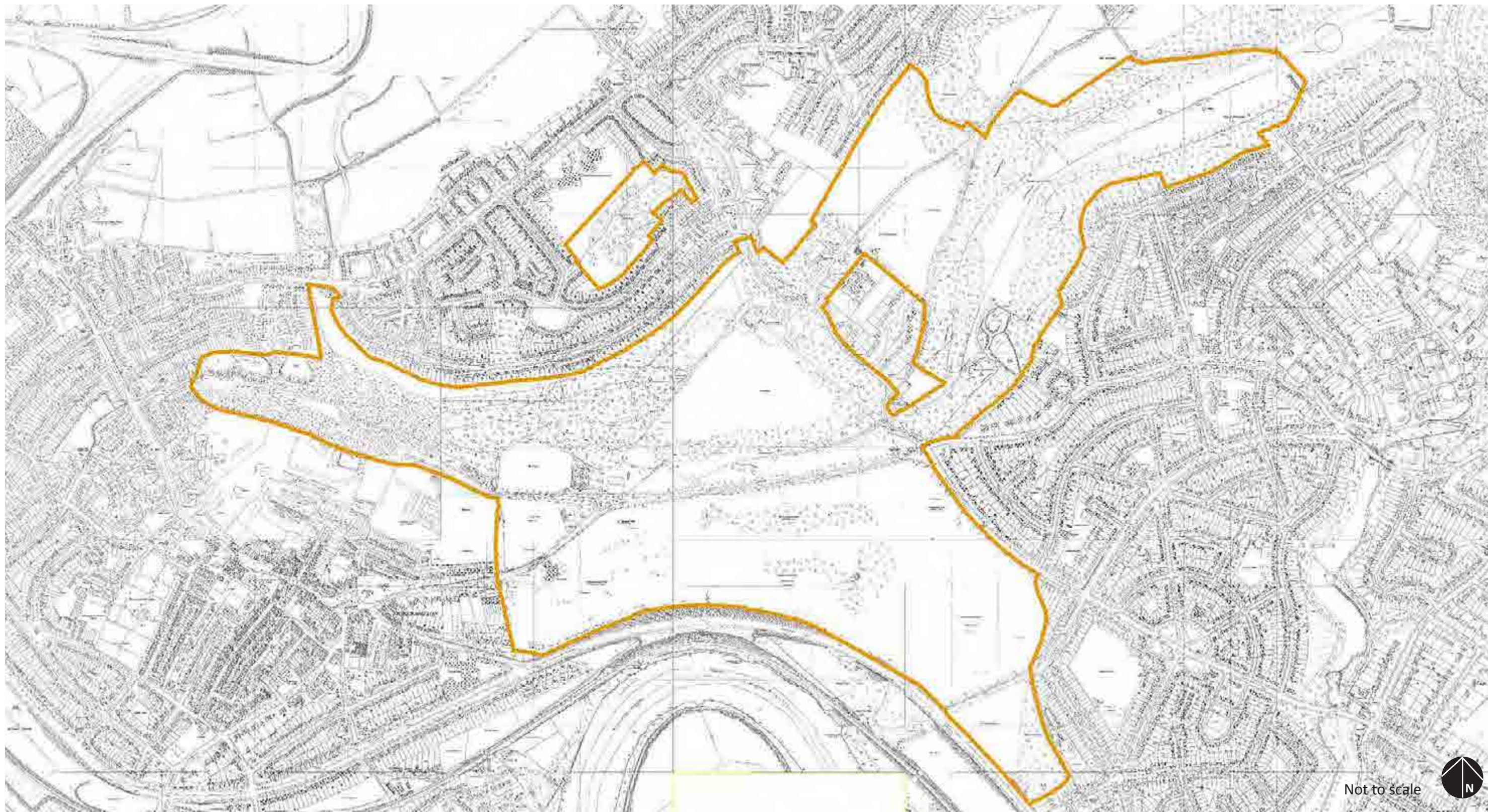
2. Understanding the History

1945-1977:
Housing and Education



- 1 Lawrence Weston housing c1949 (Bristol Library)
- 2 Newspaper cutting c 1949 (Courtesy of K Osborne)
- 3 Kings Weston House from Barrowmead Drive c1950 (Courtesy of K Osborne)
- 4 Kings Weston School c 1950. Courtesy of Know Your Kings Weston contributors

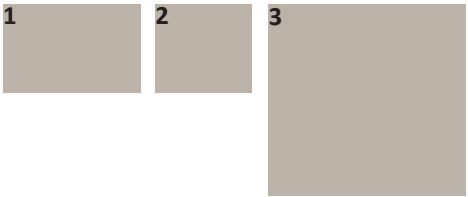




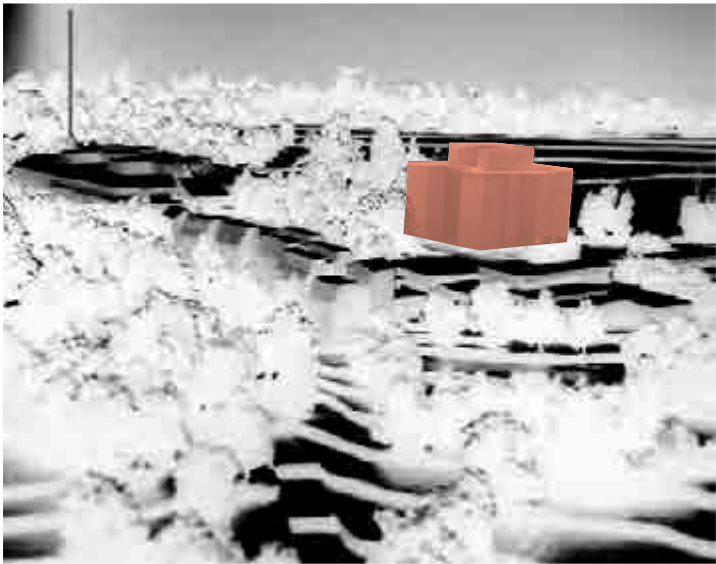
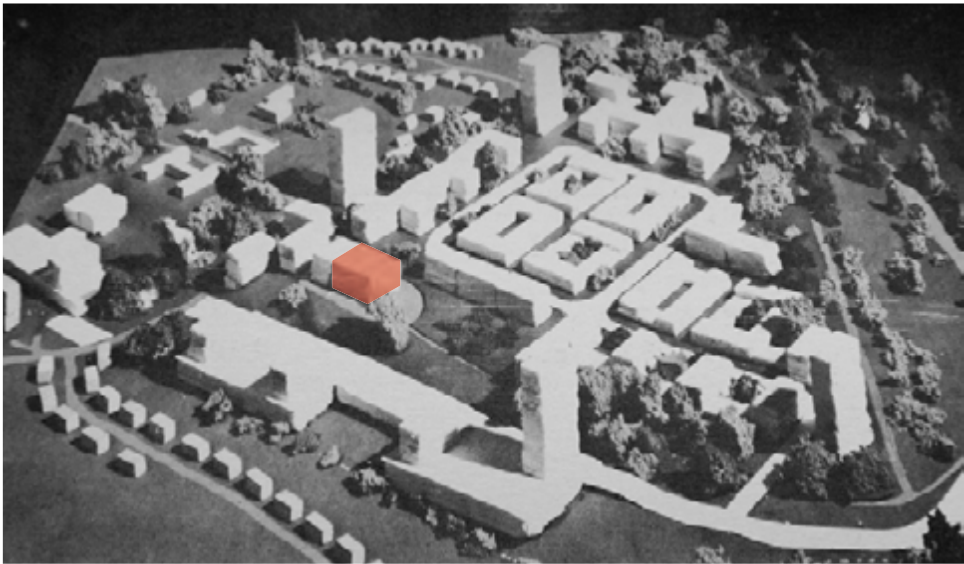
Ordnance Survey 1973

2. Understanding the History

1945-1977:
Institutional Master Plans



- 1 Proposal for College of Alternative Technology Campus c1962. (main house highlighted red), Bristol Central Library
- 2 Proposal for regional police headquarters 1977. Model - view from the north west (main house highlighted red)
- 3 Proposal for regional police headquarters, 1977. Model



2. Understanding the History

1977-Present Day

The institutional plans of Bristol College of Advanced Technology, and subsequently the Avon and Somerset Police, to develop Kings Weston tested local public patience. Kings Weston Preservation Society was formed in 1977 in response to a planned regional police headquarters at Kings Weston. The scheme was eventually refused by the development control committee of Bristol City Council following much local opposition.

The house and grounds continued to receive only the most basic repairs and maintenance. The garden buildings were at particular risk and the Brewhouse and Loggia/Laundry declined to the point of ruin. The Bristol Buildings Preservation Trust, established in 1981, identified restoration and reuse of the Brewhouse and Loggia as potential projects. A feasibility report for the garden buildings was commissioned from Niall Phillips Architects in 1985. Listed building consent was granted in 1988 for their conversion to private residential use. The Brewhouse scheme was undertaken in 1990 and included the rebuilding of the east wing. The Loggia was not developed until 2000. The Loggia and Brewhouse, now in private ownership, had both been in the same ownership as the house until this sale.

In 1994 a Historic Landscape Survey and Management Plan was produced for Avon and Somerset Constabulary by Nicholas Pearson Associates. The following year Avon and Somerset Police Authority ceased their use of the house which was then boarded up and at risk of deterioration.

In order to secure the future of this important historic property Bristol City Council bought it in November 1995, bringing the majority of the estate back into

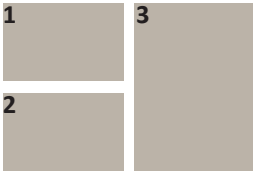
single ownership. However, with the exception of some woodland management of Penpole Wood and Kings Weston Hill the recommendations of the Pearson report have not been resourced and implemented.

In 2000 Bristol City Council sold the house, the Home Lodge and 5 acres of surrounding grounds on a long leasehold for use as a conference venue, business centre and for private and corporate events including weddings. It was purchased by local entrepreneur, John Hardy, who carried out some renovation of the house and the conversion of the Loggia. Bristol City Council and the National Trust retained responsibility for their respective parts of the wider estate.

Kings Weston Action Group (KWAG) was set up in 2011 to ‘protect the Kings Weston Estate and House, fight for its future, and protect its past.’ KWAG have actively lobbied Bristol City Council to produce a new management plan for the estate. With the support of the City Council’s Heritage Estates Team they have coordinated volunteers to undertake significant vegetation management to secure historic views and structures.

In 2011 house was put up for sale following the bankruptcy of John Hardy. The house was purchased by Bristol businessman Norman Routledge in December 2012 with plans for a wedding and conference event business and his own residential use.

In 2013 planning permission was granted for the conversion and extension of the stable block to 10 dwellings (Application 13/01051/F). Since the mid 1990s various planning applications to develop the land around the Karakal warehouse have been made and dismissed at appeal.



- 1 View from Long Cross, Lawrence Weston, 2012 (Kings Weston Action Group©)
- 2 Walking tour, Kings Weston Action Group, 2012
- 3 Penpole Wood from Mancroft Avenue, 2012 (Kings Weston Action Group©)

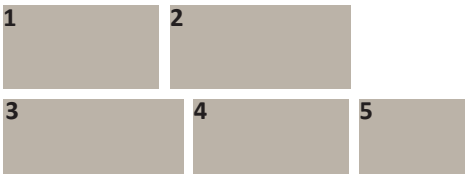


References

- 1 Kings Weston site record, Parks and Gardens UK (2007)

2. Understanding the History

Recent Work



- 1 Know Your Kingsweston event - June 2012. University of Bristol, Kings Weston Action Group and Bristol City Council
- 2 Walk and Talk. Kings Weston Action Group (June 2012)
- 3 View from the terrace following bramble management, March 2013
- 4 The Terras following removal of sycamore saplings and bramble. Kings Weston Action Group (October 2012)
- 5 Leaflet dispenser at Shirehampton Road car park installed by Kings Weston Action Group (January 2013)



Since their inception in 2011, Kings Weston Action Group have undertaken significant heritage advocacy and physical landscape conservation work around the estate. They have organised exhibitions and tours of the grounds to increase the understanding and appreciation of Kings Weston’s special character and historic assets. Their advocacy and research has been instrumental in the preparation of this Conservation Management Plan.

