

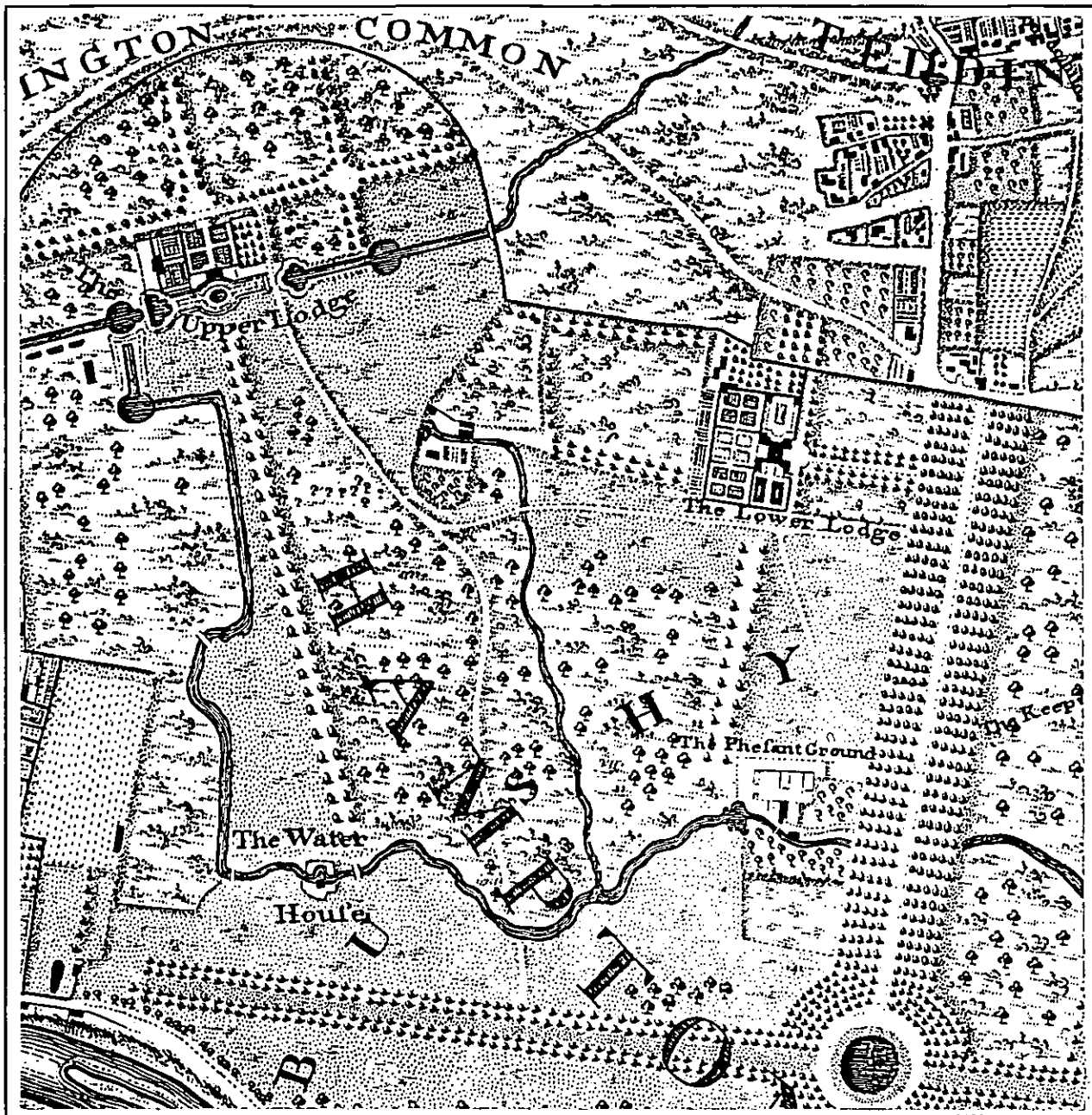
**BUSHY HOUSE,
BUSHY PARK,
LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND
UPON THAMES**

**An Earthwork Survey
by
The Royal Commission on the
Historical Monuments of England**

ROYAL PARKS PROJECT

January 1996





Rocque's plan of 1741-5
(Bushy House is shown as Lower Lodge)

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1. INTRODUCTION (Figure 1)

In August 1995 the Cambridge Archaeology Field Office of the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England carried out a survey of the visible archaeological features in the grounds of Bushy House, adjacent to Bushy Park. Although Bushy House lies outside the current jurisdiction of the Royal Parks Agency, it belongs to the Park historically and in consequence the work was undertaken as part of the RCHME's Royal Parks Project.

The area examined during the survey comprised the gardens south and south-west of Bushy House and part of the playing fields to the east. It did not include survey or investigation of standing buildings, other than basic recording of the Temple in the gardens.

Bushy House is situated in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames at NGR TQ 1557 7035, formerly in the north-central part of Bushy Park. The grounds north of the house have been extensively re-developed in the present century for the National Physical Laboratory and are now covered by buildings and roads. These have destroyed surface remains of the gardens other than portions of garden walls and a pavilion called the Clock House.

The purpose of the RCHME survey was to provide a plan and assessment of the remains of the gardens associated with the house, which developed from the later seventeenth century.

The RCHME is grateful to the National Physical Laboratory for permitting access to the grounds.

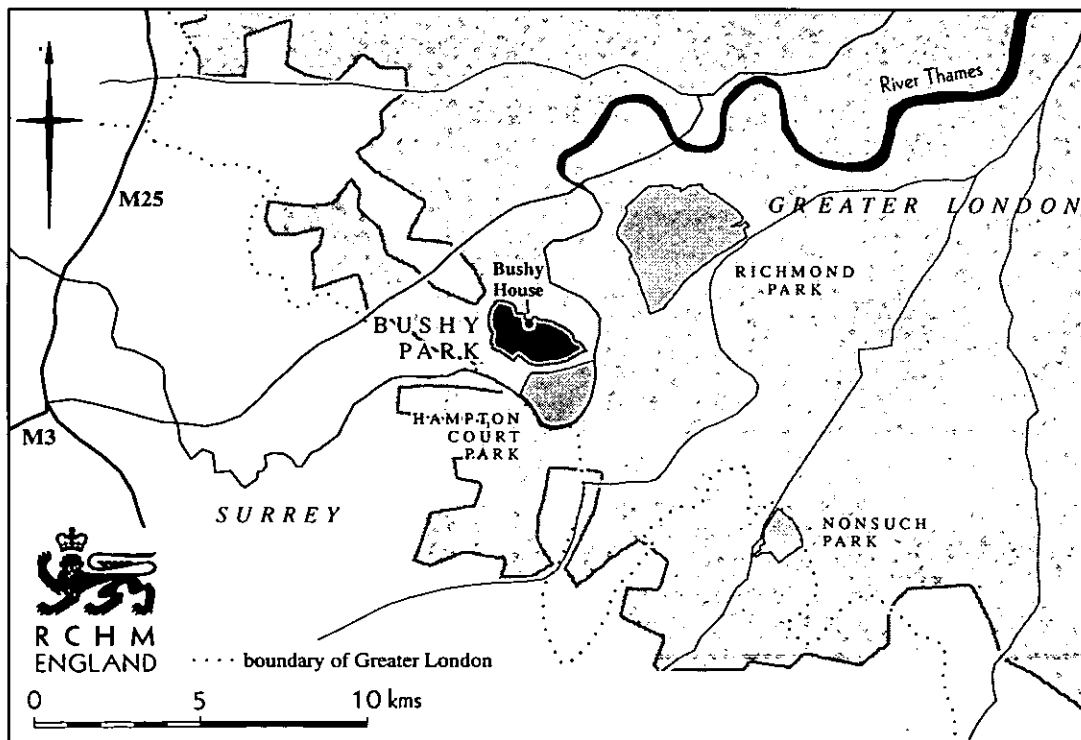


Figure 1:
Location map

2. HISTORICAL SUMMARY (Figure 2)

The area presently known as Bushy Park is actually an amalgam of several parks, enclosed separately between c.1500 and 1620. In the early sixteenth century, emparkment took place on open fields, pasture and meadow north of Hampton Court, first by Cardinal Wolsey and later by Henry VIII. Early accounts describe this area as the 'Upper Park', a reference to its location north of the Home Park attached to Hampton Court. Upper Park was sub-divided by a straight brick wall, running north to south, into two parts called Middle Park and Hare Warren (DOE 1982 III esp. Fig 3).

The original Bushy Park was added to the Upper Park by Henry VIII in 1537 and equates to an oval area of 180 acres around Upper Lodge; at the time it was called New Park but became known as Bushy Park before 1604. Furthermore, after 1713 the name Bushy Park came to denote the whole of the present park with the amalgamation of Bushy Park, Hare Warren and Middle Park (which together formed the old Upper Park) and Court Field.

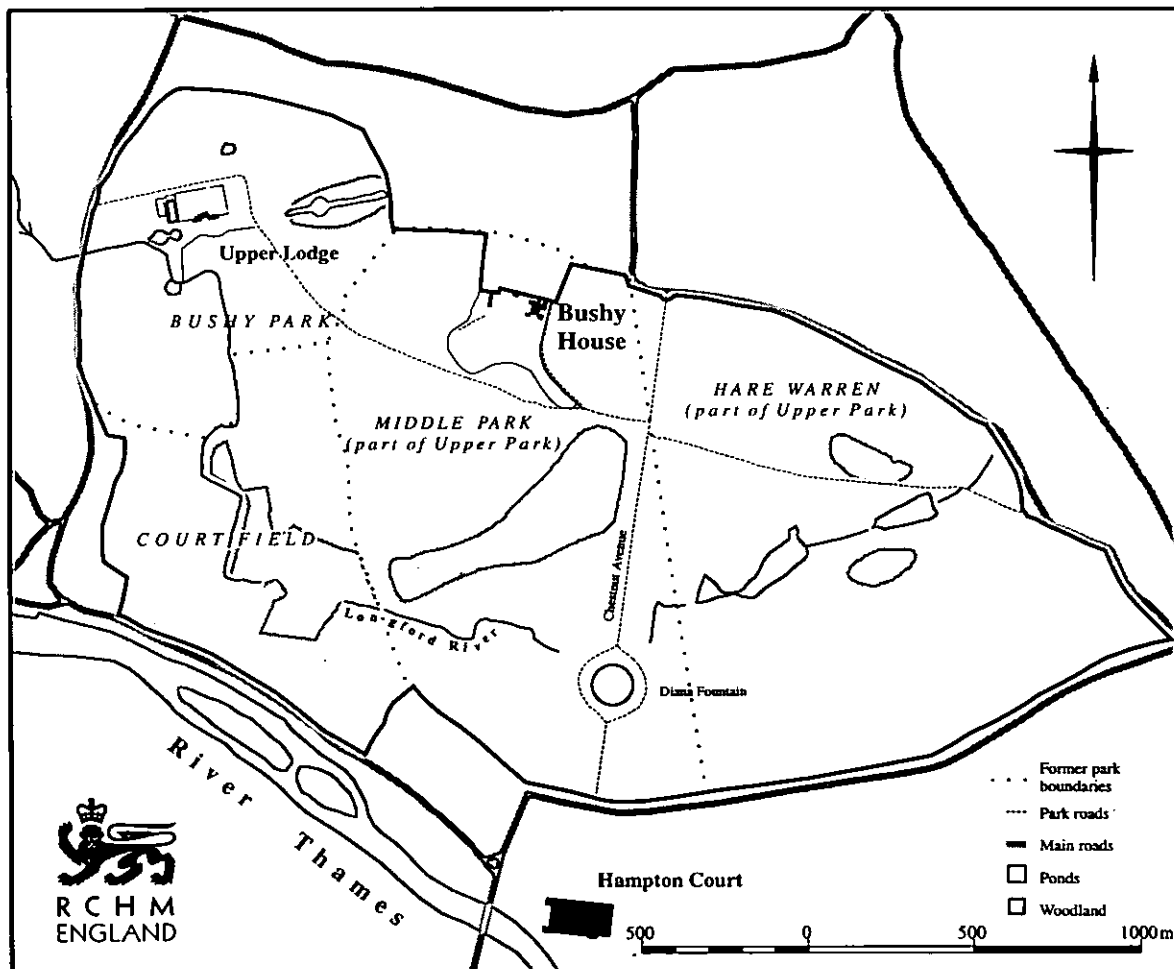


Figure 2: Bushy House in relation to Bushy Park

The present Bushy House lies in the former Middle Park. The first probable reference to the present site is in a survey of 1653 which records

'a large dwelling house or lodge, with the Barns, Stables, and other appurtenances, standing towards that syde of the Parke which borders upon Hounslow Heath'

(Foster and Pyatt 1976, 1).

After the Restoration, Charles II appointed a friend, Edward Proger, to the Keepership of Middle Park. Between 1663 and 1669 Proger spent £4000 - an enormous sum for the time - on a lodge of some pretention. It has been argued convincingly that the house, originally of two stories, was designed by William Samwell, a notable architect who worked in a similar style to Roger Pratt and Hugh May (Foster and Pyatt 1976, 6). The house is depicted on a map of pre-1709 in the north-eastern corner of a square garden, with a small formal compartment to the west and a large orchard to the south (Gough Drawings a.4, folio 62).

Bushy House is depicted on a map of c. 1710, attributed to Charles Bridgeman and Henry Wise, with a rectangular block of compartmented gardens around it and a main approach from the west off the Chestnut Avenue, along a carriage road flanked by double elm avenues (PRO Work 32/313A).

After Mr. Proger's death in 1713, the Keeperships of Middle Park and Hare Warren came into the hands of the 1st Earl of Halifax who had been carrying out extensive improvements in the neighbouring Upper Lodge and Bushy Park. Halifax and his son, the 2nd Earl, probably carried out major rebuilding works on Bushy House, masking much of the earlier work and adding the four corner pavilions. A date of 1720 on a bell in the surviving clock house probably indicates that the works were almost complete by this time (DOE 1982 I, 51, note 21).

A map drawn up between 1714 and 1735 shows the house and gardens, as completed under the 2nd Earl of Halifax, in great detail (Figure 3) (PRO MR 1454). The core of the garden was a walled rectangle divided by further walls into six equal square compartments, in two rows of three. The house, shown with its four corner pavilions, was provided with vistas to the south, east and west but the main axis was east-west. A tree-lined carriage road from the east led through a large fenced close which was thereby divided unequally into two, and ended in a semi-circular forecourt area defined by ornamental railings with gates. A terrace led north and south from the forecourt along the eastern edge of the gardens (now Glazebrook Road). The house occupied the central square compartment of the eastern row and opened directly to the north into a compartment containing a rectangular pool, and small pavilions in the far corners. To the south a tree-lined vista opened up in the park, seen through a *clairevoie* across a compartment with a central path flanked by paired octagonal basins with fountains. All three compartments in the western row were each sub-divided into four smaller squares by axial and perimeter paths flanked by topiary planting, very similar to the neighbouring gardens at Upper Lodge. The central compartment also had a *clairevoie* panel enabling the westward vista.

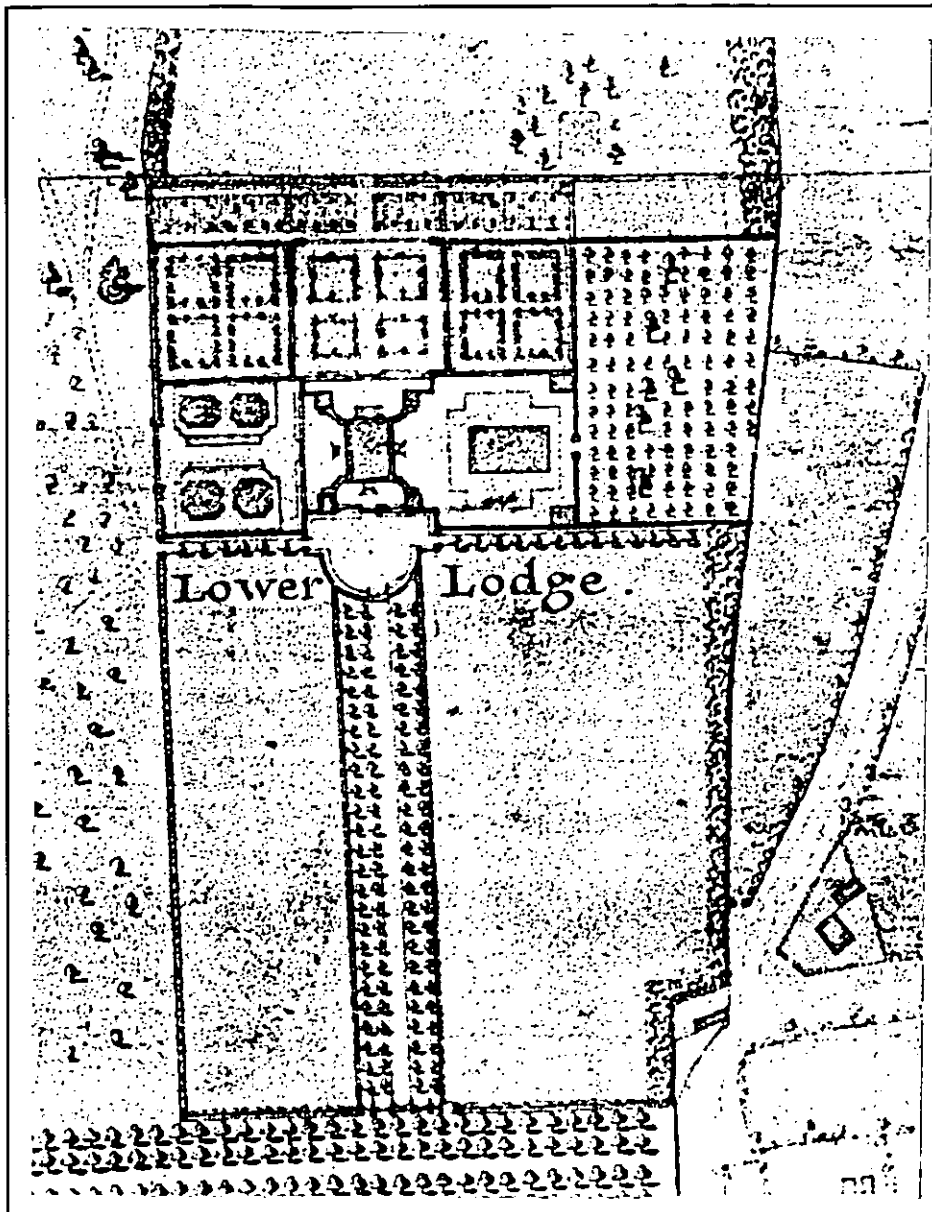


Figure 3:
Bushy House in the
early 18th century
(from PRO Kew
MR 1454)

*Note: illustration
 orientated with
 north to the right*

Beyond these three compartments was a narrow rectangular strip, also topiary planted, and on the north side of all six compartments, a large grid-planted orchard which retained some older parkland pollards.

The house and gardens remained largely unchanged in the middle of the eighteenth century (Rocque 1741-5). There was a rumour of re-design work by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (see below), a known friend of the resident of Bushy House between 1771 and 1797, Lord North. Although Brown cannot have worked here because formal gardens appear on General Roy's map of Hounslow Heath, dated 1784, and Brown had died in the previous year (DOE 1982 :1, 62, note 9), there remains some possibility of late eighteenth century garden changes (see Discussion, below).

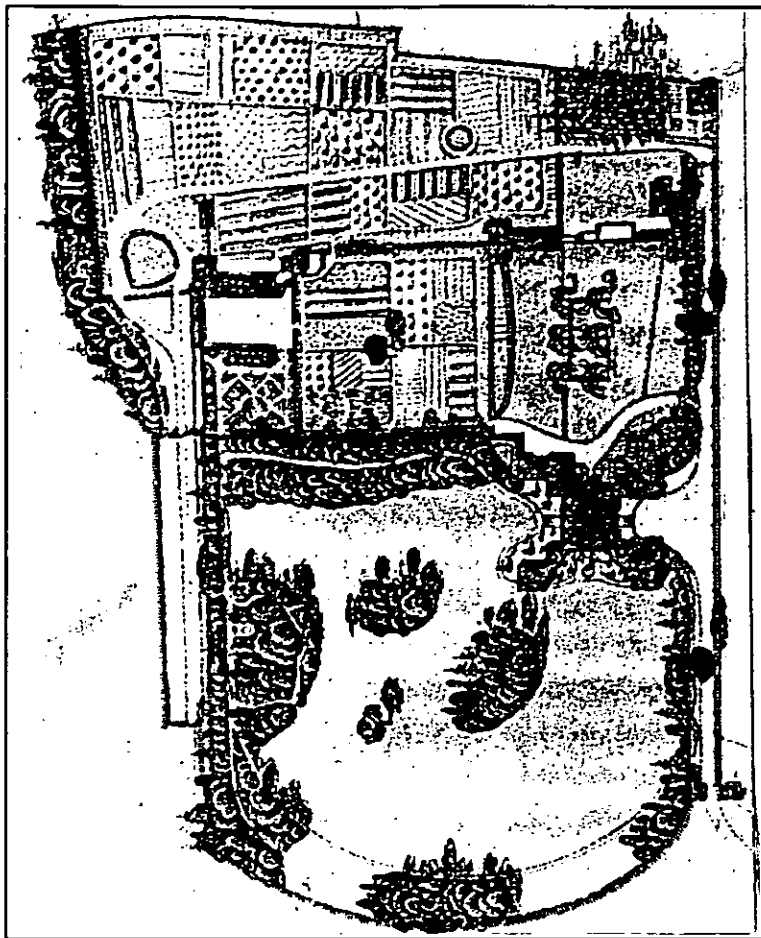


Figure 4: Bushy House and gardens in 1823
(from Warren 1823)

In 1797 William, Duke of Clarence and third son of George III became ranger of Bushy Park. He lived in Bushy House until he became king in 1830, and often thereafter. Clarence was an improver and he expended both time and money on extensive changes. Money was raised from felling and timber sales in the Park where large areas were made available to pastoral farming at the expense of the deer. In 1820, £4000 was spent on improving the house and there was additional expenditure until 1829 (Foster and Pyatt 1976, 22). An early nineteenth century plan (Figure 4) (Warren 1823, reproduced in Foster and Pyatt 1976 and henceforth called 'the 1823 plan') shows a very different garden in which there was little formality: the

north-eastern walled compartment survived as part of a large kitchen garden which also occupied most of the former orchard; the south-western compartment retained its north and east perimeter walls and the small garden pavilions had been much extended; the central rectangular pool survived, its periphery planted with weeping willows. However the elm avenue on the main eastern approach was felled and a new approach created from the south along the eastern side of the gardens. South and west of the house the other four walled compartments had been completely removed and the garden extended a little further west into the park, its hard edge softened by a ha-ha, curving gently outwards. Within these bounds were landscaped pleasure grounds comprising an extensive lawn with carefully placed tree clumps, belts of perimeter planting, and single specimen trees; both evergreens and deciduous species were used. A new walk wound and curved its way around the perimeter.

In 1827 the garden was further extended, in the interests of privacy, on the southern margins. From the south-eastern corner, a new drive led south-east through a belt of shrubs and woodland to new twin lodges with gates, designed by Decimus Burton (they survive at NGR TQ 1570 7006) (DOE 1982 III, 62). Probably at the same time, on the south and south-west, the pleasure grounds were extended by another encroachment into the Park where a large new shrubbery was

constructed and defined by a new ha-ha. It is shown on a plan of 1850 (PRO Work/32/4) and another of 1863, when a garden building occupied the central space (Ordnance Survey 1880).

Following William IV's death in 1837 Queen Adelaide stayed on at Bushy House until her death in 1849. During this time some £2000 were spent on works in the garden and on a new conservatory (Foster and Pyatt 1976, 29). In 1850 the gardens were described in some detail:

'On the south front are the beautiful pleasure grounds separated from the park by a sunk fence. On the lawn is a finely rounded knoll crowned with evergreens. It was laid out by Brown... (see above) a noble exemplification of his style of landscape gardening. To the right are the temple, the arcade walk covered with honeysuckles, roses and rose-acacias, and the Queen's drive.... These exquisitely lovely pleasure grounds, of twenty two acres, are composed of various scenes; from some are fine open views of the park, the free-flowing undulations of the green velvet lawn are diversified by groups, clumps and single trees, and the broad walks are carried through the ever-changing open vistas or berry groves of the home grounds.'

(Foster and Pyatt 1976, 25; quoting Keane's 'Beauties of Middlesex' 1850)

Thereafter Bushy House was maintained as a grace and favour residence until 1900, when Queen Victoria exchanged it for property in Pall Mall, more convenient for Buckingham Palace. The result of this exchange was the creation and rapid development of the National Physical Laboratory (NPL).

3. DESCRIPTION and INTERPRETATION (Figures 2 to 6)

(For letters or words in **bold** in the text see Figure 5)

The late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Little remains of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century gardens: much is lost under the NPL buildings or masked by later garden developments. However, east of the house an area used as playing fields is maintained under short grass. Under these conditions it is possible to pick out slight remains of the main eastern approach. Two parallel parchmarks define the former course of the carriage drive, the whole a slightly raised camber 8m wide. The curving edge of the forecourt is just visible as a slight earthwork, especially south of the former drive, where it is a 0.2m high scarp falling away from the house. On each side of the former drive, between 15m and 17m away and parallel to it, is a slight earthwork comprising a bank/scarp with external ditch. These eroded features, aligned on the junction between the curving forecourt and what is now Glazebrook Road, mark the boundaries of the approach avenue, formerly a bank with a close fence and an external drainage ditch. The elm avenues occupied the space between these boundaries and the central drive. Multiple slight banks and ditches to the north are of unknown origin.

On the western side of Glazebrook Road, south-west of the house, an ancient pollarded sweet chestnut tree survives. It would have formed part of planting along the terrace on this side of the garden but it could be an even older, parkland tree.

From the southern elevation of Bushy House the ground falls gradually from a terrace and onto the lawn: it seems likely that the terrace scarp, 0.6m high, is an early feature. At its eastern end, it turns southward into a long scarp, up to 0.8m high, leading a fairly straight course for a little under 90m. This scarp, although altered and enhanced by later developments, defines a fall in ground level from east to west, and may have been cut as a terrace providing a level plane for a formal garden compartment.

A length of eighteenth century garden wall survives west of the house, with the nineteenth century orangery built against it.

The clock house north of Bushy House, one of the garden pavilions on the early eighteenth century plan (PRO MR 1454) has been dated variously to the 1660's (Cherry and Pevsner 1983, 537) and c. 1700 (DOE 1983, 9).

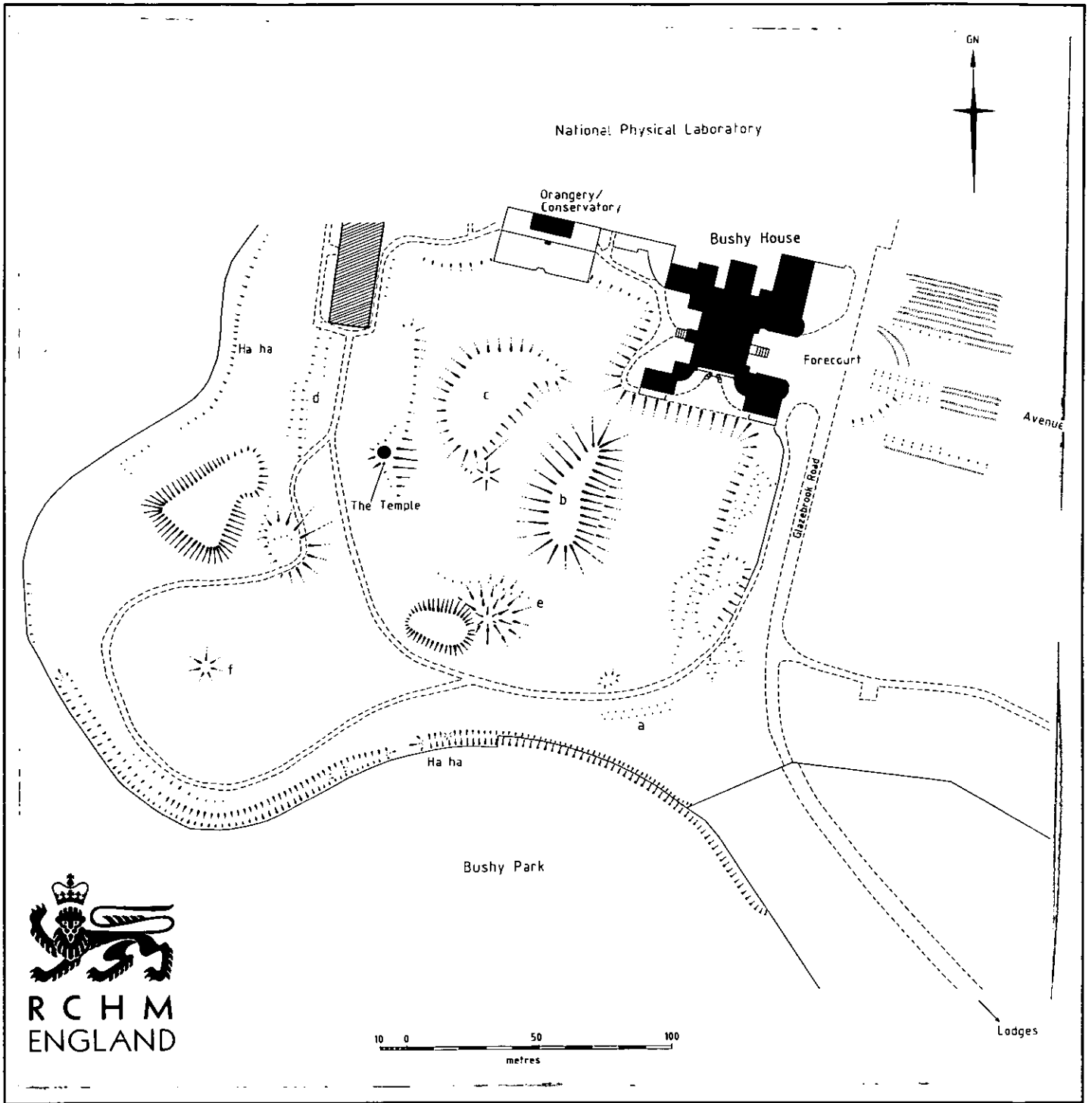


Figure 5: RCHME survey plan (original at 1:1250 scale)

The nineteenth century

The shape of the present garden was laid down in the early/mid-nineteenth century. The line of the second ha-ha survives as a sinuous ditch defining the perimeter: that portion at the edge of the lawn looking into the park has been cleaned out recently and consequently has a sharp V-shaped profile 5m across and 1.5-1.7m deep; in the woodland to the west it is more silted, with areas of dumping, averaging 6.5m across and up to 1.1m deep. It can be traced intermittently around the western side of the garden as an outward-facing scarp no more than 0.4m high. The original ha-ha, of the 1823 plan, is largely infilled but a slight linear depression, **a**, parallel to the present path, some 25m long, may mark its line.

Today, within the ha-ha the structure of the garden is intact. The southward vista into the Park looks out across the lawn, flanked by clumps and belts of trees and shrubs on raised earthen mounds and beds. In the south-western part of the garden, walks extend the lawn among further trees and shrubbery into an increasingly wooded area. Several of the extant features are as recorded on the 1823 plan, notably two large earthen mounds **b** and **c**, measuring 60m by 37m by 1.55m and 55m by 35m by 1.30m respectively. Both have gradual, rounded profiles and support a great variety of trees and shrubs. A garden building called simply '**the Temple**' occupies an elevated position at the southern end of an artificially created north-south scarp, with shrub planting along it (Figure 6). On the 1823 plan, the Temple was situated in an even



Figure 6: The Temple (NMR BB 95/15113)

more secluded position in shrubbery, approached via winding paths from the lawn. It is essentially a rotunda with a lead-covered dome supported by a solid north-western wall and an open south-eastern half of six Tuscan columns facing south-east towards the lawn (DOE 1983). There is a tradition that it was built to commemorate the naval victory of Trafalgar (Foster and Pyatt 1976, 17).

To the west of the Temple there is a low bank, **d**, 50m long, up to 8m wide and 0.3m high, which is truncated on the north by an NPL building and fades to the south under a subsequent path. There are traces of a slight ditch along its eastern side. This bank is part of a straight walk shown along the western fringe of the garden on the 1823 plan (possibly the arcade walk or Queen's Drive referred to in 1850), extant in 1863 but removed by 1913 (Ordnance Survey 1880 and 1914). Twenty metres beyond the point where it fades, a low spread mound, 30m across, may be the original southern end of the walk. The feature as a whole has an earlier origin as a perimeter path of the eighteenth century formal garden.

At its northern end, the terrace scarp along the western side of the house turns westward, defining a terrace 20.0m broad on which stands the mid-nineteenth century orangery (also called the conservatory). This terrace formerly supported a shrubbery through which ran the perimeter path of the pleasure grounds, clearly shown on the 1823 plan. The orangery itself is built against a surviving wall of the eighteenth century formal garden.

Other features include two low mounds **e** and **f**, both crowned by old trees, the latter an ancient oak, probably a parkland pollard which pre-dates the extension of the garden. Both of these trees were probably deliberately utilised as elements of the mid-nineteenth century pleasure grounds, a recurring trait of the 'gardenesque' style of the time (Elliot 1986, 34-5). One such specimen is drawn on the 1823 plan.

There is a very large, sharp-edged, triangular mound in the western part of the garden which supports trees, none of which is of great age. The mound is almost ramp-like, sloping gradually from a height of 3.5m on the south-west to 0.6m on the north-east, and although not shown as an earthwork on plans of any date, it coincides with a discrete area of trees delimited on a map of 1880 (Ordnance Survey 1880).

Overlying mound **e** is a large oval mound, 27m by 20m and 2.1m high, with steep side and a very flat top approached by steps from the east. On it are brick-edged paths and shrubbery and the whole feature is probably quite recent.

4. DISCUSSION

The formal gardens at Bushy House were very much of the late seventeenth century, comprising walled compartmented areas with geometric designs, not clearly integrated with the surrounding landscape. The grand elm-lined eastern approach to Bushy House was a subsidiary among an ambitious series of planting measures undertaken and encouraged by the Royal Gardens Administration in Hampton Court Home Park and Bushy Park in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The focus was of course Hampton Court but the effect for other buildings, including Bushy House, was integration into a huge, outward-looking, Baroque designed landscape from what had previously been a more insular series of individual deer parks and their lodges.

The long survival, throughout the eighteenth century, of these formal gardens at Bushy House is remarkable given a general climate of rapidly changing ideas and taste. Part of the reason for this may have been the relative obscurity of the house in the middle of the century and its use as a periodic residence. It is possible also, however, that the pleasure grounds depicted on Warren's survey of 1823 might have a longer pedigree than has previously been envisaged, possibly early in the Duke of Clarence's time, or perhaps Lord North did commission some work, even if it was not carried out by Brown. The Norths came to Bushy House in 1771 and used it as a summer residence until 1782, thereafter in permanent residence until 1792. Extensive work took place on the house in 1773-74 under the Office of Works, and the attic storey was added at some time prior to 1797 (Foster and Pyatt 1976, 12-13). It is hardly credible that there were not associated re-design work on the garden for a man who was effectively Prime Minister. Some support for this idea is provided by the building of the Temple which is certainly more in keeping with a later eighteenth century landscape garden than an early nineteenth century one: the connotations with Trafalgar may have stemmed solely from the Duke of Clarence's keeping part of the main mast of the 'Victory' here in the nineteenth century (Foster and Pyatt 1976, 17). It was, however, the Duke of Clarence who, in 1827, instituted the changes in the extent of the gardens on the southern side of the house which determined their basic form today.

5. SURVEY AND RESEARCH METHODS

The archaeological survey was carried out between the 6th and 8th of August 1995 by Paul Pattison and Moraig Brown. Most of the archaeological features were surveyed directly onto an Ordnance Survey digital map plot at 1:1250 scale, from taped measurements using conventional graphical methods. Several features in the south-western corner of the garden, where there was a lack of OS control, were recorded digitally using a Wild TC1610 Electronic Theodolite with integral EDM and Wild GRM 10 Rec Module. This data was subsequently transferred to a PC, plotted at 1:1250 scale on a Calcomp 3024 plotter and combined with the taped data.

Photographs of relevant features were taken by Alun Bull.

This report has been researched and written by Paul Pattison, with assistance from Moraig Brown, using a combination of primary and secondary sources which are extensive enough to allow an explanation of all the surface features. It has been edited by Peter Topping. Illustrations and final formatting were prepared by Trevor Pearson using CorelDraw 5 and Corel Ventura software.

The site archive has been deposited in the National Monuments Record, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ, record number TL 17 SE 63.

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6. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES

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- PRO Kew MR 1454 A General Plan of the Royal Palace, Gardens and Parks of Hampton Court and the adjacent country
- PRO Kew Work/32/4 Plan of the Bushy Park Estate, by R Brewer, 1850

7. LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN DURING THE SURVEY

- BB95/15110 Bushy House from the south
- BB95/15110 Bushy House from the west
- BB95/15112 Bushy House: the lawn south of the house, from the east
- BB95/15113 Bushy House: the Temple from the south-east
- BB95/15114 Bushy House: the Temple from the north-east (distant view)
- BB95/15115 Bushy House: the Temple from the north-east (near view)
- BB95/15116 Bushy House: an ancient sweet chestnut tree just south-east of the house
- BB95/15117 Bushy House: the Orangery/Conservatory from the south
- BB95/15118 Bushy House: the Orangery/Conservatory from the south
- BB95/15119 Bushy House: the Orangery/Conservatory from the south-east

