The History and Archaeology of Beddington Park and adjacent sites

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1. INTRODUCTION

This summarises the history and archaeology of Beddington Park, the Grange and the open spaces along London Road between Wallington Bridge and the Rose and Crown public house at Wallington Corner. These sites are now park belonging to the London Borough of Sutton, but before the twentieth century they were split amongst several owners and the various parts had different histories.

On casual inspection the Beddington Park appears to be flat with a largely landscape consisting of grass, tree clumps with some interesting and attractive historic buildings. Appearances are deceptive and a closer inspection will reveal many features which are evidence of the parks complex history – it is likely to be one of the most important historical and archaeological sites in southwest London.
2. **GEOLOGY AND RIVER CHANNEL**

Beddington Park and The Grange are at the foot of the dip slope of the North Downs and are crossed by the river Wandle which flows east to west from Croydon to Wallington and then turns north to run to the Thames at Wandsworth.

The higher ground at the southern edge of Beddington Park is Thanet sand which is probably covered by gravel from an old terrace of the river Wandle. The lower ground on the west side of Church Road is the foot of a small dry valley the floor of which appears to be covered with hill wash. On the other side of Church Road to the south of the Church the ground rises again and is underlain by Thanet sand.

An examination of the surface of northern part of the park in dry weather shows two zones. One, close to the Wandle is damp in summer and very wet in winter. The other, to the north is slightly higher and parches in a dry summer. This dryer area is gravel covered by soil. The gravels date back to the last ice age. At that time the area was an arctic landscape and the ground was frozen solid for most of the year. There was a brief thaw in the spring. The water could not soak into the frozen chalk of the North Downs so it ran across the surface into the valleys where large fast flowing rivers formed for a few weeks each year. These washed a mass of flint from the Downs and deposited it as gravel in north Beddington and Mitcham. In 1968 a gas main trench was dug across the eastern part of the park. A study of peat lenses within the gravel showed that it had been deposited under cold conditions around 8,000 BC in the closing stages of the last ice age.\(^1\)

The wet area by the river is probably peat with some silt and smaller areas of gravel. In the 1980s some foundation trenches at Beddington Park Cottages on the east side of the park cut into fine peat which contained a small amount of sand and bands of peaty gravel. This suggests an unstable river channel finding its way through waterlogged alder wood or possibly wet grassland. A tiny scrap of pottery in the peat suggests that it was still forming in or after the Roman period. In the past the Wandle appears to have had an unstable braided channel around which a complex patchwork of alluvium, peat and gravel was deposited.

3. **PREHISTORY OF THE AREA**

There is little or no information about settlement patterns in the immediate area until the late Bronze Age. At this time the Beddington gravels and the lower slopes of the Downs appear to have been densely settled as there have been many finds of this date in the last 30 years. Two areas of settlement have been identified, one of the site of the Beddington Roman villa about 300 m east of the northeast corner of the park,\(^2\) and another at Wandle Meadows, Hackbridge about 600 m to the north-west.\(^3\) An aerial photo taken for the Greater London Council in 1981 shows a series of marks on the north side of the park which might be interpreted as drip gullies similar to those found on the villa site.

A Roman villa, bath house and associated barns stood 300 m east of the north side of the park. It developed from a Late Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement and continued to be occupied possibly intermittently until the end of the Roman Period.\(^4\)

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3. Sites and Monuments Record numbers 021211 and 021203.
A Roman stone coffin was found in 1930 while digging a service trench on the east side of Church Road just south of the churchyard. Another coffin, of lead, was found about 1870 further east along Church Path. These coffins would have been expensive so the people buried in them must have been wealthy. They may have been connected with the villa but there is no certainty of this and it is not clear why they were buried in this location. At that time wealthy people were often buried at roadsides so there may be a Roman Road in the vicinity although there is no convincing evidence for this.

4. THE HISTORY OF BEDDINGTON PARK

4.1 The Medieval period

The Roman villa went out of use around 400 although the estate may have survived and been farmed from a nearby settlement perhaps associated with a Saxon cemetery which was found in the 19th century to the east of Carew Manor. Beddington church is first recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086. It was attached to the manor which was later known as Home Beddington and it is likely that there was already a house either on the site of Carew Manor or nearby. An excavation in the grounds of Carew Manor to the east of the church produced a long sequence of pottery fragments from the prehistoric period to the Middle Ages.

In 1978 three pennies and a half penny of William I were found to the south of the river. A small scale archaeological investigation found some early medieval pottery on the site. The find spot was at the edge of the river flood plain and any settlement associated with the coins is likely to have been on the terrace to the south.

There is no evidence of a deer park around Carew Manor until the Carews took possession of the house in the mid-14th century. The first Beddington Carew – Nicholas who died in 1390 – was a successful courtier and a man of considerable wealth. In 1375 he obtained a licence of free warren which allowed him to hunt on his own land. This may mark the creation of a deer park.

4.2 The Tudor deer park

Sir Nicholas Carew who owned the house 1520 to 1539 appears to have two parks – a ‘Common Park’ of 200 acres and a New Park of 85 acres. Two hundred acres is the area of the Manor of Huscarls which lay on the west side of Beddington Lane. The 1868 Ordnance Survey map shows an exceptionally wide ditch along the west side of Beddington Lane which may have been part of the medieval ditch and pale which prevented the deer escaping. This suggests that the manor of Huscarls had turned into a deer park. It seems likely that this was done in the 14th century. If this is so only a small part of the medieval park is within the current park – basically the area east of the tea room and north of the river.

The New Park included Brake Hill at the southern part of the exiting park adjacent to Croydon Road. This area was almost certainly added to the park by Richard Carew

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5 Adkins and Adkins 1984.
7 McCracken, JS 1978.
8 Cal. Charter Rolls Vol. 5. 16 April 1375.
(owner 1492 – 1520) who carried out a land swap with the Rector some time between 1513 and 1520.⁹ In 1536 Nicholas Carew (owner 1520-39) added to the northern end of the park by carrying out a land swap in Mitcham parish. His son Francis (owner 1558 to 1611) added site of the rectory which stood near Croydon Road roughly on the site of Bloxworth Close.

This brought the park to its greatest extent. It occupied almost all the land between London Road, Wallington and Beddington Lane. Its northern edge adjoined Mitcham Common and its southern edge ran along Croydon Road and then around Carew Manor and its gardens to Beddington Lane. The site of the Grange was not included or the land to the south of it now occupied by Wallington Boys School and the houses along Derek Avenue.

We know very little about the layout of the 16th century park. The household accounts in the Surrey History Centre contain scattered references to Wallington and Beddington Lawns which would have been areas of open grass where deer could graze and also to Upper and Lower Courses which were presumably used for hunting deer. They also mention a parrock or holding pen for deer.

Early 19th century maps show a large funnel shaped feature which had been preserved in the field boundaries. This ran across the centre of the park with the wide end to the north and the narrow to the south. This was almost certainly the remains of a Tudor deer course which was used to drive deer past a standing from which they could be shot. A similar feature can be traced on the first edition 6 inch Ordnance Survey map showing the site of Nonsuch Great Park. The northern end of this course extended into the present park. The similarity with Nonsuch suggests that this deer course was created either by Nicholas Carew who was executed in 1539 or Henry VIII who confiscated his lands.

4.3 The park 1611 - 1859

The Carew estates were divided when Sir Francis Carew died in 1611. The family fortunes were further reduced in the Civil War when the Carews were fined heavily for backing the royalists and the heir incurred heavy gambling debts. It is likely that financial pressure resulted in the deer park being reduced in size and the rest enclosed for farming. The size of a few surviving oaks on the former field boundaries suggests that this took place in the second half of the 17th century. However, it is not firmly documented until the mid-18th century when Roque’s map of Surrey shows that the whole of the northern part of the Tudor park had been enclosed.

In 1707 the Nicholas Carew, later 1st baronet, came of age and took control of Beddington. His father had died in 1689 and the house and gardens appear to have got in a very poor state. Nicholas made a many changes to the house and garden and he was

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probably responsible for the construction of a long canal like West Lake which ran across the park more or less on the centre line of the house. This was lined with a double avenue of trees and there were further avenues radiating out from the front of the house. This must have looked impressive but it was set in a very small park as the most of the Tudor park continued to be divided into fields.

Figure **. The park from Beddington and Bandon Enclosure award map of 1820.
The 1820 enclosure award map provides the first detailed view of the park although it does not cover a strip of land along the side of London Road which was in Wallington. The deer park was smaller than it is today as the area north of the river and east of the modern tea room was enclosed farm land. The western side of the modern park to the north of the river was had more trees than now. There are clear signs of old hedge lines suggesting that this area had also been turned into fields almost to the river and then turned back into park again. The enlargement probably happened the Gees inherited the estate in 1762 as their financial position was less desperate that their predecessor, Nicholas Carew 2nd baronet.

The west lake and its avenue still existed along with the southern avenue and the north side of the northern one. An avenue is also shown at the south end of the park on the line of the existing lime avenue.

Ann Paston Gee died in 1828 and the house and park were inherited by Charles Hallowell a Canadian admiral who took the name Carew.

By 1840 had some further fields were returned to the open deer park so that it had reached more or less its modern boundaries. Part of the shelter belt along the north side of the park existed in the 1820s and it had been further developed by 1840.

4.4 The park since 1859

Charles Hallowell Carew’s grandson had a passion for horse racing which led to his bankruptcy. The estate was sold in 1859 and the greater part of the park was acquired by Joseph Atkins Borsley. He may have been responsible for selling the southern edge of the park along Croydon Road which was developed for housing by 1866. The rest of the park was sold to Canon Alexander Henry Bridges of Beddington House which stood in Bridges Lane. Canon Bridges was a very wealthy man who was rector of Beddington from 1864 to 1891 and was undoubtedly the leading figure in the village during this period.

Bridges made many changes to the park and was responsible for a significant part of its present appearance. He filled in the West Lake, diverted the river and constructed both the flint and the terracotta bridges. He also created the kidney shaped lake in the northern part of the park, planted the clumps of trees and erected East Lodge and a cricket pavilion.

Canon Bridges died in 1891. His heir John Henry Bridges was living in Ewell does not seem to have been much interested in Beddington. The park was gradually acquired by the local authority. The Warren by Croydon Road 1904; the Paddock next to it in 1915, the much of the remaining area south of the Wandle in 1925, and the northern part in 1927. A lot of the land came through the hands of George Payne who owned a sweet factory in Croydon Road. He seems to have been keen to see the land turned into a public park and subsequent park users no doubt owe him a debt for his efforts. The area north of the houses along Croydon Road remained in the hands of by Major W. J. Mallinson, the owner of the Grange, who used it as a private golf course. He seems to have sold to the council around 1935 when Mallinson moved to Reigate. The local authority has had a fairly light impact on the park. The existing landscape has been largely retained. The cricket pavilion has been replaced and a new tea room built. The church road entrance gates have been removed.
The northern shelter belt and the tree clumps were badly damaged in the 1987 gale when a falling tree also destroyed the western parapet of Canon Bridges Bridge. Most of the walnut trees were uprooted in the gale but these have been replaced.

The screening belt along the back of the Croydon Road house was planted in the 1990s. A cycle track was also laid across the southern part of the park in 2004.

5. THE PRESENT LANDSCAPE OF BEDDINGTON PARK

5.1 Earthworks and archaeology

5.1.1 Features to the east and south east of the kidney shaped lake.
The area to the east and south of the kidney shaped pond has a complex series of undulations which show as burn marks in dry weather. These are likely to be significant archaeological features but they have not been explored and it is not clear what they are how old.

5.1.2 Ridging
The area to the west of the kidney shaped lake and east of the wood is covered with low east-west aligned ridges. This could be interpreted as the remains of medieval ridge and furrow but the ridges respect the post medieval field boundaries so this is unlikely. They could be water meadows, calico bleaching trenches or ridging for land drainage. Water meadows we designed to be flooded in late winter to keep the frost off and produce a crop of early grass. The water was lead onto the fields through feeder channels on the top of low ridges. The water then ran down a ridge into drainage channels. A letter of 1749 suggests that Nicholas Carew, 2nd baronet, was thinking of constructing water meadows around Park Farm by Beddington Lane but there is no evidence that he carried out the work or developed other parts of the park in this way.10 I am not aware of any other evidence for water meadows in the upper Wandle valley. Calico bleaching was by contrast a major local industry in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The cloth was whitened by exposure to sunlight. The process was faster if the cloth was kept damp so it was bleached in fields with channels across them from which workmen could sprinkle water. The ridges at Beddington are not the right shape for bleaching. Fields were also ridged to improve drainage and this seems the most likely explanation here although we cannot be certain of this without excavation.

5.1.3 Ditches
The northern part of the park is crossed by a network of old ditches. Many of these coincide with lines of trees on the first edition 25 inch ordnance survey of 1868 and a few of these trees are still standing. The ditches are clearly post medieval but may have been developed in several phases.

5.1.4 The chalk drive
Some ariel photos show a strait dark grass mark running roughly east-west to the north of the houses along Croydon Road. A wide chalk foundation was found on this alignment in 2004 when the cycle track was constructed across the south end of the

10 Berkshire Record Office D/ELI C1/243.
park. It seems likely that this is apart of an 18th century drive or walk within the park – possibly the vista walk referred to in a letter of 1743.\(^{11}\)

5.1.5  The golf course
In the 1920s the area the area to the north of the houses along Croydon Road were laid as a golf course. Some of the bunkers still remain grassed over in the park.

5.1.6  The Bandstand
A circular area of ash to the south of the flint bridge is thought to mark the site of a bandstand.

5.1.7  Dig for victory allotments
An aerial photo taken for the Ordnance Survey in 1946 shows that several parts of the park were used as allotments in the Second World War including the area west of the present tea room, the north-west corner of the park close to London Road and the Warren by Croydon Road.

5.2  Extent of archaeological survival.
The surviving earthworks show that the park contains numerous archaeological features of many periods. The visible remains are likely to be the tip of an iceberg. The peat areas around the river have been park land since the first half of the 16th century. They are probably too wet for arable farming and may well have been meadow in the middle ages. The water table is high and the ground is probably permanently waterlogged close to the surface. The areas may contain the remains of wetland and river side structures such as fish traps and mills.

The gravels which form the northern part of the assessment area may have been ploughed in the middle ages and disturbed by tree roots in the post medieval period. Although the upper part of the soil has been disturbed there may be important remains in the subsoil and any features cut into the gravel should have survived. The area is likely to contain remains from the prehistoric period to the present.

The area to the east of the kidney shaped pond is especially significant as it contains a complex series of features which can be seen as irregularities on the ground and as burn marks in dry weather. There is evidently palimpsest of features which are poorly understood but which are likely to be of archaeological significance. The area may never have been uncultivated for centuries so there could be important archaeological remains close to the surface.

5.3  Trees
This section briefly identifies the main historical aspects of the park trees. It is not a comprehensive view of the trees and does not deal with their botanical or ecological significance.

5.3.1  The wood by London Road
Roque’s mid-18th century map of Surrey shows a large wood in this general area. Although the wood is old the existing trees are not and there is only a thin understory.

\(^{11}\) BRO D/ELI C1/240
5.3.2 Former hedgerow trees
The northern part of the park contains a number of old oak trees which sit on the banks and by the ditches of former field boundaries. These trees must have started their lives in the hedges around the fields. The size suggests that some of the oldest are late 17th to 18th century.

5.3.3 The chestnut avenue
There is an avenue of horse chestnut trees running westwards across the park from Carew Manor. A slight hollow between them marks the site of a long canal like lake which is first mentioned in 1724 and was probably created by Nicholas Carew, 1st baronet, who owned the park 1707 to 1727. Roque's map of about 1760 shows a double avenue of trees along the lake and two further avenues of trees radiating out from the house front to the north and south of the lake. By 1820 one side of the northern avenue had disappeared but the southern one, and the avenue along the lake remained. The lake avenue and parts of the southern avenue survived to be shown on the 1868 Ordnance Survey map although the lake avenue was very gappy. It seems likely that the present chestnut avenue was planted by Canon Bridges in the 1870s to replace the earlier trees. The southern avenue had gone by 1896.

5.3.4 The lime avenue
There is an avenue of lime trees on Break Hill at the southern end of the park. This is marked on the enclosure award map of 1820 and on later surveys.

5.3.5 The northern boundary shaw
The shaw along the northern side of the park developed in stages. The eastern end existed in 1820 although at this time the area around it was enclosed farmland. The section along the east side of the park to the north of the river had been added by 1859 while the western part of the north boundary existed by 1896.

5.3.6 The tree clumps
The tree clumps in the park were planted for Canon Bridges probably in the 1870s. They were damaged in the 1987 gale.

5.4 The river
The river channel seems to have been altered on many occasions. Grass marks suggest that it once looped across the cricket pitch and then ran diagonally across the park to the site of the flint bridge. It is not known when this channel ceased to flow. The river may also have once run across The Grange as a channel was found when a medieval cottage was excavated on the site of the Elms Playing Field on the west side of London Road. This appears to have silted up in the Middle Ages and gone out of use by about 1300.

Roque’s mid-18th century map of Surrey shows the main river channel running from Canon Bridges Bridge straight towards the flint bridge. This line is still marked by a hollow on the grass.

By 1820 the river had been altered again to produce the channels shown in figure **. These no doubt facilitated land drainage and fishing, the latter being of importance as the Wandle was then renowned for its trout. Further changes were made by Canon Bridges who filled in the west lake and closed the channel that ran directly to the Grange Lake along the foot of Break Hill.
5.5  Standing buildings and features

5.5.1  The New Churchyard

*Grade II listed.*

The graveyard extension with its flint boundary wall and lychgate was created in 1874-5 on land donated by Canon Bridges. The Lychgate was designed by Joseph Clarke and was built by Messrs. L. H and R Roberts. The metal work and copper finial were supplied by Skidmore’s Art Constructive Iron Company of Coventry and the carved wood and stone were done by J. Broomfield of Lambeth.

5.5.2  East Lodge

*Grade II listed.*

This mock Tudor building stands at the northern end of Church Road. It was designed for Canon Bridges by Joseph Clarke and built by Messrs. Roberts of Rhidol Terrace, Islington. It is dated 1877 on the south side.

5.5.3  The Dovecote

*An ancient monument and also grade II* listed.

There was a dovecote at Carew Manor in Tudor times. This stood in Pigeon House Meadow probably on or near the site of the New Churchyard. The existing octagonal brick dovecote was probably built about 1710-15 when Nicholas Carew, 1st baronet, reorganised the grounds around the house. It originally contained about 1360 nesting boxes built into the inner face of the wall, giving it a complex honeycomb-like structure. The birds came and went through the wooden turret at the apex of the roof. The dovecote is exceptionally large, as most buildings of this type contain under 1000 nesting boxes, and it may have been erected as a semi-commercial operation rather than simply to supply the house with fresh meat. The first floor, which is not original, was probably inserted to reduce the capacity of the building as the nesting boxes below it have been bricked up. It is not known when this was done or when the dovecote went out of use, although this had almost certainly happened before the mid-19th century.
5.5.4 Beddington Park Cottages
This north-south aligned range is located to the east of the Dovecote. The north end contains a timber frame which dates from pre-1550. It is likely that the range was originally built as outbuildings. There is some evidence that they were taken apart and moved perhaps when the grounds were reorganised in the early 18th century. The range was subjected to numerous alterations both major and minor. When the Carew estates were sold the cottages were acquired by the Orphanage which sold them to Canon Bridges in 1875. In the late 19th century they were leased to a man called Thirlby who used them for a dairy farm. They passed to the Council as part of the park and were used as changing rooms and cottages for staff. They eventually became derelict and were sold in 1986 and refurbished and partly rebuilt. They are now private houses.

5.5.5 The wildlife hospital
The oldest part of these buildings was erected between 1868 and 1896 as part of Thirlby’s Dairy Farm which used part of Beddington Park for grazing the cows. The buildings later became a council depot and were converted into a wildlife hospital in 1997.

5.5.6 Canon Bridge’s Bridge
Locally listed.
This small bridge spans the Wandle to the northwest of the Dovecote. It is of brick and moulded terracotta with Portland stone dressings. The west side of the bridge was demolished by a falling tree in the great gale of 1987. Examination of the shattered remains showed that the terracotta was made by the Watcombe Pottery at Torquay and that the bricks were made by R. Allen of Ballingdon near Sudbury in Suffolk. The bridge was made for Canon Bridges as the design includes his initials. He had family connections with the Sudbury area. The bridge was restored after the gale with components custom made by the Shaw Hereford Tile Company of Darwen, Lancashire. The bridge re-opened in May 1990.

5.5.7 The flint bridge
Locally listed.
This crosses the Wandle towards the west side of the park. The bridge is faced with flint and limestone in ‘gothic’ style. There are ‘gothic’ gargoyles in the centre of the parapets. The river channel bends as it approaches and leaves the bridge and is lined with a low retaining wall. The upstream side of this is decorated with carvings of plants and small aquatic animals such as frogs and newts. The bridge must have been constructed for Canon Bridges probably in the late 1870s or 1880s. The foundations of an earlier bridge can be seen in the river bed.

5.5.8 The cricket pavilion
The present cricket pavilion is a modern building or no particular architectural merit of historic significance. It replaces an earlier one on a different site (see 5.6.4 below).

5.5.9 The tea room
The present tea room is a modern building or no architectural merit of historic significance.

5.5.10 West Lodge
Not listed
This was originally an entrance lodge guarding a drive across the park from London Road to the house. The building was originally in a rustic style with attractive wooden decorations, a thatched roof and bent chimney. The pointed windows are ‘gothic’ suggesting a date in the late 18th or early 19th century. A lodge is shown on the 1820 map and seems likely that building was constructed for Anne Paston Gee sometime around 1800. The building has suffered greatly from ill considered modifications and poor maintenance. That thatched roof has gone and an ugly extension has been built so that the building has lost most of its original character.

5.5.11 The kidney shaped lake
This is first shown on the 1896 Ordnance Survey map and must have been constructed for Canon Bridges as part of his re-landscaping.

5.6 Some lost buildings and features

5.6.1 The Portioner’s House
In the late Middle Ages the tithes of Beddington Church were divided between the rector and the Portioner who was a sinecureist with no known religious responsibilities. The origin of this unusual arrangement is unknown but it is likely to date back to at least the 12th century. At some point the Portioner came into the possession of a house which stood on the south side of the new graveyard.

In the 18th century the house was used as the rectory. In 1789 the rector – the Rev John Ferrers – sued the Carew trustees about the tithes belonging to portion. He won the case but eventually lost control of the Portioner’s house. The Carews then let it to tenants until they decided to demolish it sometime between 1853 and 1859.

An early 19th century watercolour shows the Portionary as a large Georgian building but it is likely that this façade concealed a much earlier structure – possibly of medieval date. The site is therefore of considerable archaeological importance.

5.6.2 The west lake
The west lake was a long canal-like feature which ran across the park on the axis of the house. It was probably created by Nicholas Carew 1st baronet at the beginning of the 18th century and continued to be a feature of the park until it was filled by Canon Bridges – probably in the 1870s. The site of the lake is still marked by a hollow in the ground between an avenue of horse chestnuts. The trees are Victorian replacements of an earlier avenue.

5.6.3 Buildings near Beddington Park Cottages
The 1820 map (figure **) shows several buildings around the Dovecote to the west of Beddington Park Cottages. These were outbuildings of Carew Manor. Little is known about them although they are likely to have been of some antiquity. They were demolished in the 19th century but the site is likely to be of archaeological importance.

5.6.4 The Cricket pavilion
Canon Bridges was the president of the Beddington Cricket and Archery Club. In 1871, he gave a ground to the club and constructed an elaborate pavilion for them which was dated 1873. This stood near the site of the present tea rooms. It was designed by Joseph Clarke and was timber framed with a thatched roof in a French rustic style reminiscent
of Marie Antoinette’s Hammo at Versailles. It was designed by Joseph Clarke. The building was probably demolished in the 1940s and at some point it was replaced by the existing much less attractive structure on a different site.

Figure **. Above and below. Canon Bridges pavilion for the Beddington Cricket and Archery Club, erected about 1871.

6. ** THE GRANGE **

6.1 ** History **

The Grange occupies a triangular piece of land on the west side of the park between the
Wandle and London Road. It was not part of the Carew’s deer park and in the 18th century it seems to have been wet meadow land which was used for textile bleaching.

The area was acquired by Alfred Smee (1818-77) who was the surgeon to the Bank of England and had wide scientific interests. His daughter Elizabeth Mary Odling said ‘The trout fishery of the Wandle first attracted my father's attention to Wallington. Already in 1858, he had rented that fishery, and a little later obtained a narrow strip of land, where he grew a few peas, beans &c’. At some point he acquired more land which she described as ‘a barren field which was impossible to walk across without sinking above your knees in water...’. Smees developed this into an elaborate garden described in his book *My Garden* published in 1872.

Alfred Smee did not build a house on the site. This was left to his son Alfred Hutchison Smee (1845-1901) who erected The Grange about 1880. He was the Chief Medical Officer and a director of Gresham Life Assurance as well as being a justice of the peace and a member of Surrey County Council. On his death the property passed to George Smee Odling who changed his name to George Smee Odling-Smee to comply with the terms of the will. He sold the house in 1908 and it was bought by an Indian princess Zuluka Langrana Cavalier who was a faith healer married to a Frenchman Monsieur F.H. Cavalier. In 1915 the house was bought by William James Mallinson, a timber merchant, who became a baronet when his father died in 1936. He was a major local benefactor who is now chiefly remembered for presenting a reference library to the people of Beddington and Wallington. In 1935 he sold The Grange to Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council for £57,500 and moved to Reigate. The Council turned the grounds into a park and used the house for wedding receptions, a clinic and a library. The house was destroyed by fire in January 1960.

![Figure **. The original Grange](image)

### 6.2 The Garden

Smee’s garden is chiefly known from his book *My Garden*. Smees sought to create a natural look to his garden. He felt that straight lines were appropriate in some places but in

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12 Odling 1878 p71
13 The 2nd edition was published in 1872. The first edition was probably privately circulated as it is very rare.
general avoided them and he also avoided geometric shapes. The garden was rich in ferns which were very fashionable in the 1860s and 70s. The significance of Smee’s collection has not been assessed.

![Plan of My Garden](image.png)

Figure **. Smee’s Garden from *My Garden*, 1872.

The main features within the garden were:

**The croquet lawn** - to the east of the present Grange building. The setting of this has gone but the grass is still flat.

**The artesian well** by croquet lawn is shown on the 1896 Ordnance Survey map and is probably on the 1867 one. A cement basin of doubtful date survives on the site together with an iron or steel borehole pipe which still has a slight flow.

**The alpinery** which was on the north side of the water course to the east of the present Grange building.

**The apple tree walk**. There is still a path on this line but no apple trees remain.

**The greenhouses** to the east of apple tree walk have largely disappeared:

**The fernery** was as 80 feet long. Some foundations, the path down the centre, the pool and the inscribed stone behind it survive. Stone is polished grey granite inscribed ‘In Lucem Lucrum, Ludum’.

**The Poorman’s house** by the lake was 48 feet long and partly set in the ground. There is a bump on the grass by the lake probably relates to this.

**The orchard house** was aligned north – south, 80 feet long by 15 feet wide. Extended northwards from concrete paving slabs near the west end of the fernery. No remains have been found.
The **vinery** was demolished between 1913 and 1933 when the drive which from Wallington Bridge to the house was made.

The **small stone and rockery** (locally listed) by the lake appears to have been on the boundary between the Fern Glen and the Fern Glade. The glade seems to have extended along the water course westwards from the rocks. The channel which runs from the lake, under the little bridge and through the rocks from the lake appears to be Smee's fish ladder which was at the eastern end of the Fern Glade. The Fern Glen extended westwards from this point along the stream which runs towards the house. Only a small part of the west end of the Glen survives.

Many of Smee’s trees survive.

**Latter additions**

The following features are latter additions:

- The water garden and rose pergola in front of the house is first shown on the 1933 map so it was probably made by Mallinson. It replaced a conservatory which was at the south end of the original Grange House.
- A path with flower beds along it which runs roughly south from the front of the present building is not on the 1933 Ordnance Survey map so it was probably Beddington and Wallington Council but might be by Mallinson.
- There are the remains of a bowling green on the east side of the garden to the south of the artesian well. This is not shown on any of the maps to 1933 and was probably made for Beddington and Wallington Council.
- An east–west aligned bump on the main lawn marks the site of a path which existed by 1896 and had been grassed over by 1933.

**7. THE SITE OF WALLINGTON MILL**

The Grange Lake originated as a mill pond. The mill buildings stood at the western end of the pond near London Road.

John Seller’s map of 1690 shows a mill on the site. In 1771 the mill was worked by John Filby who used it for grinding logwood to make dyestuffs which were used in the calico print works and leather mills on other parts of the river. In 1792 it was acquired by William Kilburn who ran a textile printing works on the west side of London Road some way south of the mill. He demolished the old mill and built a new one for cotton spinning. Kilburn gave up the mill about 1810 and it was then taken over by Simpson, Newton and Co. who were also calico printers. By 1840 the mill had been taken over by Charles Bourne who used for grinding flour. In 1853 the mill was being worked by Mr Holloway and then by George Crutch. By 1861 it had been converted to a paper mill which was operated by Edward Smith Manico and then William Brown. In 1896 the mill was disused but the following year they had been turned over to seed crushing for animal food firstly by Ernest G Smith and then from about 1908 by Brindley and Co. By 1919 the site was a chocolate works which was initially operated by several companies who seem to have been subsumed into the Helm Chocolate works. The chocolate factory ceased production 1960 and was demolished in 1966.
The chocolate works filled in the western end of the lake so the site of the old mill buildings is not immediately by the waters edge. In the 1840s there was a second mill building on the northern side of the west end of the lake.

The present sluice gates appear to be modern and there are no standing reamisn of the mills. However, there are likely to be archaeological remains. The connection with Kilburn means that they are of importance as he was the leading fashion textile printer in the late 18th century. The main mill building stood at the western end of the lake.

8. THE LAND ALONG LONDON ROAD

8.1 The land on the south side of London Road

This consists of the spring pond near Wallington Bridge, the adjacent Lodge and grass and the pond along the south side of London Road. This land was formerly part of the grounds of Wallington Manor House which stood a little east of Manor Road North.

The pond near Wallington Bridge is probably an ancient spring and the springs still flow here except in the driest summers.

The adjacent lodge stood by a drive which ran to Wallington Manor House. It has a slate roof and rendered walls and may have been built in the early 19th century.

The pond along the side of London Road was in the grounds of the manor house. It did not exist in 1771 but is shown on the 1868 Ordnance Survey map. The present bur brick edging was probably added in the 1930s when the areas was suburbanised. Originally the water in the pond either came from springs or the stream that ran down the north side of London Road. In dry weather the level is now maintained by pumping from a bore hole.

8.2 Elm Grove on the north side of London Road

In the 1620s there was a large house close to the corner of London Road and Butter Hill. In the late 18th century Francis Gregg and his son – also called Francis built up an estate on the east side of Butter Hill by the piecemeal acquisition of land. One of the these acquisitions, in 1799, was the piece of land and a pond which now forms the Elms Park. It was sold by William Bridges who owned the manor house on the opposite side of the road. He placed a condition on the sale preventing building on the land – presumably to preserve the view from his house. Gregg turned the ground and the pond into part of his garden which centred on a house called the Elms which stood on the ridge to the north. By 1928 the Elms and its grounds had been bought by CR Leech who demolished the house and developed the Leechcroft Road housing estate. The building restrictions were still in force on the pond and the area around it so Mr Leech gave the land to the Council to form a small park. The entrance Lodge of the Elms has survived by Butter Hill. (This is a private house and not part of the park).

This small park is of major archaeological importance partly because of the site of the Tudor House and partly because it includes the site of Wallington Chapel towards the northeast corner. The chapel is something of an enigma. It is mentioned in the mid-15th century when there was a dispute about a marriage sanctified there. A century later it

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14 Skelton 1995.
was the subject of a dispute between Henry Burton and Elizabeth Carew who both owned property in Wallington. By the mid-18th century it had been turned into a stable. The building was demolished at the end of the 18th century although some fragments may have stood longer. The site was excavated by Mrs Birch in 1921. Unfortunately she died in a car accident soon afterwards and most of her records have been lost. It is however clear that the chapel was a late medieval structure although a few pieces of stone were clearly much older – perhaps late Saxon or even reused Roman. The chapel had graveyard a small part of which was excavated by Clive Orton in 1976. A further skeleton was found in Burleigh Avenue in 1997. It is likely that the graveyard extended into the site of the park. Medieval chapels do not usually have graveyards as the right of burial belonged to the parish church – in this case St Mary’s, Beddington. This and the early architectural fragments suggest that the chapel may have been some antiquity and importance.

8.2.1 The flint bridge at the west end of the Elms Pond.

Grade II listed
This is believed to be a medieval bridge which spanned a stream which once ran down Westcroft and into the pond. The stream certainly existed as it is shown on the Bridges estate map of Wallington dated 1771. However, the interpretation of the structure as a medieval bridge seems questionable and it may be a more recent ornament connected with the gardens of The Elms.

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