

COLEORTON HALL

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

This version of the Appraisal document has been prepared for publication on the Internet. The document does not include the plates (photographs) referred to in the text and Map 1 and Map 2 are provided as separate documents. The full document may be inspected during normal office hours at the Planning and Environment Division reception at the Council Offices in Coalville. Copies of the document may also be purchased from the Council Offices.

SEPTEMBER 2001



PREFACE

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that Conservation Areas are kept under review (Section 69(2)) and that local planning authorities in exercising their planning powers, pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas (Section 72). Having regard to these requirements and the advice contained in the English Heritage guidance notes 'Conservation Area Practice' and 'Conservation Area Appraisals', the District Council produced a draft Appraisal/Study of the Coleorton Hall Conservation Area in December 2000. The draft document included proposed alterations to the boundaries of the originally designated Conservation Area (of October 1991).

The draft document was the subject of consultation and publicity over a six week period between 4 December 2000 and 15 January 2001. Having considered the various representations and recommended amendments the District Council's Executive Board of 3 April 2001 resolved to approve the alterations to the Conservation Area boundaries as outlined in the Executive Board report.

On 18 September 2001 the District Council's Executive Board resolved that subject to the amendments outlined in the Executive Board report the Conservation Area Appraisal document be adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the policies of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan (the Study element of the Draft document was not, however, adopted)

As supplementary planning guidance the Conservation Area Appraisal/Study document whilst not having the same status as an adopted plan policy may be taken into account as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

CONTENTS		Page No
	List of Plates	-
	List of Maps	-
1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	LOCATION OF COLEORTON HALL AND ITS GROUNDS	2
3.	COLEORTON HALL : ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT	3
4.	FACTORS CONTRIBUTING POSITIVELY TOWARDS THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA	5
	Character Statement	5
	Architectural and Historic Quality of Listed and Unlisted Buildings	7
	Building Materials and Local Details	17
	Historic Ground Surfaces	17
	The Archaeological Significance and Potential of the Area	18
	Relationship Between the Area and the Surrounding Landscape	19
5.	FACTORS HAVING A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CONSERVATION AREA	22
	Vacant Buildings	22
	Buildings and Land of Poor Visual Quality	23
	Fragmentation of the Historic Asset	24
6.	Appendix : Register of Historic Parks and Gardens : Coleorton Hall	25
7.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	32

List of Plates

Page No.

1.	Coleorton Hall and St. Mary's Church	6
2.	Coleorton Hall : Front (West) Elevation	8
3.	Coleorton Hall : South Elevation	8
4.	Coleorton Hall : East Elevation	9
5.	Parish Church of St. Mary	9
6.	Beaumont's Memorial	11
7.	Terrace Retaining Wall	11
8.	Angular Bridge over former Church Pool	12
9.	Top Lodge, Ashby Road	12
10.	Former Brewhouse/Coachman's Cottage	14
11.	Former Game Store	14
12.	The Cottages	15
13.	Fountain in the Flower/Rose Garden	15
14.	Lychgate to St Mary's Church	16
15.	Rempstone Road cutting through the former Parkland to Coleorton Hall	20
16.	Canterbury Lodge, Rempstone Road	20
17.	Post War Office Buildings (Beaumont House) and Boiler House to North of Coleorton Hall	23
18.	Post War Office Buildings (Beaumont House) and Car Park to the North of Coleorton Hall	23

List of Maps

	Between Page Nos.
1. The Boundaries of the Coleorton Hall Conservation Area	1 and 2
2. The Individual Factors Considered To Have A Positive Impact On The Character of the Conservation Area.	6 and 7
3. The Individual Factors Considered To Have A Negative Impact On The Character of the Conservation Area	22 and 23

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Conservation Areas are defined as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance “ (Section 69(1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). The Coleorton Hall Conservation Area was originally designated by the District Council in October 1991, although the boundaries of the Area were subsequently revised in April 2001. The Conservation Area lies within an historic parkland landscape which is included at Grade II* on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The boundaries of the Conservation Area are shown on Map 1 and the boundaries of the Grade II* listed historic garden landscape are shown in Appendix A.

1.2 This Appraisal document outlines the historical development of Coleorton Hall and its parkland landscape and defines the special interest, character and appearance of the built and natural environment within and surrounding the existing Conservation Area boundaries.

2. LOCATION OF COLEORTON HALL AND ITS GROUNDS

- 2.1 Coleorton Hall and its grounds are situated on the northern side of Ashby Road (A512), some 3.5 km to the east of Ashby de la Zouch town centre and approximately one kilometre to the west of the scattered settlement of Coleorton. To the south of Ashby Road is the dispersed settlement of Church Town.
- 2.2 The layout and alignment of Ashby Road adjacent to the southern boundary of the Hall grounds was altered in 1992. The road was straightened and follows a alignment slightly further to the south of its original route. The previous alignment of the road remains evident and in part remains in use to serve the Parish Church Of St. Marys and Top Lodge. Coleorton Almshouses were formerly located between the fork junction of Ashby Road with Rempstone Road (B5324); the junction was re-sited to the east of the buildings in 1992.

3. COLEORTON HALL : ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The Beaumont family acquired Overton manor (in which the Hall is situated) in 1426 (White, 1846, p335). At their acquisition there was a deer park in the locality, which the Beaumonts had extended by 1610 (Nichols, 1804, p739).
- 3.2 The first Coleorton Hall was erected in circa 1600, and although destroyed during the Civil War in the 1640s, it had been rebuilt by 1660 (Butler Johnson, 1902; Revill, 1987). The wealth of the Beaumont family was largely derived from the mining of the coal on their estates at Coleorton and around Measham.
- 3.3 The present Coleorton Hall was commissioned by Sir George Howland Beaumont (1753-1827).⁽¹⁾ The Hall was built as a two storey structure between 1804 and 1808 to the designs of the London architect George Dance the Younger (1741-1827). A picture gallery and the Beaumont Room were added to the north side of the Hall later in the nineteenth century and in 1862, the Hall was the subject of substantial alterations by the architect Frederick Pepys Cockerell (1833-1878). Cockerell's principal works were the addition of the second storey to the main Hall and the re-fronting and re-building of the attached northern service wing (DoE, 1983, p2).
- 3.5 Contemporary with the construction of Dance's Hall, the grounds were laid out in the picturesque style, so fashionable in the early part of the nineteenth century. The landscaping was undertaken with the direct involvement of Uvedale Price and possibly William Sawrey Gillpin. The poet William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy were involved in the creation of a winter garden within a former quarry.⁽²⁾

- 3.6 Within the grounds, some features pre-dating the existing Hall were retained including a stable block (later extended), game store and brewhouse (later converted to a coachman's cottage); all to the north of the Hall. Following the death of Sir George Howland Beaumont, new landscape features were added by later generations of the Beaumont family through to the early twentieth century.
- 3.7 In 1948, the Hall and its grounds were sold by the Beaumont family to the National Coal Board (later British Coal) which converted the existing buildings for use as a Divisional Headquarters and in the second half of the twentieth century erected a number of new buildings within the grounds to the north of the Hall.
- 3.8 The National Coal Board (NCB), also demolished the walls to the walled garden area in the 1950s; the site subsequently being used for recreational purposes by NCB staff. In 1959, a detached dwelling - 'The Cedars' - was built within the winter garden as accommodation for the NCB's Area Director. In the early 1990s the Hall site was vacated by the National Coal Board and in late 1997 was sold to Brandvik Kinton Ltd (with the exception of 'The Cedars'; now in a separate private ownership; and the Church of St Mary's).

Notes

1. Sir George Howland Beaumont was nationally an important patron of the arts and was instrumental in founding the National Gallery; the gift of his own collection forming an important nucleus for it (DoE, 1983, p3).
2. The Hall was visited by Scott, Byron, Southey and Constable; all of whom were acquainted with Sir George Beaumont (English Heritage, 1998, pp1-4).

4. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING POSITIVELY TOWARDS THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Character Statement

- 4.1 The Conservation Area boundary is concentrated on the historic extent of the pleasure grounds surrounding Coleorton Hall. The overall character of the Area is essentially of a picturesque landscape of the early nineteenth century period. The existence of earlier features and of later additions to the landscape implemented by members of the Beaumont family, nevertheless, also provides evidence of contemporary garden design in other periods within a country house estate which evolved from the beginning of the seventeenth century through to the Second World War.
- 4.2 The national as well as local importance of the Area is reflected with the inclusion of the historic landscape on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England. This national importance is further enhanced by its notable literary and artistic associations and the inclusion of ten buildings or structures within the Area on the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest (DoE, 1983, pp2-10).
- 4.3 Within the grounds, the Hall occupies an eminence adjacent to the Parish Church of St. Mary **(1)**. The Church forms an integral part of the picturesque setting originally provided for the Hall. The pleasure grounds comprise a number of distinct elements with their own individual characteristics, which were linked by series of footpaths (which only survive in parts).

Plate 1 : Coleorton Hall and the Parish Church of St. Mary

- 4.4 There are tree screens running along the periphery to much of the pleasure grounds, which were planted to conceal the grounds from the surrounding lands dominated by coal mining at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The pleasure grounds were, however, apparently deliberately planned to allow views out of the site towards Bardon Hill from the eastern side of the Hall and from a promontory in the north-eastern area of the grounds. The trees within the grounds of Coleorton Hall are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order which was confirmed (as a Woodland Order) in May 1990.
- 4.5 The individual factors which have a positive impact on the character of the Conservation Area are identified on Map 2.

Architectural and Historic Qualities of Listed and Unlisted Buildings

- 4.6 Coleorton Hall and the Parish Church of St Mary are both listed at Grade II* as being buildings of particular importance.
- 4.7 The Hall as designed by Dance at the beginning of the nineteenth century was of a stripped-down gothic nature, which was changed to a lighter, more picturesque composition by the additions and alterations carried out by Cockerell in the 1860s **(2, 3 & 4)**. The main front of the hall is of five bays, is asymmetrical and has a projecting tudor-style porte-cochere bearing the arms of Beaumont and topped by a statue of a lion. The plan for the main house is simply Neo-classical and it has a polygonal top-lit central hall which rises through the three floors of the hall building. The interiors of the main Hall were relatively plain as they were intended to provide a background for Sir George Howland Beaumont's art collection.
- 4.8 The Church of St. Mary's **(5)**; superficially of a fourteenth and fifteenth century date; is of late twelfth century origin and has a west tower with a fine recessed spire. The west window incorporates stained glass of circa 1500 brought from Rouen by Sir George Beaumont and the Church contains a number of memorials to the Beaumont family (DoE, 1983, p2). The Church, as was the case with many Anglican churches, was much restored during the Victorian period. The chancel and the extension to the north aisle are entirely of 1854 and were designed by the Derby architect Henry Issac Stevens (Pevsner and Williamson, 1992, p136). Also dating from 1854 are the east window, the font, pulpit and tower screen (Pevsner and Williamson, 1992, p136).

Plate 2 : Coleorton Hall : Front (West) Elevation

Plate 3 : Coleorton Hall : South Elevation

Plate 4 : Coleorton Hall : East Elevation

Plate 5 : Parish Church of St. Mary

4.9 Within the Hall grounds the listed structures comprise :-

- Grotto and Pool within the Winter Garden designed by William and Dorothy Wordsworth in 1806 (and now within the garden area of The Cedars);
- an early nineteenth century plain square funeral urn memorial to Sir Joshua Reynolds (inscription by William Wordsworth) and piers capped with busts of Michaelangelo and Raphael (the busts face each other) which are all located on a lime lined avenue;
- busts of Shakespeare and Milton and a flight of six stone steps (of 1817);
- an early nineteenth century monument to the Beaumonts with an inscribed plaque of verse by William Wordsworth composed in 1811 **(6)**;
- an early nineteenth century monument to the edge of the winter garden (inscribed with lines by William Wordsworth);
- an ashlar terrace with retaining wall of circa 1806 **(7)**;
- an early nineteenth century single span angular bridge which carried the former main drive from Ashby Road over Church Pool **(8)**;
- Top Lodge, an early nineteenth century lodge situated at the entrance to the former main drive from Ashby Road. The gable to the Lodge contains the Beaumont Arms and a carved lion **(9)**;

4.10 The Grotto and Pool were listed at Grade II* in August 1999. The remaining buildings and structures are listed at Grade II as being of special interest.

Plate 6 : Beaumont's Memorial

Plate 7 : Terrace Retaining Wall

Plate 8 : Angular Bridge over former Church Pool

Plate 9 : Top Lodge, Ashby Road

4.11 There are a number of other buildings and structures within the Hall grounds of a pre-1948 date of construction which are considered by the District Council to have listed status by reason of their being within the historical curtilage of the Hall (as the principal listing building). These buildings/structures include :-

- The former stable block to the north side of the Hall (late eighteenth in origin with extensions of circa 1832);
- The former brewhouse to the north side of the Hall (late eighteenth century) which was converted into a cottage for coachmen in circa 1806 **(10)**;
- The former game store to the north side of the Hall (late eighteenth/early nineteenth century) **(11)**;
- Broad terraces to the south and east sides of the Hall - the east terrace has Coade stone type urns;
- A rustic Summerhouse to the north-east of the Hall;
- The Cottages, built in an Arts and Crafts style between 1883-1921**(12)**;
- The Stone for Wilson (ie the landscape painter Richard Wilson d.1782) to the south-east of Hall (c.1818);
- A boulder inscribed 'Red Wilson' to the western rim of the Winter Garden;
- A fountain in the flower/rose garden **(13)**;
- A 'ruined cottage' to the south-east of the Winter Garden which probably was constructed as a folly;
- Scotts Seat, an alcove cut in a sandstone outcrop on the south-east side of the Winter Garden;
- A ha-ha to the eastern side of the rose garden

Plate 10 : Former Brewhouse/Coachman's Cottage

Plate 11 : Former Game Store

Plate 12 : The Cottages

Plate 13 : Fountain in the Flower/Rose Garden

4.12 In the pleasure grounds immediately to the east of the Hall, a number of slate plaques commemorate the date (mainly early nineteenth century) and circumstances of the planting of number individual trees by members of the Beaumont family (although it should be acknowledged that some of the trees have subsequently been cut down and some plaques may have been moved away from their original position). At the entrance to the churchyard from Ashby Road stands a lychgate **(14)**, which was erected by the parishioners in 1901 in memorial of Elizabeth Mary Beaumont (nee Alderson); the wife of Canon W.B. Beaumont (Kellys, 1904, p62).

Plate 14 : Lychgate to St. Marys Church

Building Materials and Local Details

- 4.13 The main Hall building is constructed of tooled ashlar and has a fine portecochere to its main frontage. The angular bridge to the former main drive to the Hall is of dressed stone. The Church of St Marys is of coursed squared rubble.
- 4.14 The stables, brewhouse (coachman's cottage), the Cottages and Top Lodge were all built in red brickwork. Top Lodge has stone dressings to window and door surrounds as architectural embellishments.

Historic Ground Surfaces

- 4.15 The graveled footpaths which linked the various elements that comprised the formal pleasure grounds remain in evidence in parts. Within the woodland areas they are largely overgrown. Stones originally placed alongside the woodland walks survive in places.
- 4.16 The memorial to Sir Joshua Reynolds faces eastwards along a lime avenue lined with decorative cobble and brickwork. The avenue expands at its eastern end into a pebble surfaced circle.
- 4.17 The graveled former main driveway from Ashby Road remains in evidence, although for much of its length it is overgrown. Many of the driveways and pathways within the immediate vicinity of the Hall were resurfaced in tarmacadam whilst the Hall was under the ownership of the National Coal Board (later British Coal).

The Archaeological Significance and Potential of the Area

4.18 The present Hall occupies the site of at least two previous houses and thus there is high potential for the existence of below ground archaeology surrounding the existing building.

4.19 Within the grounds there are a number of other sites formally occupied by estate buildings and again there is high potential for the survival of below ground archaeology. The sites include :-

- a former walled garden area associated with the previous Hall on the site in the area now occupied by a pinetum (to the north-west of the present Hall)
- the former walled garden and gardeners cottage located in the north-western area of the grounds.
- the former 'eyecatcher'/farm buildings towards the northern boundary of the Area (the area is now occupied a modern store building)
- the service yard associated with the previous Hall which included a range of outbuildings along the northern side of the wall to the churchyard
- a former pheasantry (of circa 1833) which stood at the northern end of the Winter Garden; its flagged floor remains.
- The remains of a nineteenth century icehouse to the south of St. Marys Church

4.20 To the south-west of the Hall the grassed hollow earthworks of the former Church Pool remain alongside the former main drive. To the south-east of the Hall an area of hollowed out earthworks have been identified as those of the former

course of Rempstone Road (Leicestershire County Council's Sites and Monuments Record). The road was diverted to its present course upon the building of the new Hall at the beginning of the nineteenth century. To the south-west of the Parish Church raised platforms either side of the road may have been the locations of village houses (Leicestershire County Council's Sites and Monuments Record).

- 4.21 To the north-eastern boundary are the remains of a park pale (ditch and bank) associated with the former deer park of the medieval period.

Relationship Between the Area and the Surrounding Landscape

- 4.22 The Hall and its pleasure grounds are now largely surrounded by an agricultural landscape. The land to the east and north-east was part of the planned parkland landscape for the Hall and is included within the extent of the Grade II * listed historic park and garden. This area provided the foreground to the views from the eastern side of the Hall towards Bardon Hill. Rempstone Road is of a sunken nature as it crosses through this parkland **(15)**.
- 4.23 The Grade II* designated parkland includes a ha-ha which runs alongside the eastern side of the pleasure grounds to the Hall and mature areas of tree planting within field areas now given over to pastoral agricultural use. The parkland also includes the properties at Keepers Lodge and Canterbury Lodge **(16)**. The latter is a Grade II listed 'picturesque' dwelling of the early nineteenth century, which was formerly a lodge to Coleorton Hall.

**Plate 15 : Rempstone Road cutting through the former Parkland to
Coleorton Hall**

Plate 16 : Canterbury Lodge, Rempstone Road

- 4.25 The landscape surrounding the parkland to Coleorton Hall incorporates a large number of former bell pits used for extracting coal resources. The Connery, an area of former mining workings, some 500 metres to the south of Coleorton Hall is designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- 4.26 The influence of the Beaumont family extended into Church Town where there are a number of buildings with historical associations with the family. Coleorton Hospital (Almshouses) and Viscount Beaumont's School on Ashby Road are both rebuildings of 1867. The Almshouses (at the junction of Ashby Road/Rempstone Road) with their half-butterfly plan, are now occupied as a single private dwelling. The Hospital and School were originally founded by Lord Viscount Beaumont in 1707 (White, 1846, p335). The small cemetery chapel and its boundary wall of circa 1867 on Ashby Road in Church Town may also have been built at the bequest of the Beaumont family.
- 4.27 To the north-west of the Hall grounds is the late eighteenth century (former) Hall Farmhouse. Sir George Beaumont lived at the Farmhouse for a while during the re-building of Coleorton Hall and William and Dorothy Wordsworth stayed at the property between 1806-8 (DoE, 1983, p8).

5. FACTORS HAVING A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

- 5.1 The individual factors considered to have a negative impact on the character of the Area are shown on Map 3.

Vacant Historic Buildings

- 5.2 Within the Area, the Parish Church remains in regular use. However, the Hall, Top Lodge, the former Brewhouse (Coachman's Cottage), stable block and the Cottages along with the post war NCB offices/outbuildings have all been vacant since approximately 1993.

Buildings and Land of Poor Visual Quality

- 5.3 The appearance of Coleorton Hall and its setting is presently marred by a number of buildings which have been erected to the rear (north) of the Hall. These buildings comprise the post-war office buildings constructed for the National Coal Board **(17&18)**. The large extent of tarmacadam to the car parking area to the eastern side of the post-war office buildings is also severely detrimental to the setting of the listed Hall, the Conservation Area and the historic landscape. The visual impact of this car park and of the new length of driveway built to serve it is further compounded by the lighting columns erected alongside them.

Plate 17 : Post War Office Buildings (Beaumont House) and Boiler House to the North of Coleorton Hall

Plate 18 : Post War Office Buildings (Beaumont House) and Car Park to the North of Coleorton Hall

- 5.4 A modern store building towards the northern boundaries of the site is also detrimental to the character and setting of the Area. The construction of the building may also have led to damage being caused to the archaeological remains of the former 'eyecatcher'/ farm building which occupied the site in the nineteenth century. The post-war sycamore woodland at the northern boundary of the site appears incongruous within the context of the early nineteenth century picturesque landscape.
- 5.5 Top Lodge incorporates a flat roofed single storey extension - added in the 1960s prior to the listing of the building - which detracts from the character and appearance of the property.

The Fragmentation of the Historic Asset

- 5.6 The Hall and its landscaped grounds were planned as a complete whole with the various elements interlinked by pathways. In the post-war period under the ownership of the NCB, there was some fragmentation of the grounds with the building of the residential property 'The Cedars' in the former Winter Garden and its subsequent sub-division from the main grounds. This separation has undermined the historical interpretation of the site and the introduction of new garden elements has to some extent undermined the setting of the Area. Any additional fragmentation of the historic grounds may further undermine the character and historical inter-relationship of this locally and nationally important landscape.

6. APPENDIX: Register of Historic Parks and Gardens : Coleorton Hall

LEICESTERSHIRE

COLEORTON

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE
COLEORTON
SK3917**

**GD1957
II***

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

Parkland and a range of pleasure grounds around a country house developed in the early C19 by Sir George Beaumont and various of his artistic friends including the Wordsworths and Uvedale Price. Possible involvement by William Sawrey Gilpin.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

The Beaumonts acquired the manor of Coleorton by marriage in 1426. Thomas, Viscount Beaumont died in 1702; he was the last of his family to reside at Coleorton for a century until, in 1800, Sir George Howland Beaumont decided to move from Essex to the dilapidated C17 manor house at Coleorton which he replaced with a new house designed by George Dance. Beaumont was an important patron of the arts, and a skilled amateur painter. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Scott, Reynolds, Constable, Wilkie, Lawrence, Mrs Siddons, Byron, Farington and Price were among his friends and visitors to Coleorton. Scott began Ivanhoe here, and Constable drew in the grounds. One or two, notably Uvedale Price, helped with laying out the grounds around it. Wordsworth, who in 1806 stayed at Hall Farm 600m to the west with his sister Dorothy and Coleridge, wrote a number of poems here and with her created the Winter Garden. On his death in 1827 Coleorton passed to Beaumonts cousin Sir G H Willoughby (d 1845), thereafter passing from father to son until sold to the National Coal Board (NCB) in 1948. In 1997 the Hall and surrounding land were sold by British Coal to a development consortium.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING

Coleorton Hall and St. Mary's Church stand 1km west of the extensive but scattered settlement of Coleorton, separated from it by the B5324 Rempstone Road. The Hall stands on high ground, with extensive views east to Charnwood Forest. To the south the boundary of the park follows Ashby Road, while to the north it follows a section of Rempstone Road and to the east a short length of Main Street, Coleorton. Otherwise the boundary follows field edges and, to the north, the southern limit of Rough Park. The area here registered is 100ha.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

The modern approach to the Hall is from the south-west, via a curving drive off Ashby Road. This is to the west of the C19 approach, which still survives, albeit in derelict state. On Ashby Road is Top Lodge (listed grade II), a single-storey, Tudor-gothic building. This was built c. 1812, and enlarged in the mid and late C19. From this the drive runs north through a shrubbery for c. 150m before turning east, towards the Hall and its porte cochere. At about this point, 120m west-south-west of the Hall, it crosses an early C19, single-span, ashlar bridge (listed grade II), which in the early C19 carried

the drive over Church Pool. Canterbury Lodge, larger and c. 1849, stands 700m north-east of the Hall, at the end of former tree-lined drive which approached its north side across grassland called Canterbury Park.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING

Coleorton Hall (listed grade II*) was built 1804-8 for Sir George Beaumont. George Dance the Younger (d. 1825), who had known Beaumont for twenty years, was invited to design a new house. At first (1802) it was intended to incorporate the old house. In the event, in a long correspondence Uvedale Price advised on the design of a new one, employing stripped gothic, Greek and 'Hindoo' styles in what was a modestly-sized house, adequate for Beaumont's occasional residences there and sufficient to house part of his art collection. This house was greatly enlarged in 1862 by F P Cockerell (d. 1878), whose alterations and enlargements, including a second storey, produced the present tooled ashlar Hall. On the five-bay, west, entrance front there is a porte cochere. The garden front is to the south. At the north end of the Hall are area service buildings, extended in 1862.

North of the Hall is the C18 Brewery building converted c. 1806 into a cottage for the coachman. Also there are brick stables and coach houses of c. 1832, built onto the older C18 stable block. North of these, c. 100m north of the Hall, are office buildings constructed by the NCB in the 1950s and 1960s.

The Hall which Dance's replaced was built in the late C17. That incorporated an older stone turret.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

To the west of the Hall the approach drives run through lawns with specimen trees, some early C19 but mostly later C20. Just visible from the Hall is the bridge to the west-south-west, which when first constructed in the early C19 carried the approach drive over Church Pool, now a grassy hollow. To the south of the lawns (outside the registered area), and partly framing the view across them from the Hall, is St. Mary's Church (listed grade II*), a medieval structure with west tower and spire, In 1802, before landscaping began, there was a large service and farm courtyard west of the Hall including the kitchen garden.

Running along the south and east sides of the Hall is a broad terrace (listed grade II). This was built c. 1830, and has Coade-type stone urns (marked Croggan, Lambeth, 1827) on the east, garden front, wall. From this a short flight of steps leads down to the upper lawn, 100m from east to west. On the north edge of the lawn is a rustic summerhouse, later C20 but perhaps based on a C19 predecessor. To its west, 25 north-east of the Hall, is a large boulder, Wilson's Stone, dedicated to the landscape painter Richard Wilson (d. 1782); carved on it is 'BROUGHT HERE 1818'. This was drawn by Constable in 1823. A smaller boulder inscribed 'Red Wilson 1812' lies on the western rim of the Winter Garden. A terrace walk along the east side of the lawns gives views east across the Rose Garden, to the park beyond and the further landscape. A stone terrace wall (listed grade II), designed by Dance and described in 1806 as new-built, runs along the terrace walk; at its north and south ends are bastions, the latter 6m high and traditionally called The Pulpit. Here the wall turns west, to define what in the

C19 was viewing terrace over the Winter Garden; now it overlooks the gardens of The Cedars (see below). In 1802 the area of the upper lawn was a Strawberry Garden.

A flight of fifteen steps leads down from the centre of the terrace walk along the bottom of the upper lawn to the Rose Garden (originally Flower Garden), which is 50m from east to west by 80m from north to south. An axial path runs east from the bottom of the steps terminating at a fountain. The two halves of the Rose Garden are lawn with geometric flower beds and regularly spaced conifers. Along the bottom (east) of the garden is a yew hedge and ha-ha; beyond is the park. Along the north and south sides of the Rose Garden are banks of rhododendrons, with shrubberies and specimen trees behind. Later C19 illustrations show highly intricate bedding schemes within this garden, of which the present scheme is a simplification.

Leading north off the north-east corner of the upper lawn is a flight of six steps, on piers either side of which are Coade stone busts (listed grade II) of 1817 of Milton and Shakespeare. From the steps a straight walk, with low yew hedges to either side, leads to Beaumont's Memorial (listed grade II), a 2m high block of stone with side pilasters and cornice in which is inscribed a verse by Wordsworth composed in 1811 (replaced 1976; original plaque set in Hall entrance).

Running from east to west in the woodland north of the upper lawn, behind the summerhouse, is an avenue of mature limes (planted by 1811), c. 50m long. At the west end is a memorial to Sir Joshua Reynolds (listed grade II), comprising a square funeral urn on a plinth which carries an inscription by Wordsworth. This was drawn by Constable in 1823 as 'The Cenotaph'. Extending east from this, beneath the lime canopy, is a pebble- and tile-decorated walk, which expands at the east end of the walk to a pebbled circle c. 10m in diameter, set around the edge of which are herms surmounted by Coade-stone busts of Michelangelo and Raphael.

North of Reynold's and Beaumont's memorials The Grove, ornamental woodland with stone-edged paths, continues north for 350m, extending to the north-east into a lobe-shaped projection whose outer edge is retained by a rubble-stone terrace wall. Towards the northern end of the lobe is a large hollow, possibly once a quarry garden and originally a mine or quarry. On the north-west side of the lobe is a shed. This marks the site of the Hall's Home Farm, built in the mid C19. From the north-east corner of the lobe, perhaps the site of a seat, there are extensive views east and north. It is known that Uvedale Price advised on the 'picturesque' treatment of the Hall and its grounds, and correspondence of 1802 and later (Pierpont Morgan Library) indicates that Price may actually have overseen works here. It seems possible that these woodland walks, and perhaps the similarly stone-edged ones through the woodland around the Winter Garden south lawns, were Price's main contribution.

East of the East Terrace around the Hall lawns slope gently away. These are planted with large numbers of specimen trees and shrubs. Several trees have slate plaques recording the date and circumstance of their planting. These centre on the 1830s.

Beaumont invited William and Dorothy Wordsworth to stay at Hall Farmhouse in 1806 because of their overcrowded conditions at Dove Cottage. Coleridge joined them there soon afterwards. In a letter to Lady Beaumont William Wordsworth set out his ideas for a Winter Garden to be planted in an old quarry which had recently been used as builder's dump. The Wordsworths subsequently oversaw the development of the garden

(in 1875 apparently called 'Wordsworth's Garden'), which lies south of the upper lawn. In 1959 a house (The Cedars) was built in the southern part of this garden, and there has been much planting since that date. Nevertheless, many features and trees of early C19 survive. At the north end of the Winter Garden is the 4m tall, prominently buttressed, stone wall with viewing terrace which retains the south-east corner of the upper lawn. Part of the wall was designed by George Dance. A pheasantry was built against this wall c. 1833, and its flagged floor still survives. South of this is a linear pool of 1933-4, south of which lawns with late C20 planting run down to The Cedars. West of that house in the early C19 quarry garden which forms the core of the Winter Garden. Features include steps and rockwork on the north side; a grotto with shellwork by Dorothy Wordsworth and a pebble floor with Star of David pattern on the west side; and an urn on a squat pillar, supposedly from Pompeii. In front of the grotto is a circular pool 5m across with central fountain; this a C20 reworking of an earlier C19 pool. Several features lie around the edge of the Winter Garden. On the south-east side is Scott's Seat, a stone-cut alcove. South of this are ruins of an old cottage. Elements of a second ruined building, Ivy Cottage, stand south-west of the garden. This, adjoining the main entry to the garden, was allegedly the setting of Sir David Wilkie's painting 'An Old Woman Knitting'. Above the west edge of the quarry garden is an early C19 pedimented ashlar monument (listed grade II), c. 2m high and incorporating a verse by Wordsworth composed in 1808. Beyond the Winter Garden, below the church, are the remains of a C19 icehouse.

In 1800 there were large numbers of coal mines around the Hall, and as well as natural desire to lay out new grounds around his new Hall, Beaumont intended that the landscaping would conceal the noxious local industry. The landscape gardener in charge of the work was James Cranston (d. 1835) of King's Acre (Hertfordshire), recommended to the Beaumonts in May 1803 by Uvedale Price. Later, in 1806, the Wordsworths had a rather uneasy relationship with Mr Crain, apparently the gardener. In 1820 Price recommended William Sawrey Gilpin (d. 1843), who he said was planning to take up the profession of landscape architect, to Lady Beaumont, and probably brought him to Coleorton in the autumn.

PARK

Extending c. 1km east of the Hall, and sloping away from it, is the park-like grassland known as the Paddock; this retains some mature parkland trees. Cutting across it from south-west to north-east is Rempstone Road. This is slightly sunken, set in a cutting retained by a 2-3m high stone retaining wall, and traffic is largely invisible from the Hall. The road was probably moved to this line c. 1812; earlier it probably crossed the upper lawn area east of the Hall.

There was a park at Coleorton by 1303, which lay between the Hall and Newbold Hurst. A larger park was created in 1606. This, which lay in the area of Rough Park, immediately north-west of the registered area, was later lost to coal mining and was long gone by the time Nichols wrote in 1804. The Paddock was presumably laid out by Sir George Beaumont in the early C19.

KITCHEN GARDEN

A walled kitchen garden formerly stood on level ground 250m north-west of the Hall. Its walls were built by 1835, and in the mid C19 its vineries were celebrated. The garden walls were damaged by mining subsidence and demolished in 1952. The area is now grass, having been used by the NCB as a sports pitch.

In 1802 the kitchen garden lay along the north side of the service courtyard to the west of the Hall. A new garden was then made west of the stables. It was this which was replaced by the garden of 1835.

REFERENCES

J Nichols, *History and Antiquities of Leicester* 3, pt ii (1804), pp733-44 (4 vols, in 8 parts, 1795-1811, reprinted 1971)

J Horticulture and Cottage Gardener, (18 November 1875), pp446-7; (23 December 1875), pp558-60

M Greaves, *Regency Patron; Sir George Beaumont* (1966)

M Allentuck, 'Sir Uvedale Price and the Picturesque Garden' in N Pevsner (ed), *The Picturesque Garden* (1974), pp59-76

History Today, (April 1974), pp1-7

F Owen and B Brown, *A Collector of Genius. A Life of Sir George Beaumont* (1988)

D Whitehead, 'Cranston Nursery, King's Acre Road' (draft article for Herefs and Worcs Gardens Trust Newsletter 1996)

Information from John Crocker

Maps

Plan of Hall and surrounds, 1802 (D1/9/3), (Soane Museum, London)

OS 6" to 1 mile : Leicestershire sheet 16 SW, 1925 edition

Leicestershire sheet 16 SE, 1925 edition

Archival items

Coleorton Papers, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

Description written : July 1998

Amended : May 1999

Registered Inspector : PAS

Edited : July 1999

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Butler Johnson
(1905) Sir George Beaumont and Coleorton Hall
- Cantor, L and
Squires, A
(1997) The Historic Parks and Gardens of Leicestershire
and Rutland
Kairos Press, Leicester
- Cantor, L
(1998) The Historic Houses of Leicestershire and Rutland
Kairos Press, Leicester
- Department of the
Environment
(1983) List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic
Interest : District of North West Leicestershire
28th List
H.M.S.O., London
- Department of the
Environment
(1994) PPG15 : Planning and the Historic Environment
H.M.S.O., London
- English Heritage
(1993) Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic
Interest in England : Part 26 (Leicestershire)
English Heritage, London
- English Heritage
(1995) Conservation Area Practice
English Heritage, London.
- English Heritage
(1997) Conservation Area Appraisals
English Heritage, London.
- English Heritage
(1998) Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic
Interest in England - Register Upgrade Project :
Draft Description for Coleorton
English Heritage, London
- Nichols, J
(1804) The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicestershire
Vol III Part II
Leicestershire County Council (1979 facsimile)
- Kellys
(1904) Directory for Leicestershire
Kellys, London
- Pevsner, N
(1960) Buildings of England : Leicestershire and Rutland (1st Ed)
Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth

BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)

- Pevsner, N &
Williamson, E
(1992) The Buildings of England : Leicestershire and
Rutland (2nd Ed with Alterations)
Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth
- Revill, G Mining, Landowners and Park Landscape : Two Examples
(1987) From the East Midlands (Unpublished Thesis)
- Welding, J (Ed)
(1984) Leicestershire in 1777 : An Edition of John Prior's Map
Leicestershire Industrial History Society, Leicester
- White, W History, Gazetteer and Directory of Leicestershire
(1846) W White, Sheffield