

Understanding Historic Parks and Gardens in Buckinghamshire

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research & Recording Project



(Photo: Buckinghamshire Country Parks)

BLACK PARK, WEXHAM

NOVEMBER 2021

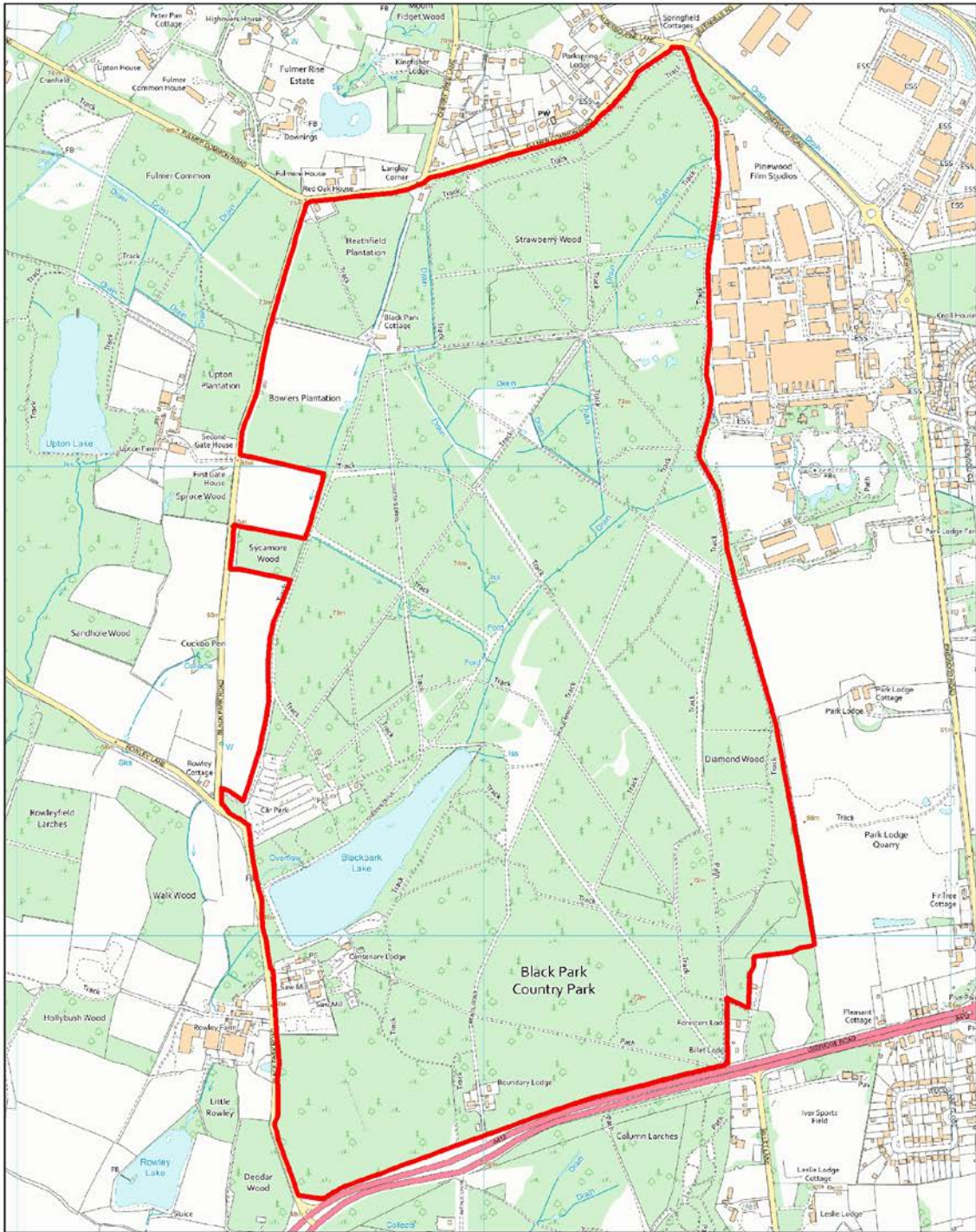


The Finnis Scott
Foundation

Roland Callingham
Foundation



HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY



Black Park: boundary of historic designed landscape interest

Produced by the Council Archaeology Service
October 2021

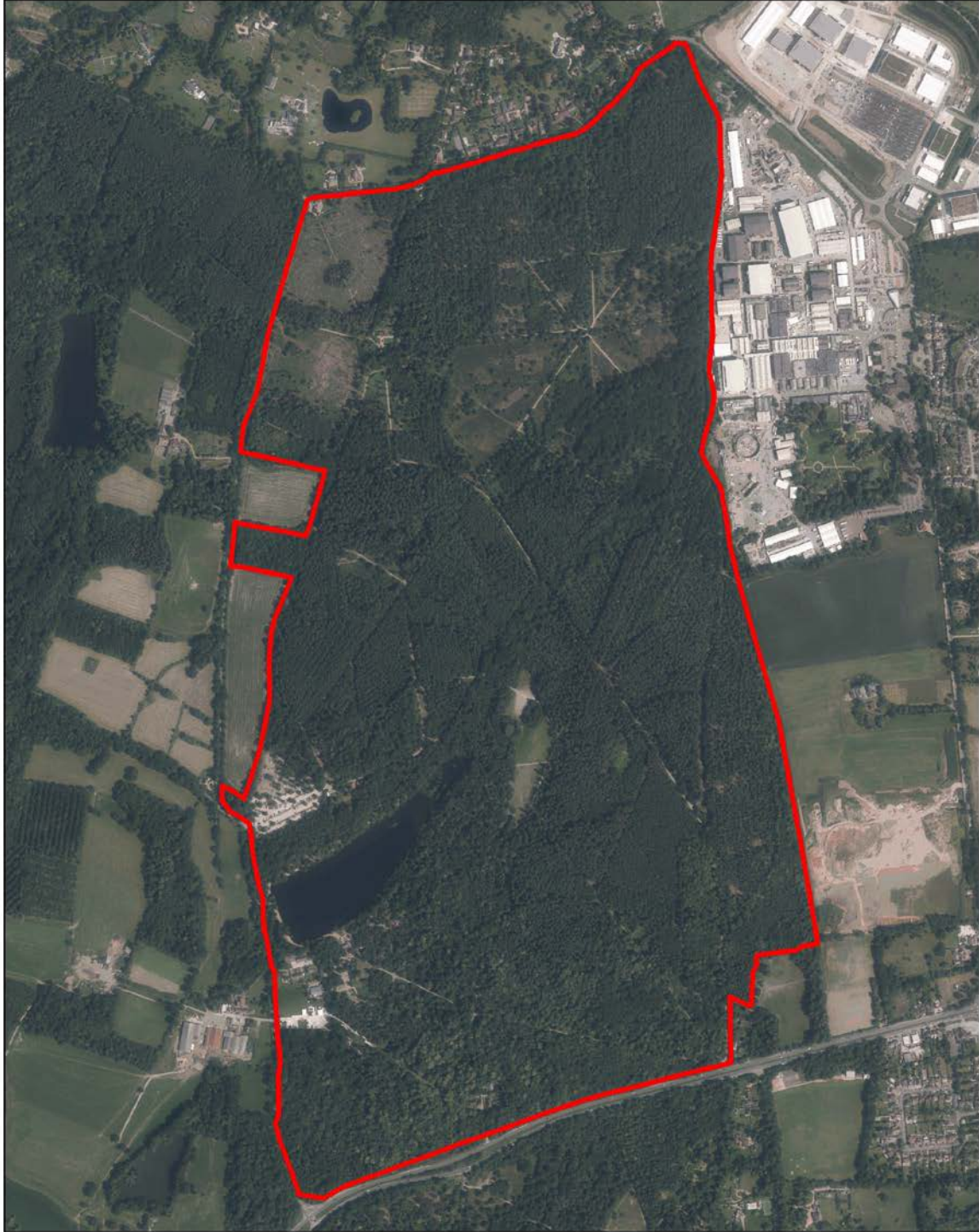


Scale: 1:10,665 at A4

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AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



Black Park: 2019 aerial photograph

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INTRODUCTION

Background to the Project

This site dossier has been prepared as part of The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust (BGT) Research and Recording Project, begun in 2014. This site is one of several hundred designed landscapes county-wide identified by Bucks County Council (BCC) in 1998 (including Milton Keynes District) as potentially retaining evidence of historic interest, as part of the Historic Parks and Gardens Register Review project carried out for English Heritage (now Historic England) (BCC Report No. 508). The list is not conclusive and further parks and gardens may be identified as research continues or further information comes to light.

Content

BGT has taken the Register Review list as a sound basis from which to select sites for appraisal as part of its Research and Recording Project for designed landscapes in the historic county of Bucks (pre-1974 boundaries). For each site a dossier is prepared by volunteers trained on behalf of BGT by experts in appraising designed landscapes who have worked extensively for English Heritage (now Historic England) on its Register Upgrade Project.

Each dossier includes the following for the site:

- A site boundary mapped on the current Ordnance Survey to indicate the extent of the main part of the surviving designed landscape, also a current aerial photograph.
- A statement of historic significance based on the four Interests outlined in the National Policy Planning Framework and including an overview.
- A written description, derived from documentary research and a site visit, based on the format of the English Heritage/ Historic England *Register of Parks & Gardens of special historic interest* 2nd edn.
- A map showing principal views and features.

The area within the site boundary represents the significant coherent remains of the designed landscape. It does not necessarily include all surviving elements of the historical landscape design, which may be fragmented. It takes no account of current ownership.

NOTE: Sites are not open to the public unless advertised elsewhere.

Supporters and Acknowledgements

The project was supported by The Gardens Trust (formerly the Association of Gardens Trusts and the Garden History Society) and funded by BGT with a significant grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust. BCC generously provided current and historic mapping and access to the Historic Environment Record.

The Trust would like to thank the volunteers and owners who have participated in this project and given so much time and effort to complete this challenging and rewarding task.

Further information is available from: www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk

SITE NAME: BLACK PARK	HER no: 0162510000
COUNTY: BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	GRID REF: TQ013 842
PARISH: WEXHAM	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Overview

This medieval deer park was landscaped in the 1740s as a detached hunting park for the 3rd Duke of Marlborough. It originated as a hunting park for the historic Langley Estate with its boundaries defined by 1607 separating it from the adjacent Langley Park which surrounds the mansion. Black Park then developed from heathland as a detached hunting park and was landscaped during the mid-C18 by the 3rd Duke who also owned the adjacent Langley Park. Langley Park was developed for the 4th Duke by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the 1760s alongside his work at Blenheim Palace and he may have influenced elements of the layout of Black Park. In any case the two parks were linked by an early-C17 or earlier avenue retained by Brown, giving access directly from Langley Park to the hunting ground of Black Park but this has been disrupted by the C20 dual carriageway (A412) which also cut back the south boundary with the loss of the C18 or early C19 ice house.

The extensive Black Park, which never had a focal building, remains intact, with an extensive network of routes having developed, and the design instead focusses on the large lake (early 1740s) sequestered in woodland. This was originally plantations of Black Pines (*Pinus nigra*) planted when the lake was dug, an early planting of this species in plantations which gave the park its name. While none of these specimens survive the park has many conifer plantations and has since 1970 been a Country Park.

Archaeological

There is the potential for evidence of lost structures and features relating to hunting, agricultural and sylvicultural practices since the C13. The park has the remains of many features of these types including boundary and deer banks. From at least 1607 Black Park was divided from Langley Park, with several deer leaps between the two. Other potential relates to the lake, former C18 and C19 structures including the former boathouse on the south-east shore and lost sawmill, watercourses and other water bodies, and routes through the site. By 1900 an icehouse lay on the former south boundary but the site seems to be under the present dual carriageway.

Artistic

This hunting park with its mid-C18 lake set among commercial plantations complements the adjacent Langley Park which was remodelled shortly after as a landscape park by Lancelot Brown in English Landscape Style. The two parks were divided by a fence from the early C17. Black Park achieved the framework of the present layout during the 1740s when it was drained and planted with conifers. The woodland encloses the large lake and is divided by a network of drives and paths. During the C18 Black Pine (*Pinus nigra*) was introduced as a timber tree, from which the park derived its name, an early use of the species for this purpose. Black Park is comparable with other detached ornamented C18 parks such as Pirton Park which lay at a short distance from the Duke of Coventry's Croome Court near Worcestershire (both laid out by Brown). That medieval deer park was landscaped by Brown in the mid-1760s as a satellite of the main park at Croome. This Avenue approach from Langley forms a link between the house and Black Park rather than an approach to the mansion. This link is comparable with other avenues adopted by Brown where hunting woods were distant from the landscape park, including the grand Yardley Riding linking Castle Ashby and Yardley Chase, Northamptonshire, and more modest versions at Tottenham Park, Wiltshire and Combe Abbey, Warwickshire.

Historical

Commercial forestry remained the dominant use in the early C20, and during World War I the park was a base for troops from the Canadian Forestry Regiment. It was used for ammunition storage in World War II. In 1970 it was one of the first sites to be designated as a Country Park. It is the location for many famous films and television productions from adjacent Pinewood Studios (q.v. Heatherden Hall) since the studios opened in the 1930s. In the 1950s-70s it was a key location for Hammer Horror Films, and later in Bond films and the Harry Potter series. Its unique history as a filming location for world renowned films adds a further layer of interest and mystique.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

A deer park is first mentioned in the parish of Langley Marish (now part of modern Wexham parish), in 1202. It was in continuous use throughout the Middle Ages (Historic England, Langley Park). In 1483 Richard III made a grant of Black Park to the owners of Langley (Honey). In 1605 Norden reported that Langley and Black Parks were dominated by poor quality beech (Phibbs). From 1607 Black Park was divided from Langley Park by a fence (Phibbs) and in 1626 the park and manor were granted to Sir John Kederminster, chief steward of the Manor of Langley, and ceased to be Crown property (Historic England).

In 1738, the heathland that became Black Park was bought, along with Langley Park, by politician and Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, Charles Spencer (1706-58), 3rd Duke of Marlborough. Soon after this purchase the Duke planted hundreds of fir trees (*Pinus nigra*), in regular rows, which gave the park its name (VCH). Phibbs notes that it was not uncommon at this period to plant warrens with conifers citing examples in Bedfordshire, and that it is possible that in doing this the 3rd Duke was converting Black Park along with Iver Warren into fox covers. The rows would have enabled the straight rides cut through otherwise unhuntable woods to make a hunting country, which were essential for riding fast from one side of the wood to the other.

Phibbs notes that Black Park was then a rarity, a detached hunting park, with C17 precedents for the Avenue leading across Langley Park to it,¹ a tradition which continued into Brown's time. He notes that such avenues were adopted by Brown wherever hunting woods were distant from the parkland, citing a grand example in the Yardley Riding linking Castle Ashby and Yardley Chase over the undulating ground of Northamptonshire, and more modest versions at Tottenham and Combe Abbey. The Avenue approach at Langley forms a link between the house and Black Park rather than an approach to the mansion. It seems to have followed an earlier line shown by Treswell and Norden.

In c.1741 the Duke dug the lake, changing it from an area of swamp to its current shape (Rocque, 1761), possibly under the direction of Thomas Greening, part of a large family of landscapers and nurserymen in Brentford (BL Add 75433 accounts of Charles, 3rd Duke of Marlborough, in Phibbs).

¹ Phibbs, 'The Avenue': 'In 1671 John Evelyn advised that an avenue should link the house and park at Euston (see *The Diary of John Evelyn* ed. E. S. de Beer 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955) Vol. III p.591). This had been planted with four rows of ash by 1677, see Vol. IV p.117. At Theobalds too, John Thorpe's plan shows a long avenue running from the garden to the park (Thorpe's plan is kept at the British Library, see Paula Henderson *The Tudor House and Garden* (London: Yale University Press, 2005) p.85). The Long Walk (2½ miles) that linked Windsor Castle to the Great Park was completed by Charles II's death in 1685 (see Jane Roberts *Royal Landscape The Gardens and Parks of Windsor* (London: Yale University Press, 1997) p.19). More or less at the same time Hackwood's Spring Wood was linked to Basing Castle by a horse-chestnut avenue, planted in platoons (see Mavis Batey 'Basing House Tudor Garden', *Garden History* Vol. XV part 2 (1987) p.102). Queen Anne's Ride at Windsor (3 miles), the chaise-riding of about 1708 which linked the castle to the races at Ascot is another more or less contemporary example (*Calendar of Treasury Books 1702-7*, p.199, and R. R. Tighe and J. E. Davis *Annals of Windsor, being a history of the Castle and Town* (London: 1858) Vol. II, p.488, *cit.* Jane Roberts *Royal Landscape The Gardens and Parks of Windsor* (London: Yale University Press, 1997) p.257).'

In the 1730s-50s the 3rd Duke borrowed various substantial sums from those working for him including the landscaper and nurseryman Thomas Greening (over £2,000 in 1744), Lord Cobham's steward (i.e. Lancelot Brown, £50 in 1745), Stiff Leadbetter (£5,500 in 1756), and William Greening (£104 in 1757). (Phibbs, Section 2.5)

By 1761 (Rocque) the park occupied substantially the same area as today with an approach avenue linking it with Langley Park adjacent to the south (now the A412). This approach was essentially a drive from the mansion to Black Park and crossed directly into Black Park, extending to just south of the lake. Here it was joined by a similar drive from the south-west corner of the site, and continuing to the north-east. The entrance drive and the north-west extension (approximating to Peace Road) are still identifiable.

At a structure adjacent to the eastern side of the lake, the track marked on Rocque divided and both continuations continued north and east to join, at different points, a track coming from the west boundary, which extends to the eastern boundary with Iver Heath. Trees covered the north half of the site and south half comprised the lake and heathland, similar to the depiction on the Rocque map of adjacent Iver Heath. The path from the south-east had gone, but the drive from Langley Park was still in use though not as an entrance. There was no track extending along the whole north/south axis and no tracks in the north eastern third.

On 2nd October 1766 Henry Turner was represented by his brother Charles Turner, attorney, in the purchase of an acre and a quarter from the steward representing the Lord of the Manor. "...to hold the promises of aforesaid with the appurtenances unto the said Henry Turner, his heirs and assigns for ever at the will of the Lord according to the customs of the said Manor." (Bucks Archives).

By 1770 Langley and Black Parks were divided by a small road, now the route of the A412 and the drive joining the two parks remained (Jeffreys).

In 1788 Robert Bateson-Harvey bought the estate for £38,000. An indenture of 25 November 1788 shows the transfer of an acre and a quarter of land "and that free and clear" "...adjoining a coppice being part of the Black Park next to the common called Langley Furze north to a pond called Black Park Pond and south to a road leading from Langley Furze to Iver Heath". This included "trees, woods, underwood, mounds, fences, ways, waters, watercourses, privileges, commons and commons of pastures." It was the same parcel of land sold to Henry Turner and was sold by his son Charles (Bucks Archives).

"It belongs now to R.B. Harvey, Esq....The Black Park, on rising ground in the North, comprises 530 acres, and is almost wholly covered with firs". (Wilson).

In 1792 Archibald Robertson was surprised by its alpine character 'on the banks of the lake, totally sequestered from the surrounding cheerful country, by gloomy woods of deep-tinted firs, this idea is still more forcibly impressed on the mind'.² (in Phibbs)

Further land was bought by Sir Robert Bateson Harvey from Ferdinand Laurence in 1806. By 1809 (Inclosure Plan) parcels of land lined the east boundary, with one where the sawmills later stood, but no paths; however by c1810 (OSD) the drive from Langley Park led to the north-east corner of the lake; this path still exists. An avenue ran from just north of the north-east corner of the lake which is now Queens Drive. The map showed the lake, Park Spring, Strawberry Farm, paths and rides, but no structures except an ice house at the south boundary, evident on later maps.

In 1825 while Langley Park was grassland and park, Black Park was woodland (Bryant). The trees were regularly cut for their timber. In 1849 the south bank of the lake was rebuilt to form a dam of 520m (Phibbs). In 1870 a bill from B. Donkin & Co, engineers, for designing a hauling mechanism for timber, to be driven by the turbine, states it was not

² Archibald Robertson *A Topographical Survey of the Great Road* 2 vols. (1792) Vol. I, 60-61.

fit for purpose as the accumulated dirt would have blunted the saw. This is followed a day later by a bill from £127.4.11 from S. Worssam & Co, sawmill engineers presumably for repairs. In January 1912 there is an invoice from GD Peters & Co Ltd for work done on the turbine and saws.

By the 1870s (OS) a boat house had been erected, halfway along the east side of the lake.

Hunting regularly took place in the park. In 1884 Her Majesty's stag hounds met at a 'lawn meet' of Sir RB Harvey's harriers in Black Park (1st baronet 1825-87, newspaper archive). By 1900 (OS) additional rides led through the Park that came to be named Rhododendron and Hammer Drives, and Bluebell Ride. This shows an expansion of rides and tracks but far fewer than have been subsequently developed to accommodate leisure use.

During World War I the park saw service for the Empire with troops from the Canadian Forestry Regiment helping to farm the Park and harvest the wood, for use in the trenches of France or building air strips in France for the Royal Flying Corps (Bucks Archives).

In 1916 a timber agreement was signed between the Hon Mrs J.A.G. Morgan-Grenville, the Home-Grown Timber Committee, for large scale felling of Scots Pine Trees standing at Black Park for the war effort. 1250 trees were taken from an area on the east border of the park and a deposit of £425 was paid. The land had to be reinstated by June 1917, and the sawmill, all bothies and huts removed. In 1929 60 acres of trees and woodland were destroyed by fire; it threatened Heatherden Hall (q.v.) and also Read's Farm and the Crooked Billet. The park belonged to Sir Robert Harvey (2nd baronet) a former High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire (newspaper archive). Pinewood Studios opened in the 1930s incorporating Heatherden Hall. Because of its proximity to the studio Black Park has been the location of Hammer Horror and Bond films and the Harry Potter series.

During World War II the Park was used to store military supplies hidden in Nissen Huts amongst the trees from enemy surveillance, as was nearby Langley Park. It was a site of an anti-aircraft Command Intermediate Ammunition Dump, located in the south of the park north of the Uxbridge Road A412, constructed between 1939 & 1941. There were 24 groups of 2 huts, scattered in the area, 6 assorted buildings located along the entry and exit roads. In 1995 a network of 10 foot wide paths was the only evidence, but white painted rings are still visible on the trunks of trees. Contemporary photographs record roads, painted trees, ammunition, and mortar shells (Buckinghamshire HER 0942200000). A ditch running north/south in the south-west corner of the site does not relate to an earlier historic feature and could be an antitank ditch constructed to protect the ammunition dump.

In 1945 Black Park and Langley Park were bought from the Bateson-Harvey family by Buckinghamshire County Council, Eton RDC and Slough Borough Council (Buckinghamshire Country Parks) 'to preserve this remarkably beautiful and rural tract of countryside between Slough and Uxbridge' (Moon).

After the acquisition of the site the County Council let parcels of land to the Morgan-Grenville family including Sawmills Cottage. In 1970 Black Park became one of the first sites in England to be designated as a Country Park. Until the 1980s, the park continued to operate primarily as a commercial forest, with the transition towards a more visitor orientated space taking place during the 1980s and 1990s. This transition saw the introduction of a play area, toilets, a visitor centre and offices, and an education centre. In 1990 part of the Park was designated a SSSI for heathland habitat.

The varied history of the park, from its heathland origins, through commercial forestry to its current recreation and nature conservation focus, has created a landscape of mixed character with a patchwork of habitats. The relationship with Pinewood Studios and the park's unique history as a filming location for world renowned films adds a further layer of interest and mystique to the landscape. This diverse history is born out through the curious and evocative place names scattered throughout the park, e.g. Dark Wood, Fulmershe Heath, Goldfinger Ride, The Potato Patch, Starfruit Pond.

The site remains in the ownership of Buckinghamshire Council. The community focus of the park and its environment are seen in the Forest School, Park Run and the Black Park Shed, part of the Men in Sheds movement.

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING

Black Park is part of the Colne Valley Regional Park, created in 1965. The 212ha. site lies in the extreme south of the historic county of Bucks, 3km north-east of Slough and 5km west of Uxbridge. The park is far larger than Langley Park which is adjacent to the south beyond the A412 Uxbridge Road.

The park is bounded by the A412 to the south and beyond this the formerly contiguous Langley Park. It is bounded by Black Park Road to the west and beyond this plantations and Fulmer Common, by Fulmer Common Road to the north and to the east by Pinewood Studios including Heatherden Hall (q.v.) and agricultural land. The south boundary was altered with the widening of the Uxbridge Road. The OS (1938) shows a bend at the SE corner of Black Park that was subsequently straightened when the dual carriage way was built, taking land from the north-east corner of Langley Park. The perimeter is c.7km. Beyond the boundaries the setting remains surprisingly rural with the main developed area being the large scale buildings of Pinewood Studios. The heathland habitat is a remnant of a formerly extensive feature in this part of the county. The soil is Black Park Gravel Member - a layer of sand and gravel that is local to the Thames Valley and associated tributaries. The site is mainly flat and surprisingly rural despite being so close to Slough and Uxbridge and satellite settlements.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

The main entrance from Black Park Road to the east enters almost half way along the boundary, just north of the lake; there is no public vehicle access beyond the extensive car parks in a block to the north of the lake. A variety of routes lead through the park, some tarmacked, but no single main route. There are multiple formal and informal pedestrian entrances, and there is a dedicated vehicle access from Pinewood studios on the NE side of the park. The Park closes areas when Pinewood Studios need access for filming. Double vehicle gates and a pedestrian gate lead to a footpath linked to Pinewood Road. Just inside this exit vehicle gates to the left lead into the south boundary of the Studios. The entire Pinewood boundary is made of 2-meter green metal spiked railings.

The Avenue Drive that leads north from Langley mansion through Langley Park crosses the A412 into Black Park. It extended a short distance into Black Park and joins another track south of the lake. These tracks do not lead to a main route through the park.

BUILDINGS, FEATURES AND FACILITIES

The park historically had no substantial structures. Sawmill Cottages, a pair, stand south of the lake and the adjacent site of the former sawmill is now the park depot. It forms a complex with the information centre, Lakeside Room, and Black Pines Camp.

The Park has a main cafe and picnic benches south of the lake. North of the lake are a Go Ape centre, public toilets, a smaller refreshment kiosk, the Beech Hut, Segway and bike hire outlets and the paid parking area,. Most paths are made of hard stone and some are wheelchair and buggy accessible. The Emma Sallis adventure play area is next to the cafe at the south of the lake. 10 miles of surfaced track provide for cycling. There is no regular pattern of routes, but most paths run diagonally forming diamond and other geometric areas between paths. A bridleway runs along the eastern boundary of the park, west along the northern fence and across to the west edge exiting onto Rowley Lane. This is not a historic route, but it separates horse riders from other park users.

THE PARK

Black Park has a range of landscape character areas. To the south and east, the landscape is dominated by Black Park Lake and the surrounding mixed woodlands. The character of the lake changes markedly from the south, with

views north-east across the lake, to the north where views of the lake are reduced to glimpses through mature Alder Carr and across reed bed. This transition from exposed to enclosed landscapes is also present along Peace Road, Queens Drive and Heathland Ride. Here the avenues between mature broadleaved and coniferous woodland give way to open vistas across heathland. The central plantation coniferous woodlands include the area of Dark Wood, where stands of Black Pine tower over the forest tracks below. These create a unique atmosphere that is loved equally by visitors and film makers. To the north and east boundaries of the park mixed woodlands dominate.

In the area of Alder Carr north of the lake "...the trees appear to have been planted on low banks separated by shallow ditches, reminiscent of ridge and furrow. "To the north and east of the park well-defined boundary banks survive. Judging by the number of veteran trees and large stumps, these banks are of some age and could have been established by the seventeenth century"(Howes). As the bank to the east lies on the line of the historic parish boundary of Langley Marish it may be earlier than C17. Howes suggests that the ditch and associated bank could be a deer park boundary formed from existing woodland. A bank and ditch lie to the west of the site.

The park in the early C20 had "sequestered walks that lead to a fine but gloomy lake." (*VCH* Vol. 3). This 5.7 ha. lake is the main designed feature of the park, located in the south-east quarter, with a squared east end bending and narrowing to the north-west. The 1.2km perimeter is mostly concrete edged. It is no longer hidden or shaded by overhanging trees.

The Duke of Marlborough created the lake from an area of swamp after 1738 and by 1760 (Roque) had the current shape with the blunt east end where the dam was built. In the mid-C18 the east bank of the lake was raised by 16 feet to form a 520 foot long dam which provided a head of water to drive a turbine at Rowley Farm, to the west, and to supply water to Langley Park; sluices control the flow (Howes). In 2002 Buckinghamshire County Council banned swimming, but well skippered model boats are welcome at all times and there is a model boat club on Thursday afternoon and Sunday morning. Fishing is permitted during the coarse fishing season (15th March to 15 September) from the accessible fishing bay near the alder carr nature reserve. The lake contains pike, perch, carp, roach, rudd, bream and tench. All users are required to respect the prolific wild fowl.

Two areas totalling 15.7 ha. were designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1990. 66 ha. are designated as a Local Nature Reserve containing heath, alder carr, mixed and coniferous woodland with some acid grassland. There is a rare insect, the Roesel's bush cricket, 18 species of butterfly, birds including the hobby and nightjar, and snakes and lizards. (Natural England)

The Colne Valley Trail crosses the south of the park from the south-east, skirting the east and north sides of the lake and exiting to Beeches Way to the north-east. There are public footpaths to the east and west and many paths within the site.

A 450m long curvilinear earthwork in Strawberry Wood near the northern boundary may be either a Roman Road or a medieval parish boundary bank. A line of large mature trees runs alongside the north side.

The site of a former gravel pit (OS 1930s) lies in the diamond of woods north-east of Dark Woods. It is grassed over. It is thought that one end of the gravel pit was filled in with arisings from the Park, including soil, tree roots, wood chip, probably over a long period. The area has been landscaped with trees and grass and has been used by the film industry for many films.

Management

There are two main focuses of the current management of the park. A new wood pasture is being created by thinning the woodland and allowing cattle to graze the area. The area was chosen because of several significant large trees that are already home to many invertebrates, fungi and birds that depend on this type of habitat. Wood pasture has its origins in wildwood or with Neolithic livestock keepers and is a nationally important habitat.

A ride is a long narrow glade which opens up woodland to light and Black Park's rides are managed to provide a gradual transition from a central grassy area, through taller herbaceous vegetation and shrubs before reaching the trees, giving much greater plant diversity and wildlife benefits. Brambles and nettles are left to flourish alongside woodland edges to provide cover and important food for a wide range of insects, small mammals, and birds. In order that the rides do not become wind tunnels, inimical to butterflies, the straight edges are broken up by 'scallops' to provide sheltered areas to cater for butterflies and other species that prefer less draughty conditions. Pipistrelle bats stream out onto the rides 15-30 minutes before sunset to forage for insects. In 2016 Great Crested newts were recorded for the first time in one of the ponds. (Country Park information)

HORTICULTURE

By 1943 (OS) the park was divided into the following areas: Heathfield Wood, Bowler Plantation, Strawberry Wood, Queens Drive, Strawberry Cottages, Sycamore Wood and Diamond Wood. Additional areas are Foxes Gutter, Dark Wood, Goldfinger Ride, The Potato Patch, Starfruit Pond, Foxley Copse, Peace Road and the Gravel Plateau. These areas are formed by the mainly diagonal rides, drives and paths. Black Fir is still the predominant species.

There is a small grove of cherry trees near the lake; the Sakora Cherry Tree Project is part of the Japan-UK Season of Culture, and the trees are of three varieties: Beni-yutaka, Taihaku and Somei-yoshino. The project marks 150 years of Japan-UK friendship and was launched in Autumn 2017 on a visit by UK Prime Minister Theresa May to Japan. 'Sakura' is the national flower of Japan and 600 trees were planted in 400 locations from winter 2020 to 2021. A story board on site outlines the project and details can be found on the Japanuksakura.org website.

The park is named after the large number of black pine trees in the C18. The black pine, *Pinus nigra*, Austrian or Corsican, was planted as a fast growing plantation tree that was also decorative. It was first recorded at Kew in 1759 (Miller). The 3rd Duke of Marlborough, who took over the estate in 1738, was among its early adopters. Fulmershe Heath in the north-east of the site, the area around Five Points, centre North, the site of the former gravel pit, an open space to the west of the northern end of the lake, and the car parks are the only significant unwooded areas.

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BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES

D/X1741/2/18

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Liza Wormald October 2021, edited November 2021

FEATURES MAP



(courtesy Buckinghamshire Country Parks)

Online at <https://counyparks.buckscc.gov.uk/media/1356/bp-map.png>

CURRENT IMAGES



Entrance to Pinewood studios on east boundary



Black Park Lake



New cherry tree grove



Go Ape



Drainage ditch



Woodland pond





War time tree markings (Buckinghamshire Country Parks)



War time structure (Buckinghamshire Country Parks)



Play park



War time structure (Buckinghamshire Country Parks)