

City of Edinburgh Council

Edinburgh
Survey of Gardens and Designed Landscapes

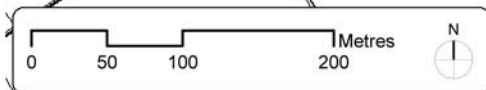
247 Woodhall

Consultants

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Survey visit: September 2007

247 - Woodhall



Key			
	Site boundary		Essential setting
	Ruined buildings		Site of former house
	Principal buildings		Main drive
	Gardens		Principal views or vista
	Water		Panoramic View
	Woodlands		Walled Garden
	Parkland		

EDINBURGH
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

**SURVEY OF GARDENS AND
DESIGNED LANDSCAPES**

Peter McGowan
Associates with
Christopher Dingwall

247 Woodhall

Parish Colinton, later Edinburgh

NGR NT 198 684

NMRS No NT16NE 111.0

Owners House and core landscape private; surrounding land in divided ownership, including City of Edinburgh Council (Campbell Park).

Designations

Listing Woodhall House B
Woodhall House Sundials (now gone?) and Garden Wall B
Woodhall House Lodge C(S)
Gowanlea, 547 Lanark Road (former Dower House / Manse) B

Green Belt

Area of Great Landscape Value (extends over Pentland Hills Regional Park)

Local Nature Conservation Site / Water of Leith Urban Wildlife Site (core policy woodland)

Tree Preservation Order (north side of Water of Leith)

REASONS FOR INCLUSION

A long established but somewhat decayed estate, formerly astride the Water of Leith, with mature south policy woodlands that contribute substantially to the setting of Juniper Green.

LOCATION, SETTING AND EXTENT

The estate of Woodhall formerly straddled the Water of Leith. With the development of Juniper Green on the north bank, the northern parkland extending to part of Currie Muir was obliterated, leaving only the core policies and parkland on the south bank of the Water of Leith. Vehicular access to Woodhall House, originally by a ford across the river until the 1870s, is now from Colinton via Woodhall Road, passing underneath the A720 Edinburgh City Bypass. There is pedestrian access to part of Woodhall from Juniper Green, by way of public footpaths and footbridges across the Water of Leith. With the severance of the westmost parkland by the bypass, part of the detached portion was gifted to the city as Campbell Park, alongside which is the small 1950s housing development of Campbell Park Crescent / Drive. Some elements remain of the rectangular walled and tree-lined grazing parks of Woodhall that extended southwards onto the north slopes of Torphin Hill. Site area 19.8ha.

The designed landscape lies immediately to the south of, but just outwith, the Juniper Green Conservation Area.

MAIN PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

Successive changes and additions from c1700; north part lost to development of Juniper Green mid-19th century; fragmentation and erosion of the remainder during later 20th century.

HISTORY OF LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

The earliest known records of Woodhall date from the 14th century when there is thought to have been a tower house on or near the site of the present mansion. The estate belonged to the Cunningham family of Enterkin, of whom Adam Cunningham, Lord Woodhall, built the mansion c1630. The estate was acquired in 1700 by Sir John Foulis of Ravelston (linked to the Cunningham family by

marriage), who is said to have improved the estate with enclosure and planting. Improvements are said to have included the building of dykes and planting of beech, oak and holly (Cumming). The estate subsequently passed into the ownership of Sir James Foulis, 7th Baronet of Colinton, who added a castellated front to the house, but who only resided there during the summer. Following his death in 1842, the estate was let to tenants, until it was sold by Sir Charles Liston Foulis, 11th Baronet, to George Eric Glendining in 1931. The house was bought by Sir Stanley Davidson, Professor of Medicine at Edinburgh University, in 1938. It was sold by him in 1959 to the Jesuit foundation, the Society of Jesus, who added a large accommodation block for seminarians immediately to the east of the house. The house and around 18 acres of ground at the core of the estate passed back into private ownership in the 1970s, after which the student accommodation block was converted to private flats (1982), and renamed Woodhall Court.

Maps and Graphic Evidence

Blaeu's map (1654) based on the earlier work of Timothy Pont, shows Woodhall within a substantial impaled park on the south side of the Water of Leith, though without any indication of internal planting. Roy's map (c1750) shows planting on both sides of the Water of Leith, with a rectilinear pattern of walled and tree-lined parks surrounding the house and stretching up the slopes on both sides of the river. The house stands in the middle of broad north–south vista which separated the tree-lined parks, and which extended northwards across the Water of Leith. The same pattern of planting on the north bank of the river appears on later maps such as Laurie (1766) and Armstrong (1773), but is less obvious on Knox (1816) and has disappeared altogether on the first Ordnance Survey maps (1852) with the development of the village of Juniper Green. The Ordnance Survey (1852) also records the 19th century planting, presumably by Sir James Foulis, of the core landscape around the house, and the existence of a substantial walled kitchen garden, gate-lodge and farmstead to the east, now Woodhall Mains. The pattern of walled and tree-lined parks to the south, seen on Roy's map is still evident on this and later maps. Also present are mills on the north bank of the Water of Leith, surrounded and backed by steep wooded slopes.

COMPONENTS OF THE DESIGNED LANDSCAPE

Woodhall House

The four-bay, three-storey mansion house of c1630, with early 19th century additions, once stood at the centre of a rectangular garden enclosure at the core of the designed landscape. It has lost the eastern part of its grounds, including a walled garden, to the neighbouring flatted block of Woodhall Court.

Core Policies

The house is largely screened from the surrounding area by policy woodland, mostly broadleaved, which contain lime, beech and sycamore of considerable age and size, some of which are likely to date back to the 18th century. The west part of the policies is gappy, with some regeneration of sycamore and a certain amount of 20th century coniferous planting to the north of the drive which leads along the southern edge of the policies to the cottage of Woodcote, at the south-west corner of the core policies. A cypress hedge has been planted to emphasise the separation of policies around the house from the grounds of neighbouring Woodhall Court, and a modern gate has been erected on the drive to Woodhall House.

Woodhall Court and Gardens

The east half of the core policies, formerly occupied by a substantial walled garden, now serves as the garden ground for the 1950s accommodation block, now Woodhall Court flats. The approach is dominated by several substantial Irish yews.



Blaeu 1654



Roy c1750



Ordnance Survey 6" map
1852



Woodhall House, 1975-76
(RCAHMS)

*Approach to Woodhall House
with mature limes*



Riverside Planting, South Bank

On the steep slope of the Water of Leith to the north of the mansion house is a substantial area of mixed broadleaved woodland, with a high proportion of beech, sycamore and lime. This screens the house from Juniper Green and the public footpath on the north bank of the Water of Leith.



Dovecot, 1975-76 (RCAHMS)

Woodhall Mains and Lodge House

Some of the original farm buildings of Woodhall Mains, including the farmhouse, survive to the east of the core policies amidst a clutter of later buildings and some planting. A track leads down past riverside cottages to a footbridge across the Water of Leith. There is localised infestation of Japanese knotweed. The former lodge house on the eastern approach to the house survives.

South Parks

Substantial traces remain of the walled and tree-lined grazing parks to the south of Woodhall House on the north slope of Torphin Hill, seen on Roy's map. The pattern is traceable in the form of stone walls, now decayed and fragmentary, and in the pattern of surviving mature trees.



*Woodhall Court and Irish
yews*

Riverside Planting, North Bank

The steep slope between Juniper Green and the Water of Leith is characterised by mixed broadleaved woodland, much of it self-seeded, but likely to be derived from earlier planting of the north half of the Woodhall estate. Within the riverside woodland are substantial traces of the mills that used to stand on this side of the river, together with access roads and paths. The site of Woodhall Mill (now demolished) is occupied by a substantial dump of rubble and other demolition material.



Campbell Park entrance

Campbell Park

Campbell Park lies towards the east edge of the former Woodhall estate on part of what was the farmland of Woodhall Mains, now cut off from the remainder of the estate by the city bypass. Named after Duncan Campbell of Woodhall (Farm), the land was gifted to the community in 1936. The neighbouring residential development of Campbell Park Drive and Crescent, on the south side of the park, was formed in 1958. The park is largely used as playing fields, with a play area at its north-west corner and a pavilion on its north side, with recent ornamental planting of rowan and cherry adjacent. A container, located close to the vehicle entrance at the south-west corner of the park, serves as an additional storage facility. There are marginal plantings of sycamore, elder and horse chestnut. A light iron railing on the north side of the park allows northward views across the wooded valley of the Water of Leith towards Hailes.



*Woodhall Lodge and public
footpath*

PUBLIC ACCESS

There is no public access to the private grounds of Woodhall House and neighbouring private properties of Woodhall Court and Mains of Woodhall. That said, a track and public footpath leads down from Woodhall Mains to a footbridge across the Water of Leith (NT 198 685). Another public footpath leads along the southern edge of the core policies to link with bridges on Blinkbonny Road (NT 193 682) and the Water of Leith Cycle Path (NT 192 681), creating what amounts to a circular walking route from Juniper Green. The riverside walk, cycle path and circular route all appear to be well-used. There is open public access at all times to Campbell Park, though off-road parking is limited.

FUTURE MANAGEMENT POTENTIAL

The core policy woodland, some of which is mature to over-mature, requires continuing management and periodic replanting to maintain its contribution to the wooded setting of Juniper Green and this part of the Water of Leith. The attractive tree-lined parks surrounding the Woodhall House policies on the north side of Torphin Hill could be rehabilitated by reversing the progressive loss of field boundary trees and the dereliction of the surrounding walls. The coherence and general appearance of the landscape has suffered as a result of the fragmentation of ownership, as a result of under-management of the woodland, and through localised unsympathetic planting that emphasises the landscape subdivisions.

Although the river and its margins are well wooded and attractive, there is the potential to improve the appearance of parts of the riverside walks by better maintenance, by the removal of dumping, and by the repair of vandalised fences. More could be made of this attractive stretch of the valley of the Water of Leith through the opening up of views and the introduction of interpretation whether of nature and wildlife or of the industrial archaeology. There is some evidence of vandalism – graffiti, damage to fences, names carved on trees etc – which could be addressed. Eradication of Japanese knotweed from the east part of the landscape is also necessary.

There has been a small amount of ornamental planting around the edges of Campbell Park. In spite of this the park, especially the children's play area, feels rather bleak and exposed. Consideration could be given to augmenting the planting and upgrading the visitor/user facilities, to make the park more attractive.



*Water of Leith walkway and
cyclepath*



Japanese knotweed



Stored demolition materials

South Park walls and planting



ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Overall

The long-established designed landscape has high local significance as the setting for a house of architectural merit and for the major contribution that it makes to the setting of Juniper Green. Some parts of the landscape also have high value for nature conservation, as part of the linear wildlife reserve formed by the Water of Leith, and some archaeological value for the traces of former industries along the banks of the river.

Work of Art

Some

Historical

High

Horticultural / Arboricultural / Sylvicultural

Little

Architectural

Some

Scenic

High

Nature Conservation

High

Archaeological

Some

Recreational

High



The Water of Leith

Sources – Primary

Maps

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NLS National Library of Scotland www.nls.uk

RMS Reg Mag Sig Register of the Great Seal of Scotland, Edinburgh

NMRS National Monuments Record of Scotland

SCRAN Scottish Cultural Resource Access Network www.scran.ac.uk

Plans at National Archives of Scotland (NAS), Register House Plans (RHP)

Scotsman 19 November 2005

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