

# Ilam Parkland and Garden History

## Ilam Park, Staffordshire

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Thanks are also due to the staff of the following archives: The Derbyshire Record Office, Stafford Record Office, Lichfield Record Office, The William Salt Library, Stafford, the British Library, the RHS Lindley Library, Newport Reference Library, Buxton Museum and Art Gallery and the Bodleian Library, who patiently answered questions and often provided additional information.

Mr Julian Watts-Russell helpfully confirmed the location of his family's archives, Helen Forder unexpectedly put a face to Mary Port and Rebecca Waddington clarified the present designatory context of Ilam Park within the Peak District National Park.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

‘Nature, in short, has been profuse of her charms to Ilam and Art has well supported her’<sup>1</sup>

Set at the entrance to the Manifold Valley in the White Peak and close to Dovedale, Ilam Park encapsulates an enduring love of the natural world. This dramatic landscape offered sanctuary to St Bertram, sheltered a medieval village, informed the sophisticated eighteenth century Picturesque composition of the Port family, provided a sublime backdrop to the Gothic Watts-Russell house of the early nineteenth century and captured the imagination of the National Trust in the early 1930s.

The property remains extremely popular with visitors enjoying the contrasts of the steep wooded valley, riverside meadows and parkland of Ilam, ornamented by features such as Paradise Walk, the Boil Holes, the Grotto and model village, with the uplands of Bunster Hill, the drama of Thorpe Cloud and the wider landscape of the Staffordshire and Derbyshire Peaks around.

This new study has been able to collate and expand the known history of the landscape of Ilam Park. Most significantly it shows that Ilam was a highly influential site in the development of the Picturesque landscape in England in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Cultural figures such as William Gilpin, Thomas Whately, Samuel Johnson, and perhaps even Jane Austen, visited and recorded the landscape. They specifically described the delights of the river valley and the views from it to the east, promoting ideas of good taste in landscape design and how such landscapes imbued good character in the people who responded well to them.

The owners of Ilam Park, the Ports, the Watts-Russell's and the Hanbury's enhanced it. However, whilst nationally recognised architects have worked here, no record of any noted landscape designer has been found. Ilam Park is therefore a very personal interpretation of prevailing landscape fashions. These interpretations did not, however, lack ambition. The realignment of the River Manifold by the Ports must rank as one of the most ambitious and effective examples of the Picturesque in England, its subtly rendering it ‘natural’. Similarly the expansion and consolidation of the parkland, the creation of a massive kitchen garden in the park, the refinement of formal gardens around a new house and the redesign of the village by the Watts-Russell's demonstrates an unusual confidence. Even further refinement by the Hanburys, evidenced by their smaller but possibly more ornamental kitchen garden and their increased tree planting within the park, speaks of a contentment and deep affection for this ornamental landscape set within the wilder Peak District.

The dramatic history of Ilam Park in the twentieth century, the break up of the wider estate and the part demolition of the hall, has not diminished its charms or the curiosity of those who visit it. The National Trust has responded to this by maintaining and enhancing the landscape. This new study allows the Trust to properly accommodate the history underpinning the landscape to help visitors understand why it looks like it does and how this informs its management. The study describes the elements of the landscape from earthworks to buildings, views and patterns of woodland and vegetation and of their combined contribution to the designed landscape. The study concludes by offering policies and management proposals to help embed this understanding in the future conservation, interpretation and enjoyment of Ilam Park.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘The Thorough Guide, The Peak District’, 1908. WSL: PN4246

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 DE Landscape & Heritage Ltd has been commissioned by the National Trust to research, analyse and report specifically on the historical development of the parkland and gardens at Ilam Park, Staffordshire. The study area relates to primarily land within National Trust ownership and not the full extent of the historic Ilam Park estate.
- 1.2 This report offers a comprehensive study of the chronological development of the designed landscape, and of its associated agricultural landscape, to refine its significance as identified by the 'Ilam Park Conservation Plan 2010 – 16' and to assess its current condition. The analysis recognises the particular historic, aesthetic, ecological and communal significances of Ilam Park.
- 1.3 Based on a refined understanding of the landscape, this report includes new conservation policies to complement and expand on those contained within the Conservation Plan 2010-16 to better guide the conservation of the designed landscape. These policies likewise inform proposals for future work to conserve and restore this aspect of the historic environment of Ilam Park while considering the impact of any potential conservation works upon the natural environment.
- 1.4 The report is presented in the following chapters:
  - Chapter Two: Landscape Context
  - Chapter Three: Historic Development of the Designed Landscape
  - Chapter Four: Ilam Park, A Cultural Landscape
  - Chapter Five: Comparative Landscapes
  - Chapter Six: Gaps in Knowledge
  - Chapter Seven: Analysis of the Designed Landscape
  - Chapter Eight: Statement of Significance
  - Chapter Nine: Conservation Policies
  - Chapter Ten: Outline Programme of Potential Management Actions
  - Chapter Eleven: References/Bibliography
  - Appendix 1: Key plans at A3
- 1.5 An illustrated gazetteer (Appendix 2) supports the study.
- 1.6 The abbreviations used in the text and footnotes of the main of collections consulted are:
  - BOD The Bodleian Library, Oxford;
  - SRO Stafford Record Office, Stafford;
  - WSL William Salt Library, Stafford;
  - DRO Derbyshire Record Office, Matlock;
  - BMAG Buxton Museum and Art Gallery, Buxton;
  - LRO Lichfield Record Office, Lichfield;
  - RHS RHS Lindley Library, London;
  - NRL Newport Reference Library, Newport South Wales.

## 2. Landscape Context

### Location and Summary Description

- 2.1 Ilam Park is located in the Manifold valley on the southern edge of the Peak District on the border of Derbyshire and Staffordshire about 4km northwest of Ashbourne.

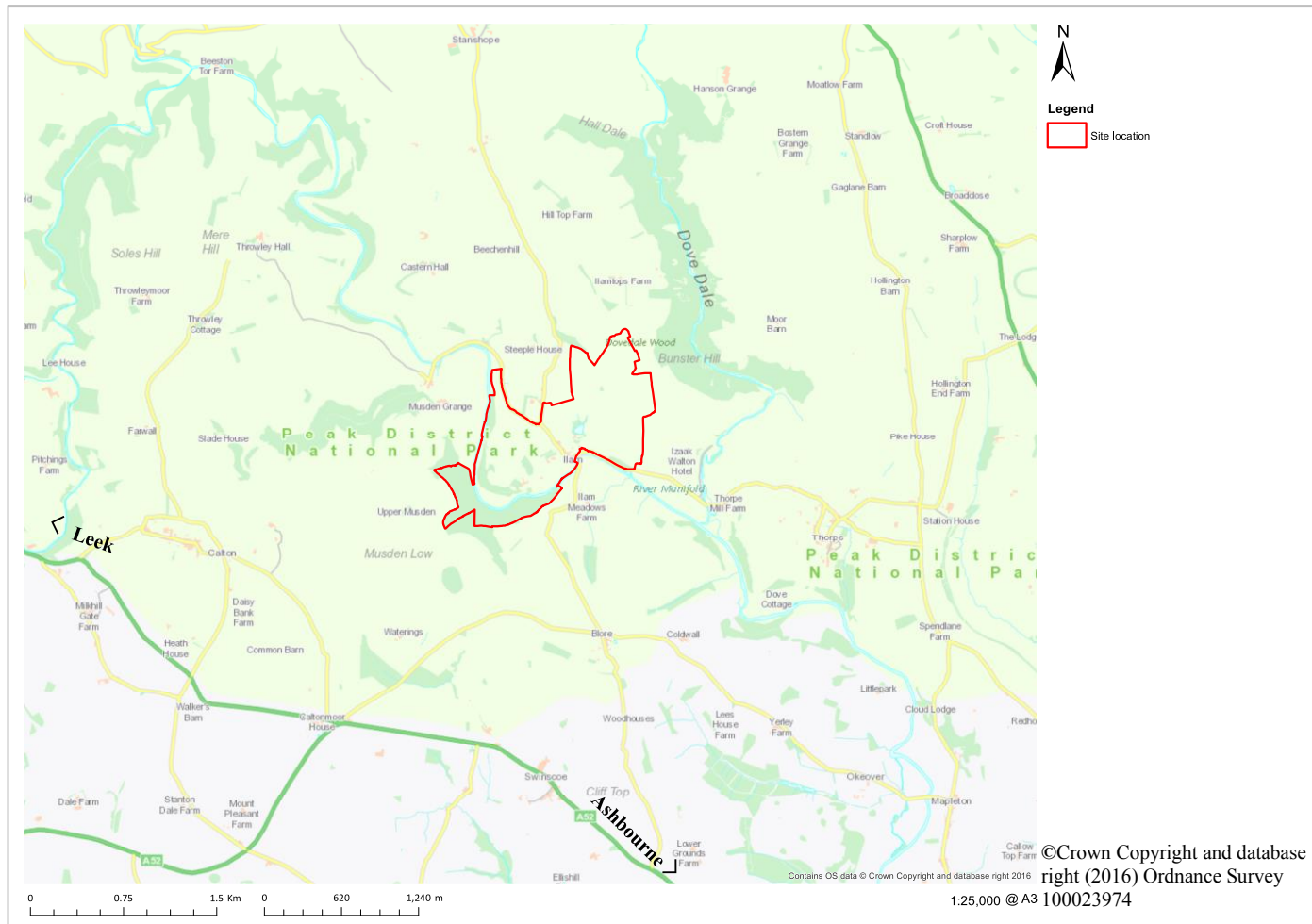


Fig. 1 Location Map (study area outlined in red) [NTS]. The National Trust.

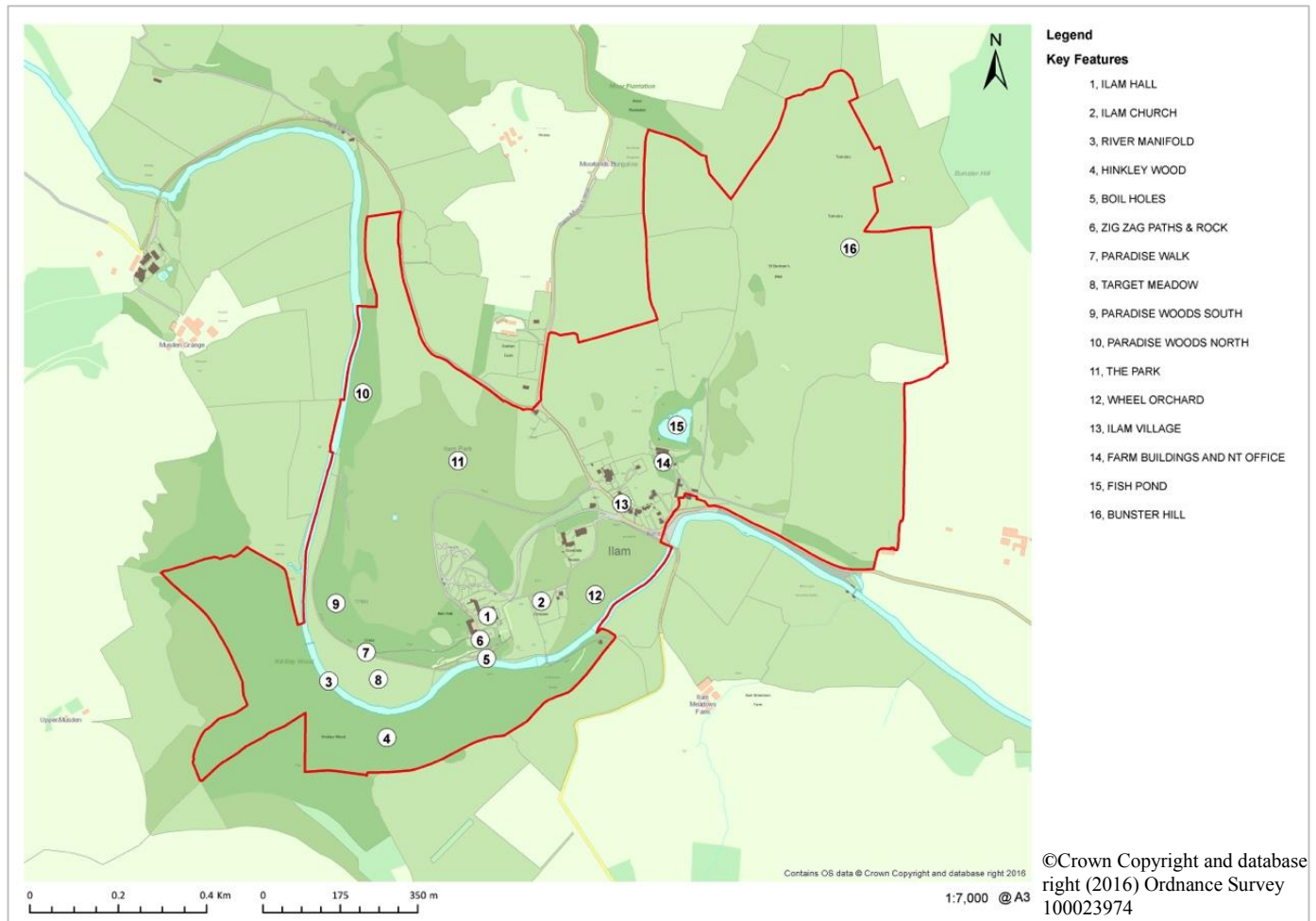
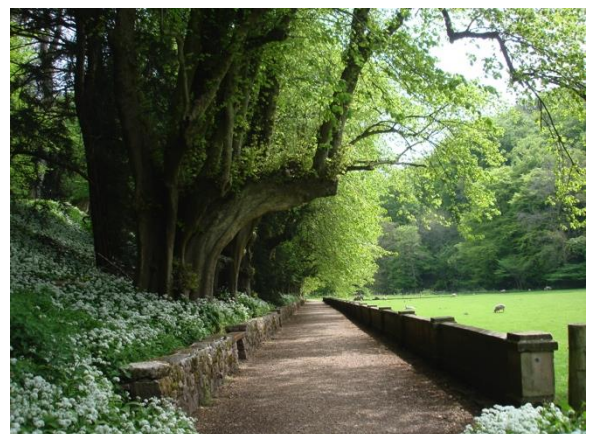


Fig. 2. Key Features within the study area (outlined in red) [NTS]. The National Trust.

- 2.2 The park lies to the west of the Victorian model village within a deep bend in the course of the River Manifold, which has cut into the limestone to create a narrow valley.



*The river valley and Hinkley Wood from the north*



*Paradise Walk from the north*

- 2.3 The steep wooded hillside of Hinkley and Musden woods rises from the river on its south and west sides respectively to enclose the site. An elongated semi-circular meadow, known today as Target Meadow, lies on the north side of the river, which is separated from the pleasure grounds at its eastern end by a Ha ha. A formal walk lined with mature lime trees, known as Paradise Walk, bounds the meadow along its north side. Behind and to the east



of this walk the ground rises as a rocky outcrop, containing steps and a Grotto, which forms part of the formal gardens and pleasure grounds of Ilam Hall. The reduced hall<sup>2</sup> and its service buildings stand on a terrace above the rock overlooking the river to the south and across wide terraced lawns to the east, which lead to the medieval church of The Holy Cross. Beyond the church the landscape is concluded by the mass of Bunster Hill to the north and the extraordinary flat-topped Thorpe Cloud to the east.



*Rocky outcrop above the river*



*View east across the formal gardens towards the church, Bunster Hill and Thorpe Cloud*

- 2.4 To the north of the hall the park extends over gently rolling ground, which rises to the northeast to meet the boundary, Lodge Lane. The park is notable for extensive earthworks, which survive within it evidencing previous land use. Relic hedgerow trees, such as oak and ash, also survive here together with later specimen trees and scrub. Woodland within the park is confined to Paradise Woods (north and south), which grow on the steep banks above the river, and Dovecote Wood to the northeast of Ilam Hall.



*View north across the park*



*View east across Wheel Orchard*

- 2.5 The park continues to the east of the hall and the church in the riverside meadow known as Wheel Orchard. An extension of Wheel Orchard, Fred's Field, runs northwest back to the main drive and is densely planted with mature specimen trees such as cedars, variegated sycamores and Purple beech. This land wraps around Dovedale House, the old Rectory, which stands in its own grounds to the south of the drive.
- 2.6 The drive is separated from the park along its north side by a Ha ha. The Ha ha continues around the east side of Dovecote Wood where it is screened from the drive by a deep raised bank. A second drive, now a track, runs parallel to the main drive on the north side

<sup>2</sup> Ilam Hall was partly demolished in 1934 losing the west range and conservatory. The area was subsequently re configured into the present arrangement to house the YHA and National Trust visitor services.

of the Ha ha before curving around Dovecote Wood to the northwest. This track returns to the area of an historic kitchen garden on the west side of the wood, which is now a caravan and car park.



*Gate Lodge and the entrance screen from the east*



*The Boil Holes from the south*

- 2.7 Several buildings, structures and semi-natural features survive in the park such as the lodges Gate, Wood and Church, the entrance screen across the main drive, St. Bertram's Bridge, which crosses the Manifold to the southeast of the hall, St. Bertram's Well, sections of retaining wall along the north bank of the river and the 'Boil Holes', where the River Hamps and part of the Manifold emerge above ground. Other features such as two footbridges also survive in the park but are either replacement structures or in different locations to that recorded historically. The park and garden both retain good examples of historic fencing, park railing, gates and pools.
- 2.8 Ilam village is set out on the east side of the road opposite the park. Ornée cottages are set back from the road behind long gardens. Limited modern development has occurred within the village such as Orchard Terrace and a garage, which face the entrance screen and Gate Lodge. An area of open ground, The Chains, separates the park entrance from the village road.



*The village seen from Wheel Orchard*



*The memorial cross*

- 2.9 At the south end of the village a Victorian memorial cross marks the junction of the main road, which approaches from the south over a Victorian stone river bridge, and the road from Thorpe, which enters Ilam from the east.
- 2.10 The Home Farm and Townend Farm (location of the National Trust offices) lie to the northeast of the junction set back from the road. The land of Home Farm extends north, sweeping northeast in a series of large square fields bound by relic stonewalls, hawthorn hedges and fencing. Tree planting is generally contained within the fields to hedgerow and



gateway trees but a small area of 'parkland' planting survives in the southwest, close to the village school, which formed a virtual extension of the park beyond the village road.



*View of Bunster Hill from the Blore Road*



*Site of St. Bertram's Well on Bunster Hill*

- 2.11 Townend Farm is sheltered on the north by a relic orchard and dense woodland, which surrounds a large, now partly silted, farm pond. Beyond the pond the land rises steeply as Bunster Hill, where pasture quickly gives way to upland grassland and exposed rock. The site of St. Bertram's Well survives on the lower west face of the hill.
- 2.12 To the south of Bunster more pasture sweeps down to the Thorpe Road. Hedgerows with some field trees enclose this pasture. The area also contains extensive earthworks, including the line of the old road which ran c50m to the north of the present route.



*Pasture on the south side of Bunster Hill*



*View from Bunster overlooking Ilam Park*

- 2.13 Beyond the park and village the land rises steeply into the Peak District and Staffordshire Moorlands, characterised by upland farms and small forestry plantations. This dramatic scenery provides a counterpoint to the pastoral beauty of Ilam Park, which sits in the valley bottom. However, the relationship of Ilam Park to the surrounding landscape is apparent in the presence of lost roads, such as the carriage drive from Cheadle/Blore which entered the park at Wood Lodge on the south side of the park, and the upland plantations including Hazelton Clump which sits above Hinkley Wood, or the linear woodlands above Home Farm which effectively control the view contributing to a wider and particularly pleasing landscape composition.

### **Topography, Geology, Hydrology and Soils**

- 2.14 Ilam Park covers c124 ha on ground that falls from c320m AOD near the summit of Bunster Hill to c160m AOD close to the centre of the park (Fig. 3). The land falls again to c138m

AOD along the river before rising to the ridge of Hinkley wood c260m AOD. The park, and its associated hanging woodlands and riverside meadows, are set out along the deep meander of the River Manifold. The very steep slopes of Hinkley Wood are on the south side of the bend with the alluvial flats and rising ground to the north forming the pleasure grounds and park.

- 2.15 The strata underlying the study area is Carboniferous limestone, notably shelf facies limestone displayed in the karst physiography<sup>3</sup>, which has allowed the undergrounding of the rivers Hamps and Manifold to emerge from the sinkholes, the Boil Holes, as the largest river resurgence in the country. A related and distinctive geological feature is the 'reef knoll' of Thorpe Cloud to the east of the park. During periods of dry weather the Manifold can dry up above ground to the west of the Boil Holes. Springs also appear within the study area notably at St. Bertram's Pool, to the north of Home Farm pond and on the west side of Bunster Hill at St. Bertram's Well.
- 2.16 The soils overlaying the limestone in the main area of the park are those of the Dale Association, which are slow draining and seasonally waterlogged (Fig. 4). Soils within the Hinkley Wood and much of Home Farm are Malham 2 Association being well-drained and often stoneless silty soils over limestone. In contrast, soils on Bunster Hill belong to the Wetton 1 Association being very shallow, loamy upland soil.

### Woodland and Vegetation Cover

- 2.17 Mixed broadleaved woodland is characteristic of Ilam Park and dominates the slopes of Hinkley Wood to the south of the river. The woodlands are predominately ash (*Tilio-acerion* Ravine ash woodlands) but contain notable communities of lime and yew. Similar plantations are found along the west side of the park above the river but with the addition of a clearly recognisable ornamental layer of lime trees with some beech, notably along Paradise Walk and close to St. Bertram's bridge. The parkland contains a mix of older field trees (ash and oak) with nineteenth century parkland planting. The park also contains a high percentage of hawthorns, while holly, box, snowberry and elder contribute to the shrub layer within the woodland where ground flora is dominated by ramsons and Dog's mercury. Small areas of relic coppice are also found in the woods, particularly in the western extent of Hinkley Wood but no scrub habitat exists at Ilam<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Rock outcrops and caves are other features typical of karst landscapes.

<sup>4</sup> Draft Statement of Significance, 2015 p.10

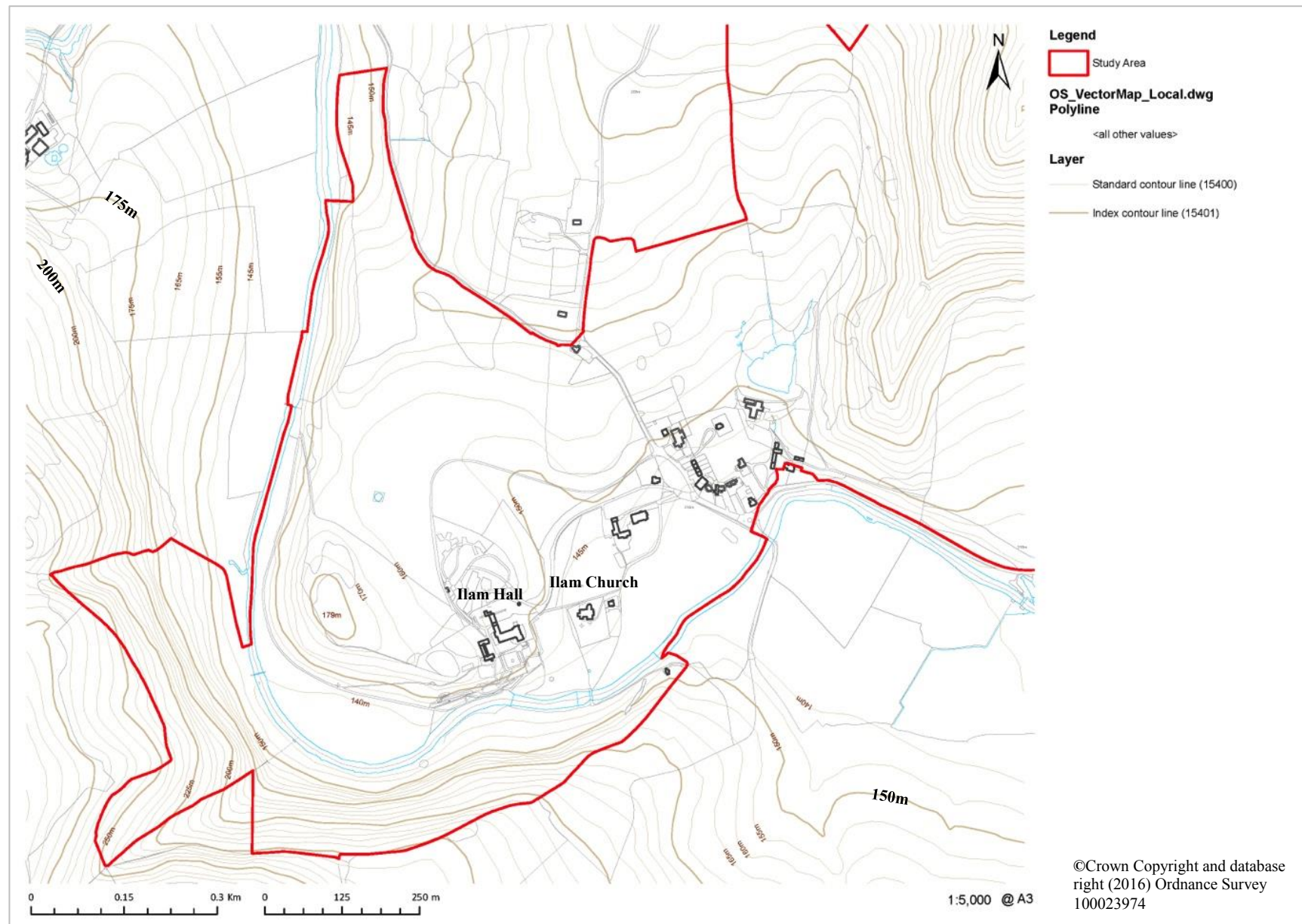


Fig. 3. Topographical map of Ilam Park. The National Trust [NTS].



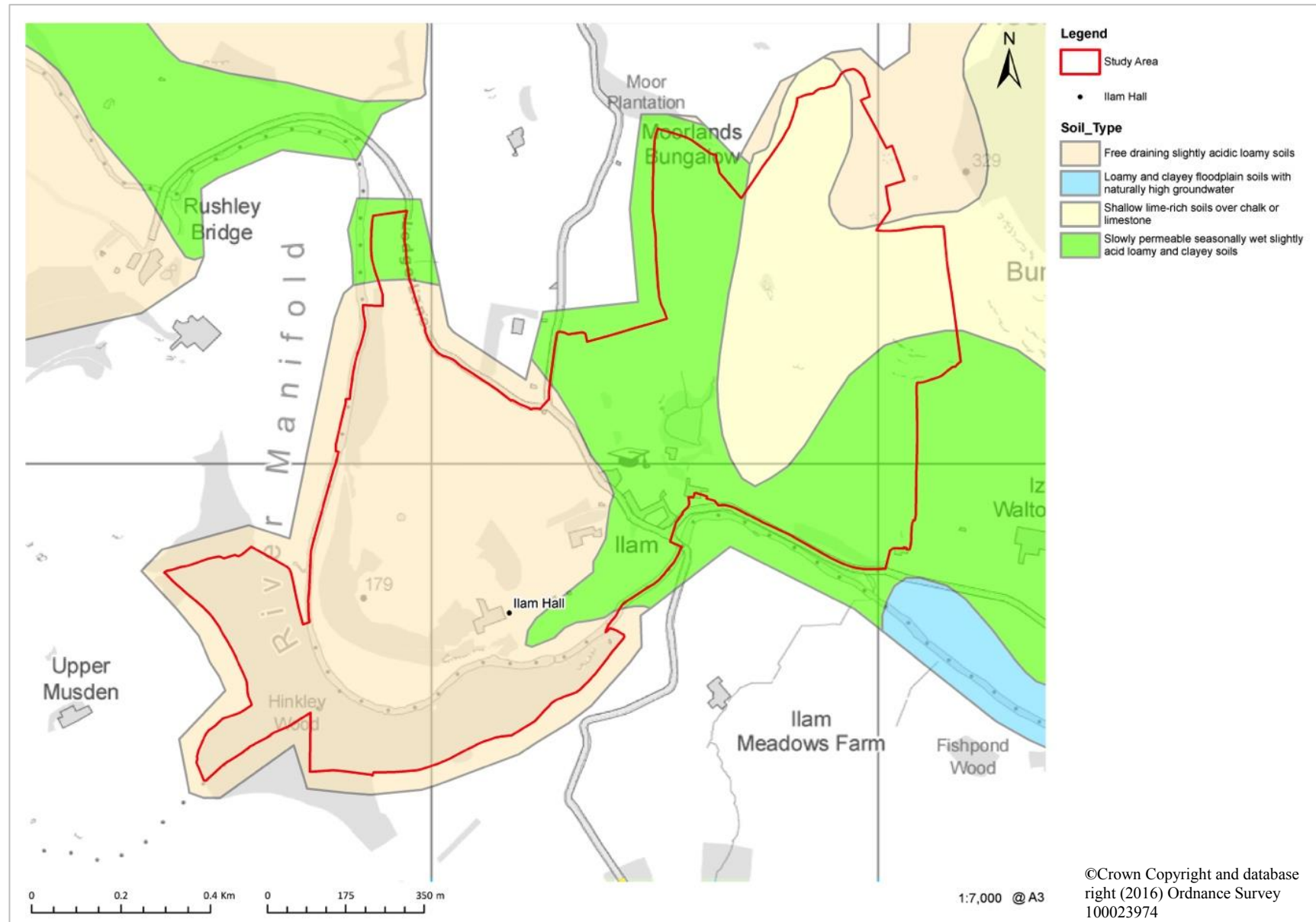


Fig. 4. Ilam Park soil map. The National Trust [NTS].

## Landscape and Planning Context

### *Landscape Character*

- 2.18 Ilam Park falls within National Character Area, 52 White Peak, which is characterised by 'raised, undulating limestone plateau deeply incised with steep-sided limestone valleys'<sup>5</sup>.
- 2.19 White Peak forms part of the Peak District National Park, the first national park established in the United Kingdom in 1951, which is the local planning authority for Ilam Park. Local planning authorities produce a statutory development plan (or Local Plan) for their area, comprising of one or more documents. In the Peak District the key planning document at the time of writing is the Core Strategy, 2011<sup>6</sup>. This includes the following policies which are considered to be of particular relevance to Ilam Park:
- *GSP2*: Enhancing the National Park;
  - *L1*: Landscape character and valued characteristics;
  - *L2*: Sites of biodiversity or geo-diversity importance;
  - *L3*: Cultural heritage assets of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic
  - Significance;
  - *RT1*: Recreation, environmental education and interpretation;
  - *CC5*: Flood risk and water conservation.
- 2.20 Other plans and strategies such as the Peak District National Park's Biodiversity Action Plan, 2011 – 2020, Landscape Strategy and Action Plan, 2009 and the Cultural Heritage Strategy, 2005, complement and support the statutory development plan.

### *Planning and Heritage Designations*

- 2.21 In addition to the National Park, the village and south and east areas of Ilam Park fall within the Ilam Conservation Area (Fig.5), designated in 1977 and extended in 2012 to include the Battle Stone and Paradise Walk within the pleasure grounds. Almost three-quarters of the Conservation Area are occupied by parkland and woodland and the picturesque setting of Ilam Park is considered to hold 'particular significance' within the Conservation Area.
- 2.22 It is understood that there are currently no Article 4 Directions, which remove certain permitted development rights, in operation within the Conservation Area but any development proposals would be tested against policies contained in the statutory development plan and reflected in the Conservation Area designation. All decisions would be made in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>7</sup>.
- 2.23 Any proposals for tree works within the Conservation Area would also require consent via a section 211 notice<sup>8</sup> unless the trees were dead or dangerous, or of a diameter less than 75mm at 1.5m above ground level.

<sup>5</sup> The full description of this National Character Area together with its Statements of Environmental Opportunity can be obtained from Natural England <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles>. The document contains few direct references to Ilam Park and includes no explicit consideration of its historic or cultural contribution to the White Peak. Significantly, the document noted that the river between Hopedale and Ilam was of 'poor ecological status' at the time of publication.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/ldf>

<sup>7</sup> For NPPF please see [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf). For Conservation Area advice please see <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/conservation-areas> and <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/historic-environment/article4directions>

<sup>8</sup> This requires notification of proposed tree works six weeks ahead of operation. Proposals to remove dead or dangerous trees should also be notified at least five days ahead of operation.

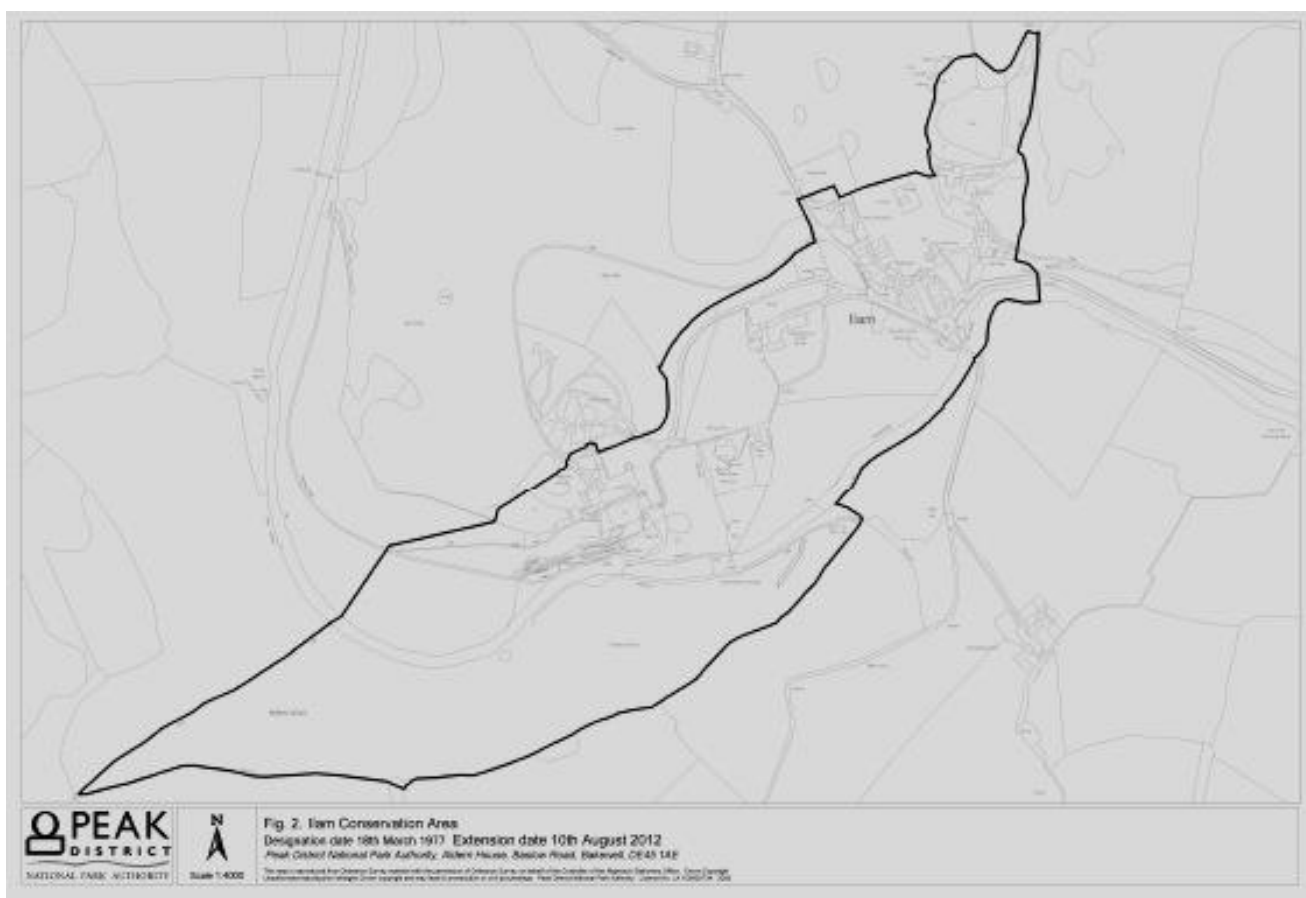


Fig. 5. The Ilam Conservation Area (outlined in black) [NTS]. Taken from the Conservation Area Appraisal, PDNP, 2012.

2.24 The study area contains 27 listed buildings (Fig.6). Those within National Trust ownership are:

NAME	GRADE	NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST NO.	NTHBSMR (where applicable)
Ilam Hall	Grade II*	1188713	60097
Hall Cottage	Grade II*	1188713	
Italian Gardens	Grade II	1188747	60079
Stable block	Grade II	1374598	60159
The Pepperpot	Grade II	1038115	60098
Gate Lodge	Grade II	1038114	60094
Gateway	Grade II	1294616	60122
Wood Lodge	Grade II	1037901	64292
Wood Lodge gates and railings	Grade II	1374719/1191444	64294
Church Lodge	Grade II	1374597	
Croft Cottage	Grade II	1188521	60091
St. Bertram's Bridge	Grade II	1374599	60111
Home Farm and Barn	Grade II	1188538	60095
Estate Office	Grade II	1188569	60093/96
Gateway and walls	Grade II	1188595	60121



- 2.25 Two scheduled monuments are also found within the study area, which are St. Bertram's Bridge and the Battle Stone. Another scheduled monument, the Saxon stone crosses in the churchyard, lie outside the study area. All of these features appear on Staffordshire County Council's Historic Environment Record, together with a further 29 sites in the area of Ilam recorded in association with the Peak District National Park's archaeological survey of 2006<sup>9</sup>.

NAME	GRADE	NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST NO.	NTHBSMR (where applicable)
St. Bertram's Bridge	Grade II	1006109	60111
The Battle Stone		1012655	60092

- 2.26 No part of Ilam Park is currently included on Historic England's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*. However, the whole of Ilam Park is understood to be included on the non-statutory Staffordshire Parks and Gardens Register, 1994<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ullathorne, A. National Trust South Peak Estate Survey, Archaeological Survey, Peak District National Park, 2005/06.

<sup>10</sup> Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2012, Peak District National Park paragraphs 1.6, 8.1. No copy of this register has been found. It is understood that the information therein on Ilam Park was shared with the UK Parks & Gardens, Database, University of York. The area of Ilam Park included in the non-statutory designation was the parkland, Wheel Orchard, the hall and pleasure grounds. Rebecca Waddington, PDNP, email correspondence 23 Nov. 2016.

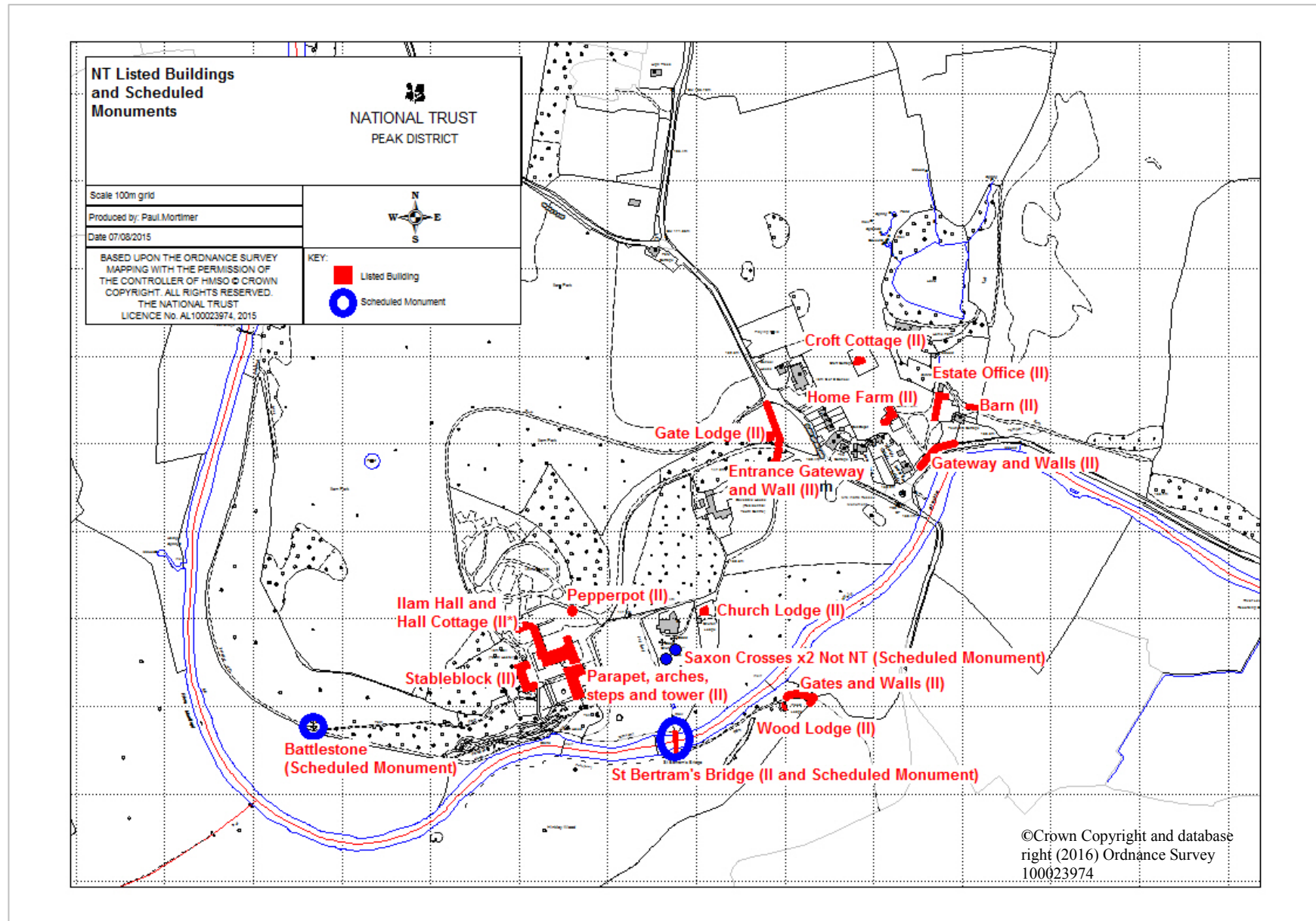


Fig. 6. Listed buildings and scheduled monuments at Ilam Park in the ownership of the National Trust [NTS]. National Trust Draft Statement of Significance, 2015

## *Earth Heritage and Ecological Designations*

### Geology

- 2.27 Ilam Park falls within the Manifold Valley Geological Review Site<sup>11</sup> where five locations are known to demonstrate reef formation and climate change in the form of cemented scree. These sites are Bunster Hill (cemented scree, quarry and mining trial), the Ridge in Ilam Park, the Craggs near the Boil Holes, a quarry near St Bertram's Bridge and the Reef<sup>12</sup>.

### Woodland

- 2.28 Most of the woodland at Ilam Park falls within the Peak District Dales SAC and the Hamps and Manifold Valleys, SSSI (Fig.7). The woodlands are dominated by ash making them one of the largest examples of upland ash woodland in the country. This rare *Tilio-Acerion* ravine forest is a priority habitat under Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive. The woodlands are described as containing Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites<sup>13</sup>.
- 2.29 Hinkley Wood, which includes areas of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland, also contains a notable population of lime trees with sycamore, oak, yew, birch, beech and conifers occurring. The limes represent the greatest concentration of these trees within the SAC<sup>14</sup>. The parkland plantation, Paradise Walk, is understood to date post 1650<sup>15</sup>.
- 2.30 No forestry operations are carried out at Ilam Park, the woodlands are managed for conservation and landscape interest. The present Woodland Management Plan<sup>16</sup> seeks to extend the existing woodland cover, create and maintain good structural diversity and create a broadly native species composition, which has been identified by the plan as the correct woodland type for this location.
- 2.31 A 50-year tree replacement plan was drawn up to support the Conservation Plan for Ilam Park (see 2.35). The plan identified two principal phases of tree planting in the park c1839 and c1880 and aims to rebalance the planting to reflect the earlier eighteenth century picturesque composition. As such trees planted since 1880 may not be replaced/replicated and trees blocking important historic views may be removed.

### *Landscape and protected species*

- 2.32 Beyond the woodland, the Nature Conservation Evaluation of 2005 found, within the present study area, 'unimproved calcareous grassland with areas of exposed rock' conforming to the UK BAP priority habitat and Lowland Calcareous Grassland. It also identified areas of wood pasture and park conforming to the UK BAP Priority Habitat Lowland Wood Pasture and Parkland, with their associated communities of saproxylic invertebrates and fungi<sup>17</sup>.
- 2.33 Protected species have also been recorded at Ilam Park and include badgers and bats. The uncommon Common Toad has been recorded at Home Farm pond, the only standing water for five miles, while Amber-listed Goldcrest, green woodpecker Dunnock, Meadow pipit and Red-listed Marsh tit, Song thrush, Skylark and Bullfinch have also been recorded<sup>18</sup>. Elsewhere the landscape contains notable colonies of lichen, on exposed rocks, wax cap flora in meadow and upland grass and trees approaching veteran status.

<sup>11</sup> National Trust Nature Conservation Evaluation 2005 p.8

<sup>12</sup> Ilam Park Conservation Plan, 2010-16 p. 10

<sup>13</sup> National Trust South Peak Estate, Woodland Management Plan, 2010

<sup>14</sup> National Trust Draft Statement of Significance, Ilam Park, 2015

<sup>15</sup> Ilam Park Conservation Plan, 2010 – 16 p.8.

<sup>16</sup> Woodland compartments identified in the plan, which fall within the present study area, include Hinkley/Musden Wood (IW01a, 1b); Paradise Wood South (IW02a), Paradise Wood North (IW02b) and Dovecote Wood (IGD).

<sup>17</sup> The internationally scarce pink fairy cap wax cap fungi have been found at Ilam.

<sup>18</sup> 'A Guide to Ilam Hall and Grounds', 1926 recorded kingfishers, herons, sandpipers and ouzels at Ilam. WSL: pbox/ILAM/7



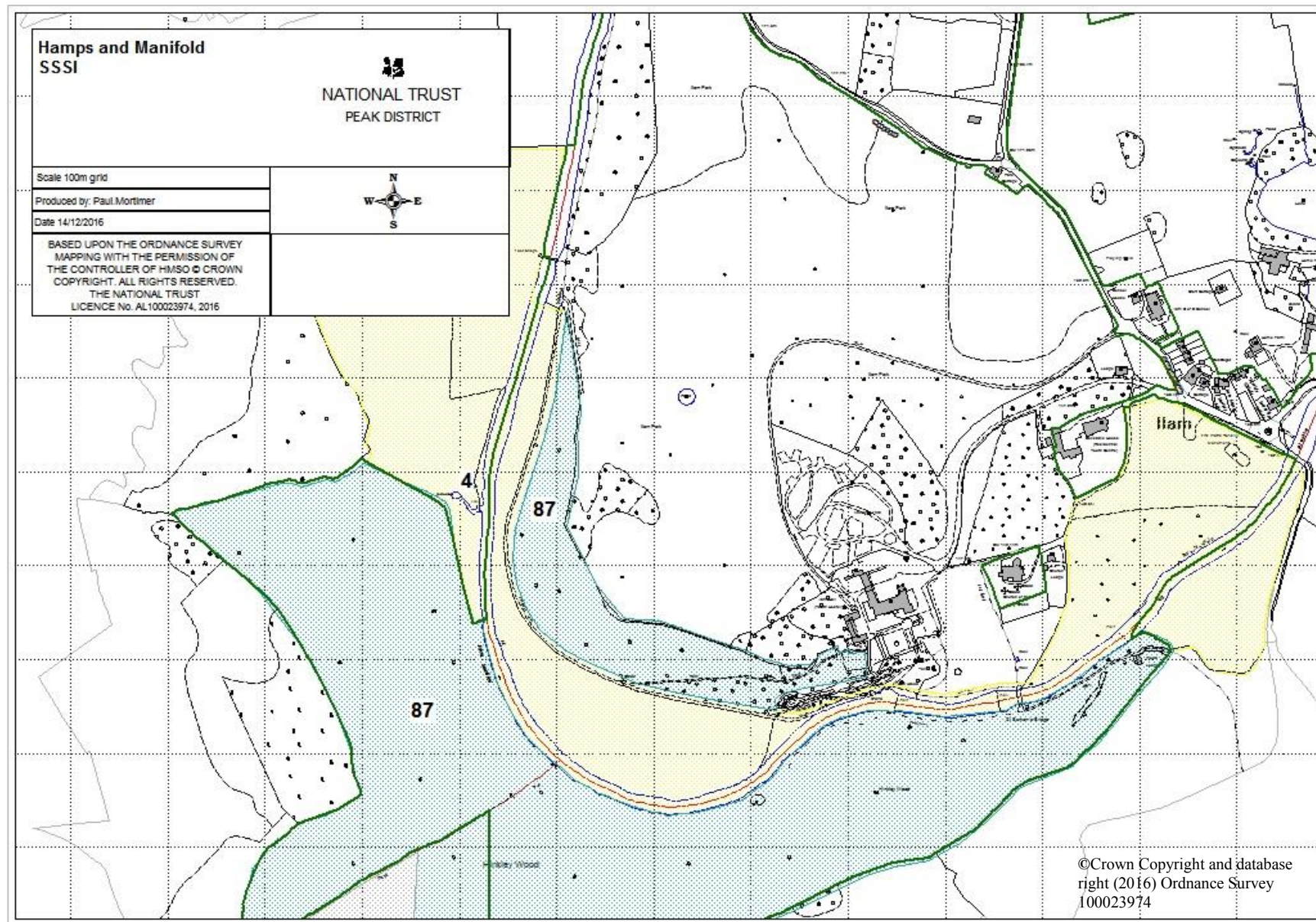


Fig. 7. Hamps and Manifold Valleys SSSI Unit 4 – Earth Heritage (shaded yellow), Unit 87 Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland (Upland) (shaded blue) [NTS]. Taken from National Trust Ilam Park Conservation Plan 2010-16.

### **Present Management and Use**

- 2.34 The National Trust operates Ilam Park as a free-to-enter countryside property with a pay and display car park for non-Trust members, a caravan site, a bunkhouse, the Manifold Tea Room and a shop. The site forms part of the wider Peak District Portfolio but is itself estimated to welcome c135,000 visitors per year.
- 2.35 The Conservation Plan for Ilam Park is currently being updated. The existing plan, 2010 – 16, established objectives for the property in six key areas:
- Landscape: ‘To restore elements of the 18<sup>th</sup> century landscape’;
  - Archaeology: ‘To increase our understanding, conservation and promotion of the archaeological resource’;
  - Nature Conservation: ‘To maintain and improve the quality of the habitats’;
  - Geology: ‘To maintain the geological interest’;
  - Interpretation: ‘To ensure a sympathetic understanding in the visitors that helps to promote a deeper connection with Ilam’;
  - Access: ‘To enhance access provision through maintenance and provision of some new routes, and to improve visitor orientation’.
- 2.36 The site was divided into 19 separate compartments to assist in the delivery of these objectives (which have been adopted by this present study for consistency), guided by a 20-year vision and a six-year action plan<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 8).

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<sup>19</sup> The landscape has also been divided into seven areas of historic landscape for management purposes. These are: The parkland, an enclosure of unknown dates with irregular fields (southwest corner of the park), post 1650 Plantation (Paradise Walk), woodland of unknown date (Hinkley Wood) and two areas of ASNW (southeast edge of Hinkley Wood and northwest edge of the park). Ilam Hall Conservation Plan, 2010 -16 p. 8.



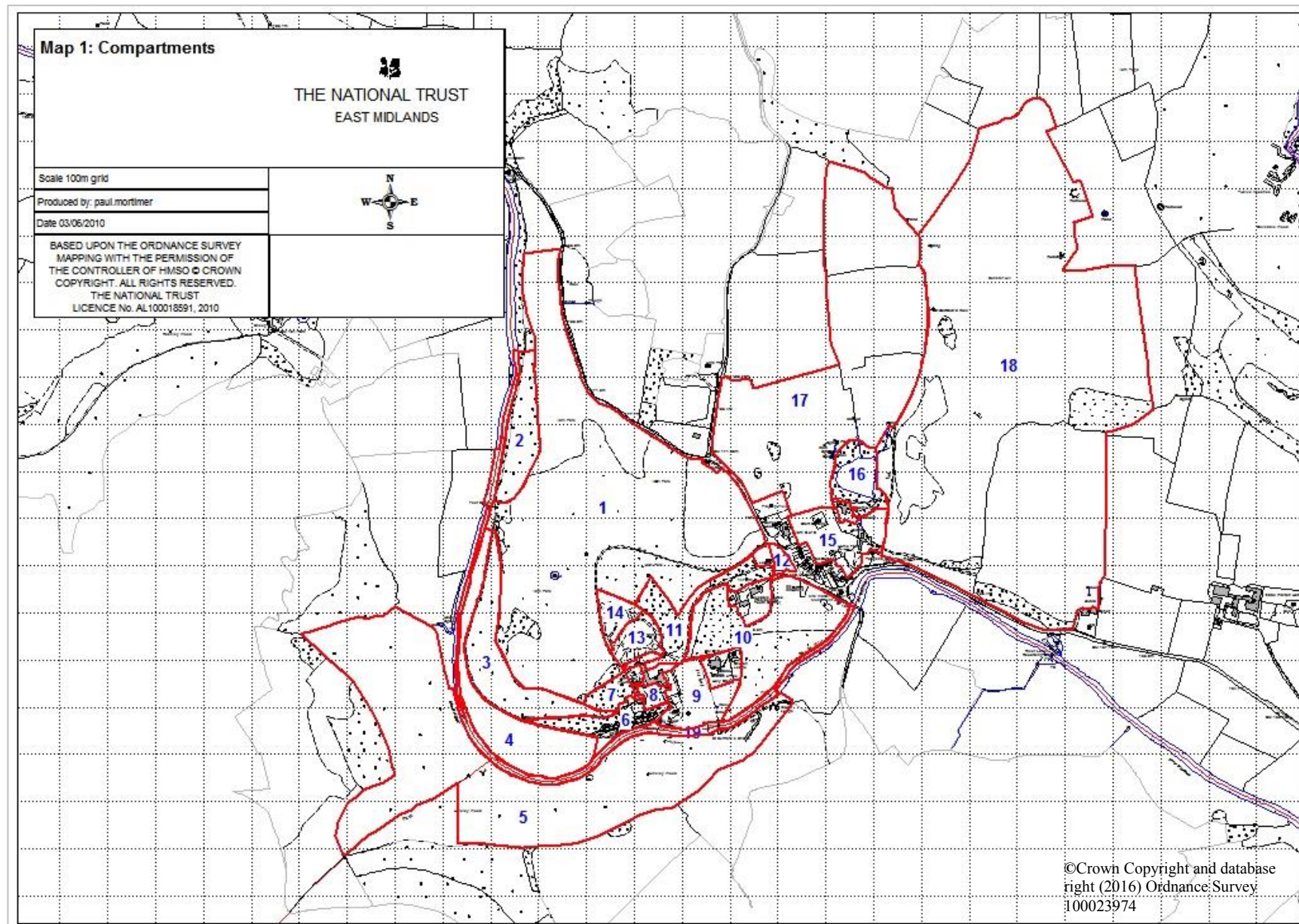


Fig. 8. Ilam compartment map [NTS]. Taken from Ilam Park Conservation Plan, 2010- 16



- 2.37 In the current Property Business Plan (2015 – 18) Ilam Park is identified as a ‘key focal point’ and hub for visitor experience being a gateway to the urban centres of Derby and Stoke. Ilam Park is well placed to deliver the Trust’s strategic priority ‘Land Outdoors and Nature’ and demonstrate landscape conservation and sustainability in its role as an ‘active farmer’, and to deliver the visitor strategy to provide experiences that “Move, Teach and Inspire”.
- 2.38 The 2015 Spirit of Place for Ilam Park concludes ‘Ilam is a gift: of memories, of discovery and of nature. A gift from one generation to the next, where you can cross bridges into countryside, escape in your own way, rest or play’<sup>20</sup>.
- 2.39 The National Trust is the majority landowner within the study area. However, the church and churchyard, the rectory (Dovedale House) and its grounds and most of the cottages, the garage and the school within the village are privately owned.

*Leases, commercial agreements and access rights*

- 2.40 The National Trust has granted the YHA a 21-year lease for Ilam Hall (running until 2030) and a 20-year lease to Staffordshire County Council for the Ilam School Playing Field (running to 2029). The sites of two electricity sub stations within the study area (opposite Gate Lodge and behind the Stable Block) are also let.
- 2.41 Other residential tenancies within the study area concern Croft Cottage, Church Lodge, Gate Lodge and Hall Cottage.
- 2.42 Home Farm, Ilam is let under the Agricultural Holdings Act (Fig.9). The tenant is party to Higher and Entry Level Stewardship agreements over part of the holding, which includes land within the park<sup>21</sup>. The parkland is managed under the options ‘Management of archaeological features on grassland’ (HD5/ED5), ‘Protection of in-field trees (grassland) (EC2) and mixed stocking (EK5) with other land management options around Home Farm and Bunster<sup>22</sup>.
- 2.43 There are no current sporting or fishing rights let or exercised within the study area.
- 2.44 Mineral Rights: Various mineral rights are reserved out of the conveyances.
- 2.45 Various rights of access affect the study area and include access for the YHA to Ilam Hall across the park via the main and church drives, access to the churchyard via church drive and access to Wood Lodge by the National Trust from the Okeover Estate (Fig. 10).
- 2.46 A short network of permissive paths is also found within the study area to supplement the public rights of way (footpaths Ilam 20, 22, 5 and 4). The footpaths run west through the park from the village to the north of Gate Lodge, from the village to the church, to the north of Townend Farm along the west side of Bunster and along the escarpment of Bunster to return southeast towards Dovedale respectively.

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<sup>20</sup> Ilam Park, Spirit of Place 2015

<sup>21</sup> This agreement will expire c2022.

<sup>22</sup> The agreement also allows for payments for land parcels of ‘Severely Disadvantaged land above the Moorland Line’.

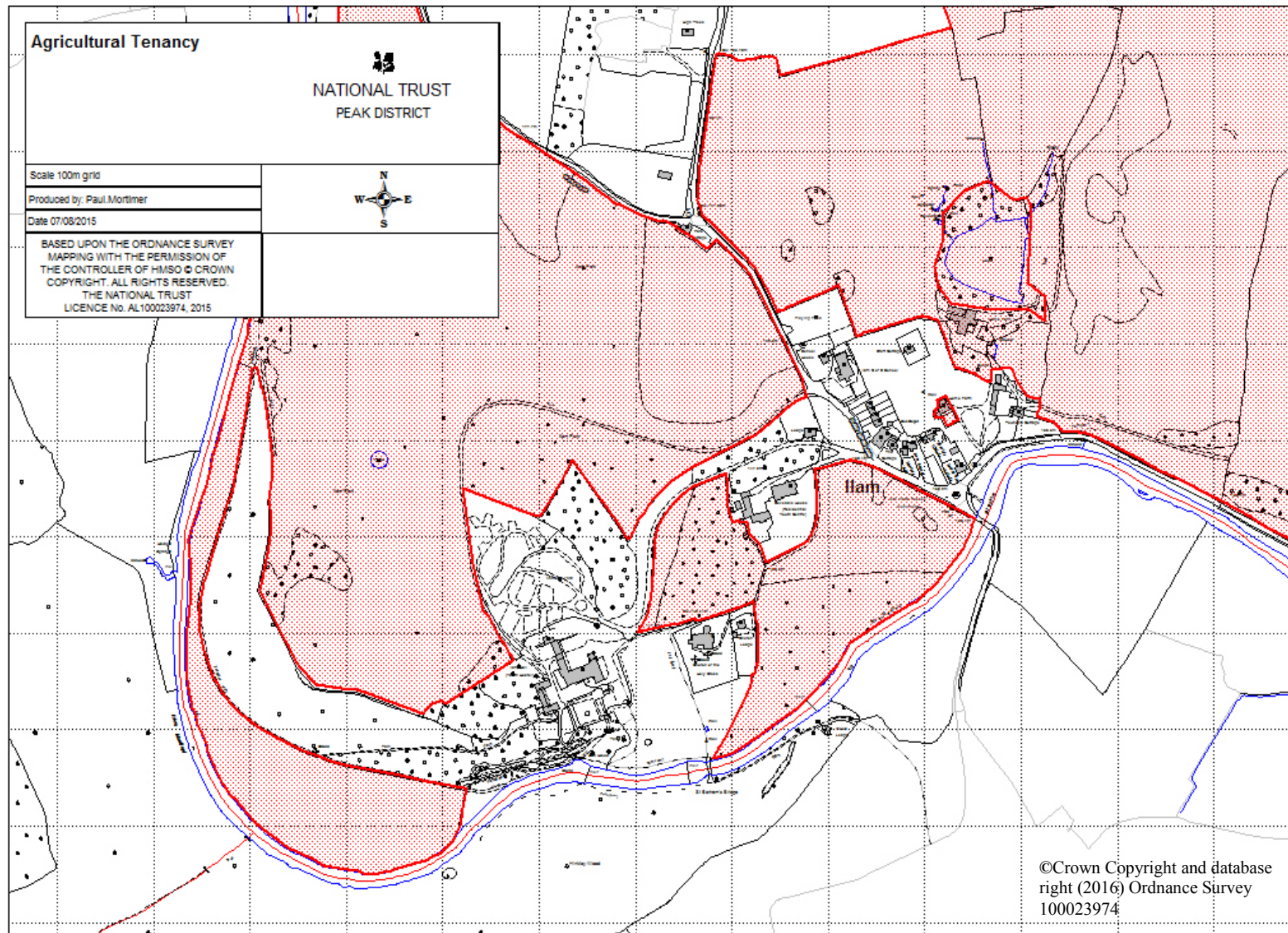
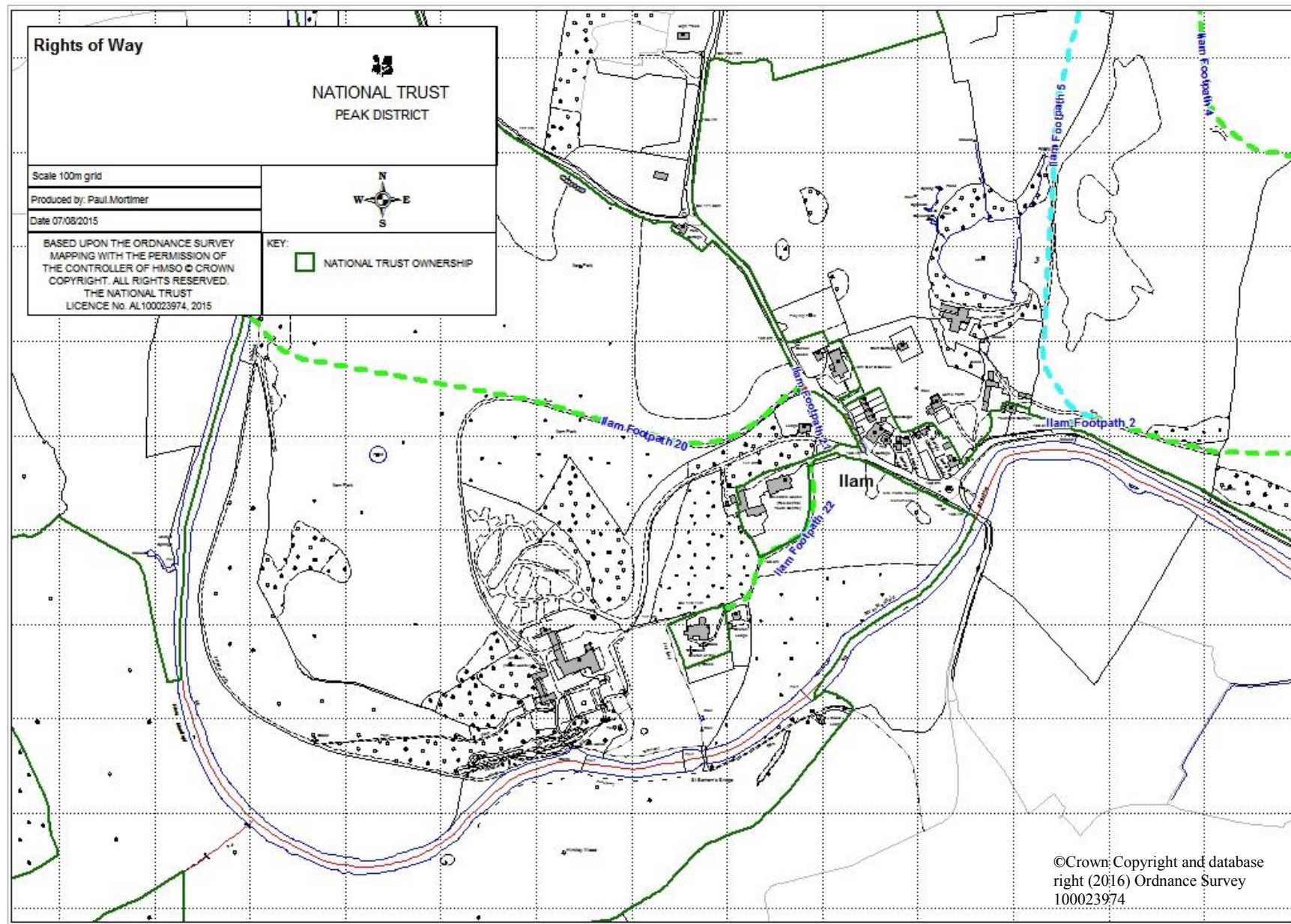


Fig. 9. The Home Farm tenancy (outlined in red) [NTS]. The National Trust Ilam Park Conservation Plan 2010-16.





**Fig. 10. Public Rights of way in the study area [NTS]. The National Trust, Ilam Park Conservation Plan 2010-16.**

### 3. Historic Development of the Designed Landscape

#### Chronology

- 1004 Wulfric Spott gifts land at Ilam to the Benedictine Abbey, Burton-upon-Trent
- c1114 Ilam is included in the assessment of Okeover in the Domesday Book
- c1540 Dissolution of the Monasteries, the manor of Ilam passes to William Paget
- c1547 Paget sells the manor of Ilam to John Port(e) who builds a new house
- 1607 Kip creates the first mapped record of Ilam
- 1618 The Meverell family of neighbouring Throwley Hall fund the creation of the new St. Bertram's Chapel in Ilam church
- c1650 Anonymous sketch survey, 'The Mapp of Ilam' showing two large fields, a 'hie' or 'bie-way', the church and some houses but no obvious manor house
- c1689-93 Playwright William Congreve visits Ilam where he writes part of 'The Old Bachelor'
- 1749 Bowen's County map of Staffordshire provides the first record of a gentry house at Ilam
- c1750 Surviving mortgages and deeds record George Port as the Lord of the Manor of Ilam
- 1751 James Mason engraves at least two variations of a view of Thorpe Cloud from the gardens at Ilam, based on a painting by Thomas Smith of Derby which shows an idealised landscape
- 1756 Mrs Delany visits and sketches the view to the east of the front door of Ilam Hall
- 1759 Dr Johnson visits Ilam while staying at Ashbourne and bases Happy Valley in his novel *Rasselas* on the Ilam landscape. Descriptions of the landscape by other tourists also begin to emerge suggesting an existing, ornamental circuit of walks close to the river
- 1769 Death of George Port, who leaves an indebted estate
- 1770 George Port's nephew and heir, John Port marries Mary Dewes at Bulstrode House, home of the Duchess of Portland. Mary Dewes is the favourite niece of Mrs Delany
- 1770 Thomas Whately visits Ilam and records the landscape ahead of improvement
- 1771 Arthur Young visits Ilam and records the landscape ahead of improvement
- 1772 William Gilpin visits Ilam and also records the landscape ahead of its improvement. His account is illustrated by sketches which show the Hamps and Manifold flowing over ground to reach the main Manifold river
- C1772-74 John Port realigns the river at Ilam taking it north to meet the 'Boil Holes'. The improvements are recorded on a piece contained in Josiah Wedgwood's Green Frog Dinner Service, noted by Mrs Delany before they are shipped from London to Russia
- 1777 Dr Johnson visits Ilam with James Boswell and describes the landscape improvements

- 1775 Mrs Delany sends 'curious seed' to Mary at Ilam to propagate while Yate's County map confirms emparkment and new drives in the landscape
- C1776 Mary Port is painted by John Opie
- 1779 John Port lets the estate and the family move to Derby
- 1789 – 1806 Various notable tourists and surveyors visit Ilam and describe it, such as Richard Colt Hoare, William Pitt and, possibly, Jane Austen
- 1807 Sketch of the Port house by Fanny de Bunsen
- 1809 Sale of the Ilam estate to Jesse Russell following the death of John Port in 1807
- 1809 Jesse Russell gifts Ilam estate to his son Jesse Watts-Russell
- c1820 Watts-Russell commissions John Shaw to design a new house, which is built by James Trubshaw by 1826
- 1824 Trubshaw is commissioned to make alterations to Ilam church including the construction of the octagonal Pike-Watts memorial chapel
- 1824 The Glebe map records changes in the park such as new drives and a new kitchen garden
- 1827-28 A series of footpath closure orders are made removing old paths, and possibly lanes, from within the park effectively extending the park to the village
- 1828 Trubshaw is commissioned to build a new river bridge at Ilam for c£600 and to build a new vicarage to designs by Edward Blore. Blore possibly designs the gate screen at the main entrance
- 1839 Watts-Russell's achievements are recorded in the Cobb estate survey and by the tithe map, which also record the construction of Church and Wood lodges
- 1839 George Gilbert Scott is commissioned to design a new model village, a gate lodge and to reorder the church
- 1840 River Lodge is built
- 1841 George Gilbert Scott designs the Watts-Russell memorial cross which is erected in the village
- 1875 Death of Watts-Russell and purchase of the estate by Robert Hanbury
- 1880 Construction of the bailiff's house (later Home Farm house) in the village
- 1884 The first edition Ordnance Survey records an established estate with some major changes such as the loss of the walled kitchen garden and increased parkland planting
- 1898/1900 The second edition Ordnance Survey records a consolidated landscape with the park extending northeast of Lodge Lane into the farmland and a new kitchen garden to the southwest of the stables
- 1910 Ilam estate is partially sold following the death of Hanbury in 1903. The house and gardens are understood to have been sold to an hotelier
- 1926 Part of the estate, including land close to the hall are put up for sale by the Hanbury family

- 1927 Ilam Hall and its immediate grounds are purchased by Mr E.C.S Backhouse who continues to run it as a hotel
- 1933 Ilam Hall is again put up for sale following the failure of Backhouse's business
- 1934 Sir Robert McDougall purchases Ilam Hall with the intention of gifting it to Stoke-on-Trent for possible hospital use. His offer is declined and McDougall arranges for the greater part of the hall to be demolished
- 1935 McDougall gifts the remaining part of the hall and 50-60 acres of land to the National Trust on the understanding that the building would become a Youth Hostel
- C1935 on The National Trust establish and manage Ilam Park as an outdoor property gradually improving visitor facilities, and creating new attractions such as a caravan park, and undertaking conservation work in the landscape. Ilam became a Country Park in 1987.

## Early History

- 3.1 The origin of the name Ilam is understood to either be the Norse, Hylum 'at the pools' or 'at the deep places in the river', or the pre English river name, Hile or Hilum for 'tickling stream'<sup>23</sup>.
- 3.2 Evidence for pre Romano British settlement and land use around Ilam Park comes from mid nineteenth century archaeological excavations in Dovedale and the White Peak with Roman finds being recorded further west along the Manifold Valley<sup>24</sup>.
- 3.3 More locally, 'The Victorian County History of Staffordshire' records a mid nineteenth century but undated entry about Ilam: 'In a barrow on the top of Hazleton Hill (Hazleton Clump?) above Inkley Wood (Hinkley Wood?), and at the back of Ilam Hall, were found' a rock grave, with cremation remains, 'two inferior' arrow points of flint and a broken pebble, a plain urn of thin pottery inverted over 'a few burnt bones', a broken coarse urn with ashes and flint, a 'fine round instrument', flint chippings and a piece of lead weighing 3 ½ oz, four more 'circular instruments', numerous pebbles 'and a piece of iron ore' <sup>25</sup>.
- 3.4 The same volume also records the excavation in 1845 of two barrows at Bitchenhill Harbour, between Wetton and Ilam, which were opened and found to contain the remains of coarse pottery with burnt bones and a brass of Constantine the Great (AD 291 – 306). In addition, a third barrow, called Green Low, was opened near Castern in 1860 near the site of an earlier excavation c1846. This barrow contained worked flint, coarse pottery, a harp-shaped bronze fibula, the skeleton of a child and a young adult, pieces of stag horn and other animal bones, pebbles and flints<sup>26</sup>.
- 3.5 The National Trust South Peak Estate Survey<sup>27</sup>, concerned with the archaeology of the estate, identified many examples of Romano British activity around Ilam Park evidenced by surviving field systems, boundaries, strip lynchets with areas being retained or reformed during the Medieval period.

<sup>23</sup> 'A Guide to Ilam House and Grounds', 1926 WSL: pbox/ILAM/7, Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2012 3.5 Peak District National Park

<sup>24</sup> Ilam Conesevation Area Appraisal, 2012, 3.3-3.4, Peak District National Park

<sup>25</sup> The Victorian Country History of Staffordshire, p. 175. WSL: open shelves

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 190

<sup>27</sup> Ullathrone, A. National Trust South Peak Estate Survey, 2005-6, Peak District National Park



### *Anglo Saxon - Norman*

- 3.6 Ilam Park contains an unusual assemblage of fine Anglo Saxon features which evidence established settlement in the local area. These artefacts include three stone cross shafts, which are all scheduled, and inside Ilam church the font and the shrine of St. Bertram.
- 3.7 The rare stone cross shafts are noted for their fine 'basket work' decoration, known as the 'Staffordshire Knot pattern'<sup>28</sup>, which incorporates human and animal figures. The crosses were identified as 'funeral monuments and have Danish origin'<sup>29</sup> and are similar to stones found at Checkley, Staffordshire<sup>30</sup>. Two crosses remain in the churchyard while the third, the Battle Stone<sup>31</sup> was moved into the grounds from the village c1840.
- 3.8 The Church of the Holy Cross contains evidence of the original Anglo Saxon building in the round-headed arches and windows, which survive on its south side. The church also evidences the original location of the village. Inside the church a fine pre-Norman stone font with grotesques stands close to the door, while the stone coffin of St. Bertram lies beneath a stone canopied shrine in its own chapel built in 1618.

### *St Bertram*

- 3.9 Ilam has been a place of pilgrimage from at least the medieval period on account of St. Bertram, to whom the church was dedicated. Bertram was King of Mercia in the eighth century and travelled to Ireland to become a scholar of St. Guthlac. He married an Irish Princess but lost both his wife and child to wolves on their return to England. Bertram then renounced his privileges and became a reclusive holy man 'He found a cave in Ilam and lived there until his death'<sup>32</sup> and became one of the earliest English Saints.
- 3.10 The venerated objects associated with Bertram included his shrine/tomb, a nearby well and an ash tree<sup>33</sup>, which all conveyed healing powers. Pilgrims 'used to creep through the perforated quatre foils in its sides and ends to lie upon the stone which contained the saint's body'<sup>34</sup>.
- 3.11 The stone coffin was opened c1810 'and nothing discovered but a cowl'<sup>35</sup>. Marks on the side of the coffin lid have been interpreted as ornamentation and are believed to be similar to carvings on the side of a contemporary coffin lid at Wirksworth Church, Derbyshire<sup>36</sup>.

### **Ilam During the Medieval Period**

- 3.12 Little evidence has been found concerning the landscape at Ilam during the medieval period although the land is understood to have formed part of the estate of the Benedictine Abbey at Burton-upon-Trent<sup>37</sup> to whom it was given in 1004AD by Wulfric Spott<sup>38</sup>. The church is understood to contain fabric, which may date to this time<sup>39</sup>.
- 3.13 Ilam does not appear in the Domesday Book but is understood to have been included in the assessment of Okeover of c1114, which recorded a church, a priest and a mill<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> 'An Account of the Three Ancient Cross Shafts The Font and St Bertram's Shrine at Ilam', Revd. G. F. Browne, 1888. NT Ilam Park

<sup>29</sup> 'The Archaeology of Ilam, re printed from The Staffordshire Advertiser', 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1892 p.1. WSL: PN42/D

<sup>30</sup> 'An Account of the Three Ancient Cross Shafts The Font and St Bertram's Shrine at Ilam', Revd. G. F. Browne, 1888. NT Ilam Park

<sup>31</sup> This stone was removed from one of the village houses, which it structurally supported, during the improvements c1840. Villagers believed it recorded a Viking battle.

<sup>32</sup> Ilam Park Conservation Plan 2010-16, p. 8

<sup>33</sup> 'Topographical Tour of Staffordshire', 1817 p. 38-39, WSL: S.1429/1

<sup>34</sup> 'The Archaeology of Ilam, re printed from The Staffordshire Advertiser', 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1892 p. 1. WSL: PN42/D

<sup>35</sup> Ibid p. 2

<sup>36</sup> Ibid p.2

<sup>37</sup> NT Nature Conservation Evaluation, 2005 p. 9

<sup>38</sup> Mottram, P. 'Local History Briefing for Excavations at Ilam', 2000. The National Trust Ilam Park

<sup>39</sup> Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2010, PDNP 3.7. The church was rebuilt or adapted in the C13, C17 and in the mid C19.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid 3.8

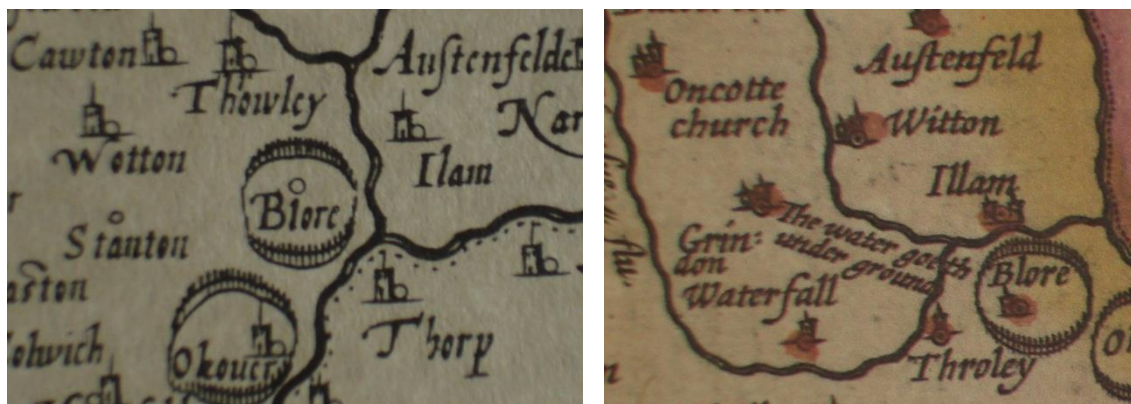
- 3.14 The landscape at Ilam Park contains no evidence for any form of gentry landscape, such as a deer park,<sup>41</sup> being instead an agricultural holding. Parts of the large tracts of ridge and furrow earthworks, which survive in the park and surrounding area, are understood to date to this period. Surviving earthworks in the southwest of Ilam Park have also been interpreted as a possible shrunken medieval village with tofts (gardens), small fields and enclosures set out around the knoll above the river. The village centre subsequently moved east or these outlying properties were simply abandoned<sup>42</sup>.
- 3.15 Medieval charcoal burning platforms, terraced trackways and possible hollow ways have also been identified in Hinkley Wood<sup>43</sup>.

### Origins of the Designed Landscape

- 3.16 Following the Dissolution, the manor of Ilam was purchased by the Port(e) family c1547<sup>44</sup> from William Paget, Principal Private Secretary to Henry VIII<sup>45</sup>. It is understood a house was built on or near the site of the later mansion shortly afterwards. However, no clear information has been found about this early house or of any ornamental or functional landscape, such as a kitchen garden, that was possibly associated with it<sup>46</sup>.

#### *The seventeenth century*

- 3.17 The first known map evidence for Ilam appears on Kip's map of Staffordshire 1607 – 1610 and Speed's map of Staffordshire, 1610 which are presented on a different orientation from one another. These simply identify the church with the deer park at Blore to the south; no roads are shown. Speed provides some additional information about the subterranean rivers Hams and Manifold, 'the water goeth under ground'.



Figs. 11 & 12. Details from Kip's map of Staffordshire 1607 – 10 and Speed's map of Staffordshire, 1610, LRO

- 3.18 However, an anonymous, undated and schematic sketch 'Mapp of Ilam Manor' dating from this period survives in the Derbyshire Record Office and provides a much better indication of the landscape.

<sup>41</sup> Ullathorne speculates that the later park may lie on the site of an earlier deer park but offers no evidence for this. South Peak Archaeological Survey, Vol. 2 p. 7, 2006

<sup>42</sup> South Peak Archaeological Survey, Vol. 2 p. 88 SMR: 64320

<sup>43</sup> Ilam Park Conservation Plan 2010-16 p.9. The same document also refers to post medieval quarries in the wood and in Ilam Park.

<sup>44</sup> It has been stated that the Ports bought a small monastic site but no further evidence has been found for this. Mowl, T, Barre, D 'The Historic Gardens of England, Staffordshire', 2009 p. 137

<sup>45</sup> Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2012, PDNP, 3.15

<sup>46</sup> Ullathorne speculates that a surviving earthwork (NTSMR 64302) north of the later mansion may represent gardens associated with the Tudor house. South Peak Archaeological Survey, Vol. 1 p. 30, 2006.

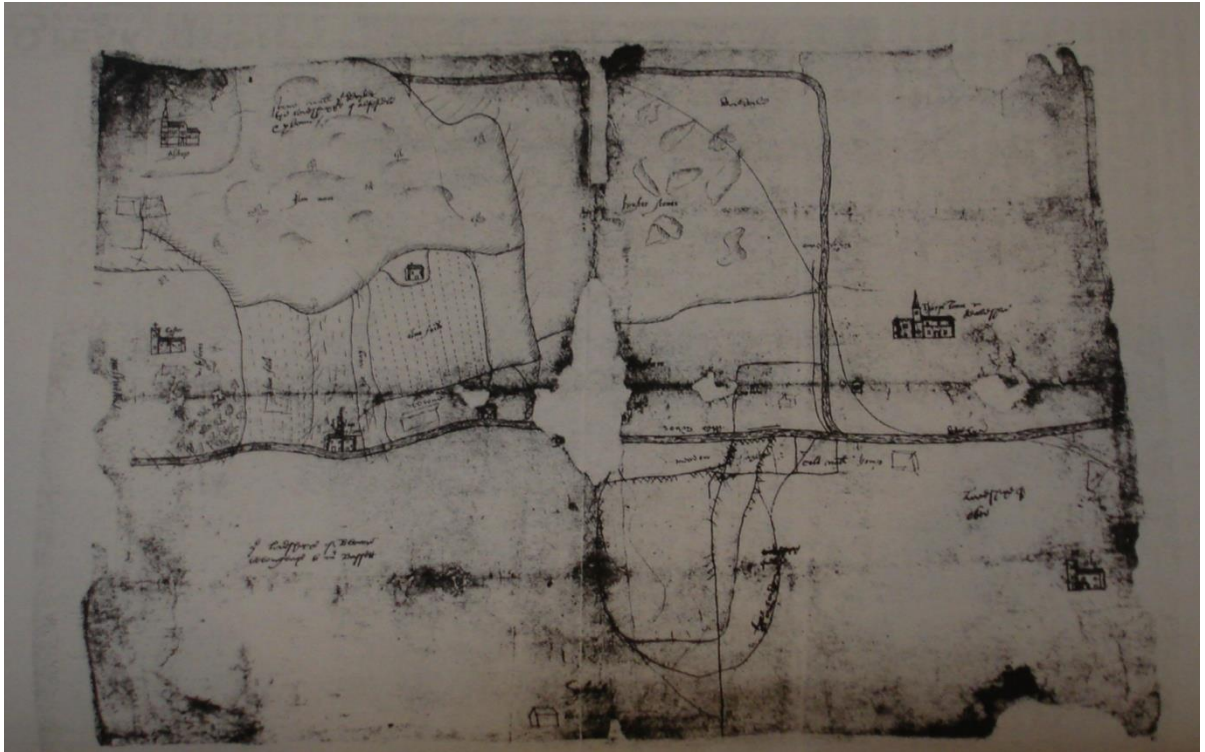


Fig. 13. Seventeenth century 'Mapp of Ilam Manor'. DRO: D231/M/P2 (also included at A3 in Appendix I.)



Fig. 14. Overlay of the Mapp of Ilam on the current Ordnance Survey base using the church as a marker [NTS] (also included at A3 in Appendix I).

- 3.19 This map (Figs. 13 & 15), contained within the papers of the neighbouring Okeover estate, Derbyshire, shows the land at Ilam set out in large encloses, including 'Ilam Field' to the west and 'Elm Field' to the east. These fields probably survive from the medieval open field



system. A wide 'bie-way' or 'hie-way' separates the fields and connects Ilam Moore above to the 'Manifold Brooke' and an indicative river ford. The 'Brook' runs across the centre of the map and is joined by the River Dove, which flows around 'Bunster Stones'. Meadow and pasture are recorded close to the water in the valley bottom together with a 'cold wall', while woodland is confined to the west of Ilam Field and south of Calton<sup>47</sup>. Ilam church is shown close together with at least one other building<sup>48</sup> close to the river and to the west of the bie-way, while a sketched block identified as 'Towne' lies to the east, which may correspond with earthworks surviving in the park today<sup>49</sup> in the area of Wheel Orchard, known historically as Vylly (Town) Orchard<sup>50</sup>.



Fig. 15. Detail of the Mapp of Ilam showing the church (with spire), village fields, bie-way, Manifold Brooke and 'towne'

3.20 Unfortunately, as the centre of the map is lost little other information is known about the village although a large house is shown in its own grounds to the north of Elm Field, which may evidence the origins of the later Steeple House Farm. It has been suggested that the

<sup>47</sup> William Senior, surveyor for the Cavendish Estate, produced a survey of Blore and Swinscoe c1650, which recorded woodland in this area as Hinkley Spring and that at the southeast end of Hinkley Wood as Gattlief Spring (not included in this report), National Trust, South Peak Estate Survey, Archaeological Survey. Ullathorne, 2006, pp11-12. This evidence subsequently informed the designation of this woodland as Ancient Woodland, Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2012, 3.14

<sup>48</sup> A house for 'the Kitchener and their agent' near the church c1197 was noted in papers associated with the Abbey. Mottram, P. 'Local History Briefing for Excavations at Ilam', 2000, National Trust, Ilam Park.

<sup>49</sup> National Trust, South Peak Estate Survey. Archaeological Survey. Ullathorne, 2006. Vol. 2. Fig. 4. This figure shows two distinct areas of ridge and furrow running (west) north/south and (east) northwest/southeast respectively with a linear area of unmarked ground between them, which correlates with the two fields and 'bie-way' recorded by the map. Recent geophysical survey on land to the south of the church has also recorded the possible site of earlier buildings (and burn pits) 'Geophysical Survey by Magnetometry at Ilam Hall, Ashbourne Derbyshire', Allen Archaeology Ltd. 2010. Excavation of the trial pits revealed these to be tipped slag, possibly from the church boiler.

<sup>50</sup> Contained in a description by Sir William Paget c1549 and mentioned in Mottram, P, 'Local History Briefings for Excavations at Ilam Hall' 2000. The National Trust Ilam Park.



large pond to the north of Townend Farm may have originated as fishponds, which would have been recorded – if present – in the missing area of the map.

- 3.21 A series of sweeping lines are also shown near the base of the map, which may indicate proposed roads or new field boundaries, but this is unsubstantiated.
- 3.22 According to the Derbyshire and Staffordshire archives, Ilam together with the village of Calton, formed part of the Musden Grange estate at this time. Therefore a distinction needs to be drawn between the Manor of Ilam and the wider Ilam estate, which historically was often in different ownership, in order to concentrate on the development of the landscape at Ilam.
- 3.23 The extensive surviving earthworks within the park today composed of ridge and furrow, lynchets and banks, which was recorded as part of the South Peak Archaeological Survey in 2006, supports this interpretation.



Fig. 16. Aerial c.1990 showing earthworks in Ilam Park [NTS]. National Trust.

### An Emerging Gentry Landscape

- 3.24 The obvious absentee from the Mapp of Ilam is a gentry house. The Ports had been at Ilam since c1547 and it is understood that they built some form of house, possibly close to the site of the later houses and certainly to the west of the church<sup>51</sup>. However, no evidence for

<sup>51</sup> The location of the earlier house has created much speculation over the years, such as a reference to the old hall in an article of 1852, which likely misidentified Castern Hall and an article of 1934, which stated that part of the purpose of demolishing the Victorian Hall was to reveal the Old Hall i.e. the Stables behind it. Part of the confusion appears to stem from descriptions of Nerther Hall taken from the Derby Mercury in 1788, which described as 'a neat small house near the church' that may in fact be the first Vicarage: Mottram, P. 'Local History Briefing for Excavation at Ilam', 2000. National Trust, Ilam Hall.

this building has been found although a sketched square marked on the map in the south of Ilam Field could be significant.

- 3.25 The Ports were evidently a family of consequence. A relation<sup>52</sup> or close family friend was the leading eighteenth century poet and playwright, William Congreve (1670 – 1729), who was part of the aristocratic and influential Kit Kat Club<sup>53</sup>. Congreve is known to have stayed at Ilam 1689 – 93 where he wrote the first part of his play, 'The Old Bachelor', which is discussed further in Chapter Four. A stone desk and seat remain at Ilam set high up the rocky cliff close to the house, which is known as Congreve's Seat. However, the actual date and the original location of the desk is unclear (it appears in a drawing by John Buckler c1839 located in the Grotto at the foot of the cliff).
- 3.26 Significantly, Congreve referred to an ornamental riverside walk at Ilam, which if it dates from c1680 is one of the earliest planned 'Savage Picturesque' walks in the country<sup>54</sup>. As Congreve was at the centre of society and fully aware of fashionable taste it is worth speculating if he offered advice at Ilam or if the Ports, confident in their own ability, had already created such a walk.
- 3.27 Despite the Congreve connection, no other accounts of Ilam as a notable designed landscape of this period are known to survive. Garden/landscape visiting was already becoming a popular pastime amongst the aristocracy. It is perhaps significant that one of the most seasoned travellers, Celia Fiennes, made no mention of Ilam in her account of her 1697 tour, which included travelling from Swadincote to Stafford via Ashbourne<sup>55</sup>. Similarly fellow traveller and author, Daniel Defoe, makes no reference in his various Tours of England c1714 despite visiting Dovedale.

### *The eighteenth century*

- 3.28 A written but unproven record of a house at Ilam is found in the Staffordshire Record Office. The record is a title deed of December 1704 concerning Mr William Manley, who held land in Stanshope and Ilam<sup>56</sup>.
- 3.29 The first mapped evidence for a house at Ilam appears as Bowen's Map of Staffordshire of 1749. A gentry house is shown to the west of the church in the curve of the river, the approximate location of the surviving but reduced hall. The map is also useful in recording the continuation of the deer park at Blore and also one to the west, possibly at Throwley Hall the historic seat of the Meverell family who funded the creation of St. Bertram's chapel in Ilam church in 1618.
- 3.30 A rare glimpse of the house comes in April 1749 when Francis Venables, recounted in a letter of being invited 'to take Ilam in our Roade', having met Mr Port at the Derby Sessions. Venables continues 'I like the house very much for I think it is built in a much genteeler and prettier manner than Catton (Gatton)'<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> The nature of the connection between Congreve and Ilam is unclear but many references have been found declaring his family's and even his own ownership of Ilam although all are unsubstantiated. References include Ilam Park, Conservation Plan 2010-16 p.7 and 'A Guide to Ilam Hall and Grounds' 1926 WSL: pbox/ILAM/7 p. 8

<sup>53</sup> The Kit Kat Club was an early eighteenth century gentleman's club, sympathetic to the Whig cause (Liberal) and with strong political and literary associations. The club was named after the meat pies served at a tavern in Shire Lane, London owned by Christopher Catt. Congreve was a member as were other Whig luminaries such as Sir John Vanbrugh, Joseph Addison, Godfrey Kneller and the Dukes of Grafton, Devonshire, Kingston, Richmond, Dorset and Somerset. Kneller painted all 48 of his fellow members, the portraits becoming popular engravings. Please see Chapter Four for Kneller's portrait of Congreve.

<sup>54</sup> Historic Gardens of England, Staffordshire, Mowl, T, Barre, D, 2009 p. 138

<sup>55</sup> 'The Northern Journey and the Tour of Kent' 1698, Cecil Fiennes. Fiennes did remark on the copper mining around Ashbourne.

<sup>56</sup> SRO: D (W) 1747/24/2. It is worth noting that a Mary Assheton acted as executor. She was recorded as the wife of Raphe Assheton, a probable relation to another Mary Assheton, wife of 4<sup>th</sup> Baron Scarsdale of Kedleston Hall who undertook significant landscape improvements c1720-40. A will of Catherine Port of Ilam, dated 1722, spinster and heir to a John Port, also survives in the Derbyshire Record Office. This specifies three parcels of land at Ilam including the moor but only briefly mentions the manor of Ilam i.e. it was not her property. DRO: D2535/M/2/36

<sup>57</sup> Staffordshire Record Office, Port family letters D661/10/3/1/3



Fig. 17. Detail of Bowen's map of Staffordshire, 1749. LRO.

- 3.31 A series of mortgages and deeds from the mid century also offer useful descriptions of the landscape of the Manor of Ilam. In 1750, Mr Port, who is likely to have been George Port, was party to 'a small land conveyance' of part of the Ilam estate<sup>58</sup>. This listed 'common pasture', 'underwood', 'a common of Turbay fuze' (?), 'a fishing stream', 'a mansion house', 'farm cottages' and 'edifices' (working buildings), 'close land', 'glebe land', 'Leasowes meadows', 'orchards and gardens'.
- 3.32 Deeds of 1750<sup>59</sup> further recorded '16 messanges, 1 dove house, 16 gardens, 400 acres of land, 600 acres of meadow, 400 acres of pasture, 20 acres of wood, 500 acres of furze, 500 acres of moor, Six (?) shillings Rent Common of pasture for area of cattle common of Turbury(?)' and a 'free fishing weir'. All in all a sizable land holding.
- 3.33 In 1751 a popular image of Ilam was published by the engraver James Mason, which showed a view of Thorpe Cloud from the riverside (Fig. 19 see Chapter Four for further discussion). This image shows that Ilam was a landscape familiar with fashionable society or had pretensions to be so. It appears to have attracted one notable figure, Mrs Delany<sup>60</sup>, as early as 1756. She sketched a view from the door of Mr Port's house looking east towards the church (Fig 18).
- 3.34 This sketch is extremely important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it offers a credible record of how the landscape looked to the east of the house recording the church, graveyard (with at least one of the Anglo-Saxon crosses), a large house (the Rectory) to the north within its own gated grounds complete with an arbour, and fields bound by hedgerows, fences and trees, laid out between the hall and the area of the village. The sketch is also useful in conveying a sense of woodland on the lower slopes of Bunster and Thorpe Cloud. The planting is confined to natural valleys or sheltered slopes. This woodland arrangement, and the general scarcity of the planting, suggests it is established rather than recently planted plantation.
- 3.35 The sketch is also important, as it is the only sketch of Ilam included in Delany's sketchbook. Either she had not seen the Thorpe Cloud engraving or the view was not actually there to be seen. Given Mrs Delany's social and artistic connections it is highly

<sup>58</sup> Staffordshire Record Office, D (W) 1747/3

<sup>59</sup> Staffordshire Record Office, D (W) 1747/7/11

<sup>60</sup> Mrs Delany (1700 – 88) is one of the most remarkable women of the eighteenth century. Born into the aristocratic Granville family she married twice, latterly to an Irish clergyman. She was the confidant of Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, and the Duchess of Portland at Bulstrode House, Herts. She was related to the Landsdowne, Spencer, Cowper and Lyttleton families and regularly stayed at their houses such as Longleat and Hagley. Her friendships included many of the luminaries of the age such as Horace Walpole, John Wellesley, William Mason and Dr Johnson. A gifted artist she produced outstanding needlework, painting and collage as well as recording the life of the Court and society in her countless letters. Her sketchbook recorded views c1740 – 1773, which include several views of Derbyshire, the last sketch being of Thorpe Cloud. It is likely that she would have been staying with her brother, Bernard Granville, at nearby Calwich Abbey when she visited Ilam. The National Library of Ireland now holds the sketchbook.



unlikely she would have missed any celebrated view or feature, perhaps seeing Ilam principally as a natural rather than an ornamental landscape at this time.



Fig. 18. Bunker Hill and Thorpe Cloud. The sketchbooks of Mary Granville Delany: NGI: 2722.59. Reproduced by kind permission, The National Gallery of Ireland.



Although crude, a comparison with the existing view and a compressed version of Mrs Delany's shows how woodland cover has changed within the park and on the surrounding hills.

- 3.36 Another glimpse of Ilam comes from the cultural luminary Dr Samuel Johnson<sup>61</sup>. Johnson was visiting Ilam as early as 1759 when he enjoyed a sabbatical in Ashbourne. He made day trips to the area and is understood to have based the description of 'Happy Valley' in his novel *Rasselas*, published in 1759 on the Manifold valley (please see Chapter Four). While the scale of landscape in the kingdom of Amhara, described in Johnson's novel, is

<sup>61</sup> Samuel Johnson or Dr Johnson (1709-84) was one of the greatest English journalists, authors, critics and wits. In 1755 he published 'A Dictionary of the English Language' after nine years work.



much greater than that of Ilam, the sense of enclosure and privacy created by the surrounding mountains and the river valley is described filled with 'verdure and fertility' and the 'palace' set 'on an eminence raised about 30 paces above the surface of the lake' is familiar.

- 3.37 The clearest impression of the landscape is, however, found in an undated but mid-century description by the Revd. Richard Wilkes, who records a garden<sup>62</sup>. He describes the seat of Mr George Port 'a pleasant but romantic situation, the House standing a top and the gardens lying on slopes one above the other all down the south side of a high and very steep Hill'. This is particularly important, as it appears to describe some of the paths cut into the rock above the boil holes, which in itself evidenced a significant investment in time and money. What is unclear, however, is if these walks are part of the river walk described by Congreve almost a century before or are subsequent additions to it.
- 3.38 Wilkes describes the rivers breaking out near the gardens through 'a large hole, or mouth, like yt of an oven'. The water is described forming a pool, which 'hastens to meet the Dove'. However, he also notes a second channel to the south of the pool and 'rich meadows below yr gardens'.
- 3.39 The scale and character of the view to the east is also described. Bunster Hill is compared to a 'barn', its mass linking with that of Thorpe Cloud 'to form a prodigious bason' with some parts covered in wood, moss and 'naked stones'. Wilkes estimated that this amphitheatre could hold 'many millions of spectators'.

#### *John Port and Mary Dewes c1770 - 1807*

- 3.40 John Port (d. 1807) married Mary Dewes in December 1770, following his introduction to her while she was staying with her uncle, Bernard Granville, owner of Calwich Abbey near Ellastone, Staffordshire<sup>63</sup>. Following the early death of her mother in 1761, her aunt, Mrs Delany, took a great interest in Mary advising on domestic matters, artistic and fashionable pursuits. After her marriage, the niece and aunt wrote weekly to one another; it was Mary who was first told of Mrs Delany's new skill in creating the botanically correct paper flower collages the 'Flora Delanica' in 1772, which made her particularly famous.
- 3.41 Although untitled, Mary Port had grown up in fashionable society and had been close to the Court. She appears to have married for love, her uncle's fierce opposition to the match perhaps indicating a mismatch in financial or social standing<sup>64</sup>. From Mrs Delany's correspondence it is also clear that Mary Port did not enjoy good health, no doubt contributed to by her regular pregnancies<sup>65</sup>. After her marriage, she seldom visited London instead confining herself to Ilam, to her family home at Wellesbourne, Warwickshire, occasionally her uncle's home at Calwich and spa towns such as Bath and Matlock. Her letters to her aunt ask for news of London, of friends and even for advice on her growing family but she failed to see off her apparent depression frequently remarked upon by Mrs Delany and later, by her own daughter, Georgiana. In 1784 John Port wrote to a friend to say that Mary was forbidden to write for seven months on account of her 'nervous complaint'<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> WSL: S LS 466/6

<sup>63</sup> Granville's garden at Calwich was laid out in accordance with fashionable taste containing a grotto and wilderness and a secluded island on a lake reached by a Chinoserie bridge. Mrs Delany's sketched a view of the garden in 1756 (National Gallery of Ireland) which is also reproduced in 'Mrs Delany and her Circle', Laird, M, Weisberg-Roberts, A, 2009 p. 173. A sketch of Delany's grotto at Bulstrode (British Library) appears on the same page for which fossils and crystals were sent from Ilam.

<sup>64</sup> The marriage was endorsed by her aunt and her great friend, the Dowager Duchess of Portland, the marriage taking place at the Portland's residence of Bulstrode House, Bucks. Hayden R, Mrs Delany and her flower collages, 1980 p.105-06.

<sup>65</sup> Mary Port had four children between 1770 -74, Georgina, John, George and Louisa who were later followed by Harriet (?) and Fanny.

<sup>66</sup> Letter between John Port and Mrs Anne Viney quoted in Mrs Delany and her flower collages, p. 128. The Ports eldest child, Georgiana feared better, regularly travelling to London from 1778 to stay with her Great Aunt and becoming her virtual companion from the age of 13. It was Mrs Delany and not her parents who launched Georgiana into Society, 'Mrs Delany and her flower collages', Hayden, R, 1984 p. 166-67.

- 3.42 Mary may have been tasked with bringing refinement to Ilam but the extent of her influence is unknown. We know from Bowen and the visitor accounts that a house stood at Ilam but do not know if it was the one recorded in 1807 (Fig 25), or if part of the service buildings shown in that drawing record part of the earlier house.
- 3.43 Similarly we have little information on the gardens beyond the description of Congreve and the Revd. Wilkes. We also have little information on the form of any early park that surrounded the house, although surviving field evidence shows that much of the present park remained working land until at least the mid eighteenth century. What we do have is supporting information from Mrs Delany who visited Ilam regularly during the early years of the Port's marriage, often addressing her letters to 'Dear Sweet Ilam', which helps to build picture of an ornamented but predominately natural landscape.
- 3.44 In October 1771 she writes from Sudbury Hall to Mary, who is presumably recovering from a pregnancy; 'I fancy Port has coxed you out for a little walk in the sun on the dry gravel before the house', followed on 26<sup>th</sup> October 'winter seems much more advanced her (London) than at Ilam .... Your superb hills so Beautiful with wood, y<sup>r</sup>s pretty valleys and playsome River'<sup>67</sup>.
- 3.45 The estate was certainly productive. In 1771 Mrs Delany wrote to her niece to relate how the Duchess of Portland had enjoyed her 'roast pork and hashed venison' saying 'it relishes vastly the better for coming from Ilam'<sup>68</sup>.
- 3.46 While it is expected that the estate would have had a productive home farm, the venison is more interesting given that no evidence has been found for a deer park at Ilam. It is therefore possible that this came from a neighbouring estate at Throwley or Oaker halls<sup>69</sup> or even from another Dewes estate such as Calwich or even Wellesbourne.
- 3.47 Meat was not the only gift to travel from Ilam to London or to Bulstrode. Soon after an extended visit in 1771, Mrs Delany gave instructions for fossils and crystals to be sent from Ilam for use in the Duchess of Portland's grotto or cave at Bulstrode House, which Mrs Delany was decorating. She writes from Bulstrode on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1771<sup>70</sup> describing her satisfaction at placing 'the great Rock covered with Coral', a fossil from Bunster Hill, in the grotto. Other gifts followed including one of crystal in coal in 1774 described as 'very curious and much admired .... Mr Lightfoot accepts on behalf of the Duchess of Portland ... he values it as coming from Ilam'<sup>71</sup>.

### The Landscape Improvements of John Port

- 3.48 It has been suggested that the Ports reflected a lack of ambition in their development of the Ilam landscape<sup>72</sup>, possibly on account of restricted funds. However, this new research shows that the designed landscape at Ilam became a sophisticated interpretation of the natural landscape (see chapters Four & Seven). This 'improvement' built on an existing association of the house and river through the rock cut paths and particularly in the location of the Boil Holes. What is interesting is the apparent order in which it evolved.

#### *The Thomas Smith engravings*

- 3.49 Artist Thomas Smith of Derby (d.1767) was commissioned by the family to paint an idealised scene of the view of Thorpe Cloud from the garden. The painting, presumed lost, was engraved in two versions by James Mason in 1751 (Figs.19 & 20) and became one of

<sup>67</sup> Newport Reference Library, Mrs Delany's Letters Vol III 1748, 1770 – 74, QM 416.6 012 DEL, letters 30 and 31.

<sup>68</sup> 'Mrs Delany's menus, medicines and manners', Cahill, K 2005 p. 91.

<sup>69</sup> This is unlikely as venison was still high status meat that was rarely sold and usually used only by the gifted recipient.

<sup>70</sup> Mrs Delany's Letters Vol III 1748, 1770 – 74, NRL: QM 416.6 012 DEL, letters 32

<sup>71</sup> Mrs Delany's Letters Vol V, 1774 – 78, NRL: QM 416.6 012 DEL, letter 7, 28 October 1774. Georgiana Port also gifted the Duchess a fossil, who placed it in her 'choice cabinet' thereafter referring to it as 'Miss Port's fossil'.

<sup>72</sup> Mottram, P 'A Landscape Mystery at Ilam Hall, Staffordshire', 2000, p. 6 unhelpfully compares Ilam to the aristocratic landscapes of southern England associated with designers such as Lancelot Brown (1716-1783) whose approach to design was often very different to the landscape which emerged at Ilam c.1750.

over 200 views of notable landscape scenery and features included on the Green Frog dinner service, created by Josiah Wedgwood for Empress Catherine the Great of Russia (see Chapter Four for further information).

- 3.50 The images provide valuable detail on the principal landscape improvement, the realignment of the River Manifold to include the Boil Holes from where the River Hamps joined the flow.
- 3.51 The engravings show the full river sweeping round to the north, separated from the cliffs and hanging woods by a path and stone retaining wall. The two river streams emerge from the Boil Holes via a pair of brick arches set beneath a simple bridge, while a stone steps let into the retaining wall invite closer inspection of the water from the east side. The ground around is noticeably smooth and contrasts with the rougher, wilder land on the south side of the river, where the natural riverbank rises to rough meadow, which in turn becomes scrub and woodland. The 'polite' nature of the north side of the river is emphasised by the smartly dressed visitors who admire the view and the water, the pastoral cows and flowering plants and by the group of labourers or gardeners scything the lawn in the background.



Fig. 19. Thomas Smith 'A View of Thorpe Cloud' from the gardens of Mr George Port', engraved by James Mason c1751. BMAG/Derbyshire County Council

- 3.52 The second engraving suggests a slightly rougher scene with only a dairymaid in the foreground about to milk her charges. While the architectural details around the river are the same, the planting is slightly more naturalistic with more pronounced scrub and young trees appearing near the cliffs and along the riverbank.





Fig. 20. The variation on the Smith view engraved by Mason showing a dairymaid and her charges. WSL: SV IV.31b  
Reproduced by permission of the WSL.

- 3.53 Thorpe Cloud dominates both engravings, rising in the background like Vesuvius, a peculiar cloud formation to the north suggesting volcanic steam<sup>73</sup>. It would have been impossible to experience this view from within the gardens, on account of topography, but apparently it could have been possible from a 'viewing station' aided by a camera obscura<sup>74</sup>, located on a lost path, which climbed through Hinkley Wood towards Calton<sup>75</sup>.
- 3.54 However, these views differ from a description of the river recorded by landscape designer, Thomas Whately<sup>76</sup>, who visited Ilam in 1770. He noted that the two streams 'appear only to lose themselves again, for they immediately unite their streams, just in time to fall together into another current, which also runs through the garden', which suggests that the two water sources in fact flowed over land to meet the river.
- 3.55 The agricultural improver, Arthur Young, visiting Ilam in 1771 recorded a similar scene 'under the rock in the garden, two rivers rise .... Boils up like a vast spring and soon after falls into the Dove'.<sup>77</sup>
- 3.56 Young also provides additional and useful advice about a circuit, the presence of St. Bertram's Bridge, and the location of at least one seat which is undoubtedly similar to the Smith viewpoint, possibly close to the Ha ha at the east end of target meadow:

*The walk at the entrance of the valley winds up a rocky cliff, from which you look down on the river in some places, and in others only hear the roar of it over broken rocks; at the end of the vale, on*

<sup>73</sup> The active volcano, Vesuvius, and the Bay of Naples was an established destination on The Grand Tour and depicted in many landscape paintings of the early-mid eighteenth century.

<sup>74</sup> The camera obscura together with a 'Claude glass' became popular items of the artists or tourist's equipment, which enabled accurate on-site illustrations of landscape.

<sup>75</sup> 'A Landscape Mystery at Ilam Hall, Staffordshire', Mottram, P, 2000x p. 7. National Trust Ilam Park.

<sup>76</sup> Whately, T 'Observations on Modern Gardening', 1770 – 1793 x five editions. Whately (d.1772) described the most fashionable landscapes of the day including Hagley Hall, the Leasowes and Woburn Farm primarily for foreign tourists. Each of these landscapes hold similarities with Ilam. Please see Chapter Four for further information.

<sup>77</sup> A Farmer's Tour through East of England, Young, Arthur, 1771, vol. 1, pp.190-191. Arthur Young (1741 – 1820) was an agricultural writer and political observer, his work, specifically his *Annals of Agriculture* published in 45 volumes until 1803, led to his appointment as Secretary of the Board of Agriculture in 1793. However, his notes on Ilam concern only the gardens and not the wider estate although he does comment on the heavily wooded hills alongside the river opposite the garden.



*the side of the water, is a bench which commands the whole, and looks full on the entrance of the ground, which seems quite blocked up by a distant mountain called Thorpe Cloud, of a very coned shape, blunt at top: The effect fine. You look also upon a bridge thrown over the river, which perhaps hurts the view, it is small and not at all in unison with objects of such magnificence, as these vast woods, and the hill which rises so boldly above it: There should be no bridge in sight, or it should be the single lofty arch, to unite in effect with the rest of the scene.*<sup>78</sup>

#### *Gilpin at Ilam*

- 3.57 The notes and sketches of the Revd. William Gilpin<sup>79</sup> further substantiates the records of Whately and Young. Gilpin visited Ilam in 1772, writing up his notes for publication in 1786<sup>80</sup>. The notes<sup>81</sup> recorded 'a very characteristic scene': 'In front the hill slopes gently into the county it has a gentle slope. This slope is the part where the genius of its proprietor has chiefly shown itself. It is cut into little terraces, descending from one to another by stone steps: and the 2 sides are ornamented by flower parterres'.
- 3.58 Gilpin did not warm to the parterres, describing them as 'artificial deformities'. He also suggested that the meadow by the river 'might be made into a beautiful lawn' and pondered on the form of the landscape beneath the woodland on the opposite side of the valley, which he did not have access to, hoping that it was 'more irregular'.
- 3.59 The main channel of the river was dry at the time of his visit which allowed him to fully appreciate the 'very curious' behaviour of the Manifold which 'rises out ground under the house and forms a river at one burst. Within a few yards of it another stream, the Hamps, though of very inferior value, makes its exit in a similar course and joins the Manifold upon coming out of its subterranean passage'.
- 3.60 Gilpin drew a map and a sketch of a view at the time of his visit (Figs 21 and 22). The map is particularly important as it clearly shows that the Boil Holes were to the north of the course of the Manifold and that the two streams from the Boil Holes combined running south to join the river. The sketch is useful as it shows how different the land was to the Mason engraving, clearly recording the two water channels converging below the distant view of Thorpe Cloud. It also notes the presence of a 'Lawn' in the foreground, showing that this land was already perceived as pleasure ground and not as the meadow suggested by the engraving.

<sup>78</sup> A Farmer's Tour through East of England, Young, Arthur, 1771, vol. 1, pp.190-191.

<sup>79</sup> Revd. William Gilpin (1724-1804) was one of the great promoters of picturesque landscape theory in the eighteenth century popularized through his published 'Observations'. See Chapter Four for further information. Gilpin became part of Mrs Delany's circle and it is possible that she encouraged him to visit Ilam in 1772; 'Mrs Delany and her flower collages', Hayden, R, 1992 edition. p. 165.

<sup>80</sup> The final manuscript for Gilpin's 'Tour Through England', Vol 8 c1786 is held by the Bodleian BOD: Ms Eng Mix e 488 Vol 8 pp. 768-773

<sup>81</sup> BOD: MS.Eng. Misc. f. 179(1) fol 10

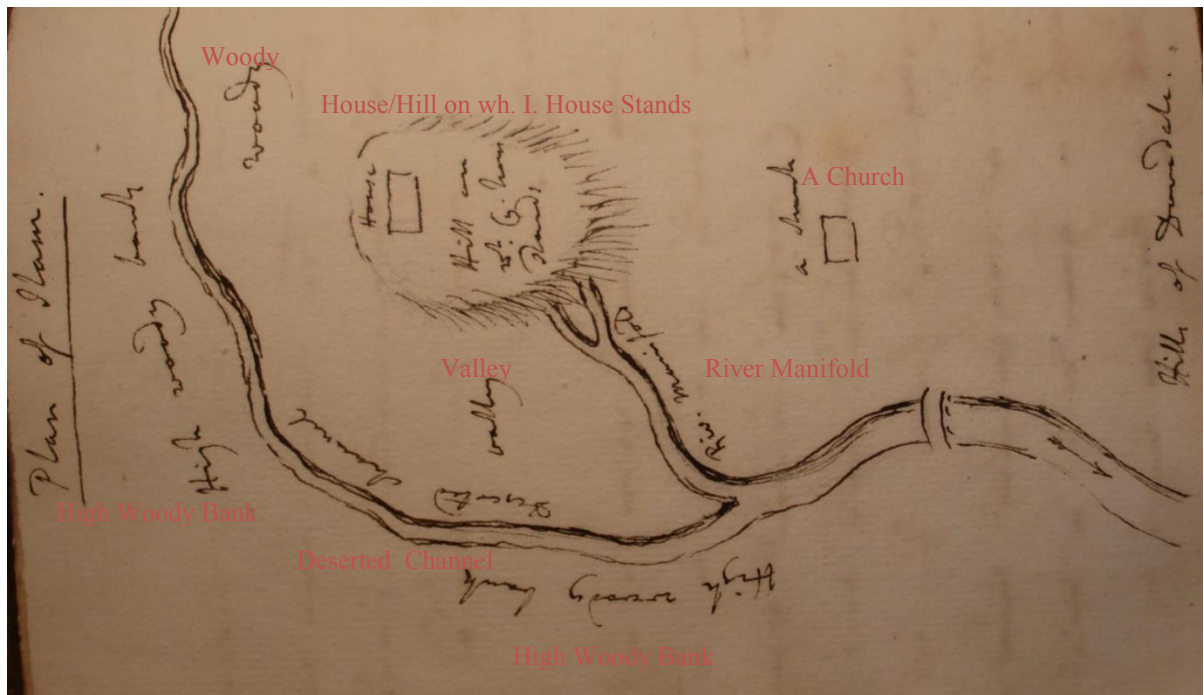


Fig. 21. Gilpin's plan of Ilam rotated and annotated to show actual orientation of the Manifold. Taken from the manuscript of his 'Tour Through England' vol. BOD: Ms. Eng. Misc. e 488

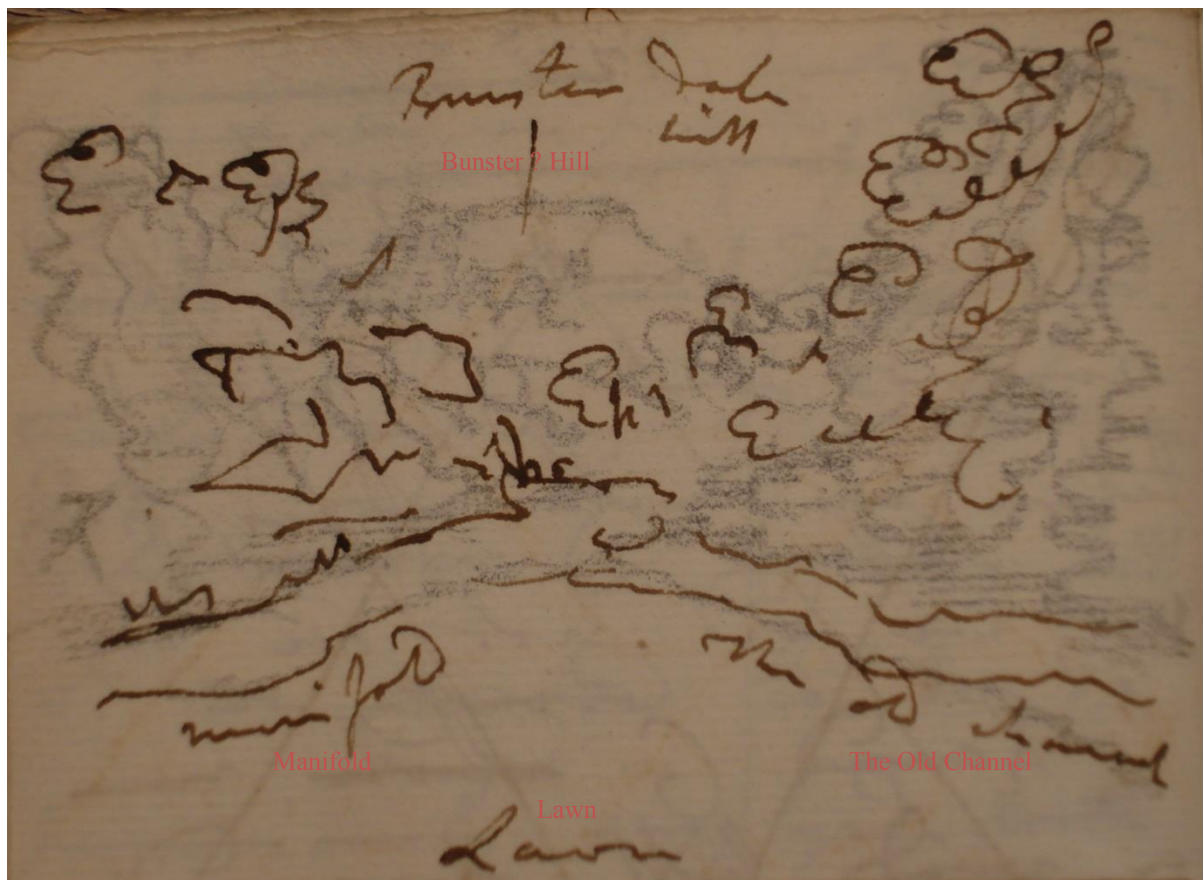


Fig. 22. Gilpin's sketch showing the view towards Thorpe Cloud and the original river system BOD: Ms Eng. Misc. f. 179(1)

3.61 Gilpin goes on to provide ideas on improving the landscape, notably 'if the waste-stream could be diverted; then both the curiosity and the beauty would remain'<sup>82</sup>. As this is what

<sup>82</sup> BOD: MS Eng Misc f. 179 (1).

happened it would appear that the Smith view of c1750 was actually a proposal and not a record of change. George Port died in 1769, which also makes his successor and nephew, John, the actual architect of change.

- 3.62 An indication that work was afoot comes from Mrs Delany in November 1771 when she writes to Mary Port, 'I hope soon to hear Mr Port has accomplished his intended work .... We talk a great deal of the beauties of Calwich and Ilam'<sup>83</sup>.
- 3.63 Mrs Delany also provides a clue for the date of the completion of the improvements. She was invited to view the Green Frog dinner service, at Wedgwood's London showroom in June 1774, before it was shipped abroad<sup>84</sup>. Mrs Delany wrote to Mary exclaiming that the prettiest plate was the view of Thorpe Cloud 'as it appears at the end of the improvements at Ilam'. It would seem that the work was therefore carried out between 1771 and 1774.
- 3.64 A second early record of the improvements comes in a letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1777 written by Dr Johnson to Hester Thrale. Dr Johnson had taken his friend and later biographer, James Boswell, to see 'Ilam Gardens'. The picturesque landscape was described as 'a very fine amphitheatre, surrounded with hills covered with wood, and walks neatly formed along the side of a rocky steep, on the quarter next to the house, with recesses under projections of rock, overshadowed with trees', one of which would become known as the 'grotto'. Crucially, he adds 'we viewed a remarkable curiosity ... two rivers bursting near each other from the rock, not from immediate springs, but after having run for many miles underground'<sup>85</sup>, which appears to describe the Boil Holes and the new closer access to them as indicated by the engravings.
- 3.65 An ornamental landscape was clearly emerging at Ilam. However, little is known about other features in the landscape such as the existence of a wider circuit walk connecting park and gardens, or the presence of any landscape features on the south side of the river. Given the status of the family and their social and artistic connections both of these features could have been anticipated at Ilam. Similarly, it is unclear if the cliffs above the Boil Holes were embellished in any way apart from the Grotto (cut back, ornamented with spar and fossils for example) or when and where the peculiar 'Congreve' stone writing desk and bench appeared.
- 3.66 In addition, nothing is known about any possible ornamental planting that may have accompanied the improvements. This is frustrating as landscapes, such as Hagley, which would have been familiar to the Ports through family connections, included ornamental shrubs and flowers in the landscape, often arranged around specific features<sup>86</sup>. The 1770s also witnessed the expansion of use of glass, coal and brick in productive and ornamental hot houses where new and exotic plants could be grown and brought out to ornament more formal areas of the gardens such as terraces or close to seats.

<sup>83</sup> Mrs Delany's Letters, Vol III 1748, 1770 – 74. NRL; QM 416.6 012 DEL. Letter 32. John Port's improvements may have also included a new pumping system powered 'by a curious engine' described in 1777 pushing water from the area of St. Bertram's Well uphill to the house through a pipe: Mottram, P 'Local History Briefing for Excavation at Ilam', 2000, National Trust Ilam Park. French traveller, Louis Simond, described c1810 an hydraulic contrivance of rotating buckets 'so simple and ingenious' that supplied water to the house in an unceasing stream. This machine was apparently c40 years old at the time of his visit making it broadly contemporary with Port's improvements. 'Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain During the years 1810 – 1811', 1815, books.google.co. pp. 88-89. An underground passage connecting St Bertram's well and 'The Coffin Spring' which maybe related to this pump was also noted in 'A Guide to Ilam Hall and Grounds', 1926 WSL: pbox/ILAM/7

<sup>84</sup> See Chapter Four for further information on the Green Frog dinner service. Mrs Delany was furious to note that the card misappropriated the owner of Ilam, suggesting it was a Mr Addlesley. She rectified the mistake stating 'Ilam will acknowledge its true master to her Imperial Majesty'. NRL: Mrs Delany's Letters, Vol V, 1774 – 78 QM 416.6 012 DEL, letter 1. However it is unknown which Port, George or John, was identified by Mrs Delany as the 'true master' as the catalogue which accompanied the service still recorded George Port as owner five years after his death (Please see 4.47)

<sup>85</sup> 'The Historic Gardens of England, Staffordshire', Mowl, T, Barre, D, 2009 p. 138 & 'The Letters of Samuel Johnson', Vol. III, ed. Redford, B, 1992. James Boswell later recorded a gardener saying 'he had put corks where the Manifold sinks into the ground and had caught them in a net placed before one of the openings where the water bursts out' ('A Guide to Ilam House and Grounds', 1926 WSL: pbox/ILAM/7)

<sup>86</sup> The ornamentals depicted on the Smith engravings probably owe more to artistic license but are useful in indicating a preference for the 'natural' landscape style (Please see Chapter Four)



- 3.67 The only glimpses we have of horticultural interest come again from the letters of Mrs Delany. In February 1775 she encloses in her letter to Mary Port 'curious seed, which I hope will prove good, and not settle on the road'<sup>87</sup>. While in October 1777, she sends her seeds from 'Mr Bromton' and asks about the 'feather-grass' seed sent previously and whether 'it appears yet'<sup>88</sup>.
- 3.68 However, the contribution of the natural scenery to the scene was recognised. On 24<sup>th</sup> May 1780, Mrs Delany, while expressing her disapproval of the latest hair styles, compared them to Ilam 'as if Mr Port was to fell and crop all his fine hanging woods and feathered hills and instead of all the Beautiful hues of Various greens, should plant Scotch firs and brambles'<sup>89</sup>.
- 3.69 The improvements marked a high point at Ilam for the family. Mary Port appeared to be in better health, her quiet beauty captured by the Court painter John Opie c1776 and John Port was investing in his family's status in the purchase of a new carriage<sup>90</sup>.



Fig. 23. Mary Port (1746 – 1814) by John Opie, c 1776. Private collection

<sup>87</sup> Mrs Delany's Letters, Vol V, 1774 – 78 NRL: QM 416.6 012 DEL, letter 19. Through her aristocratic and botanic connections, Mrs Delany had access to some of the greatest nurseries and plant collections in England. These included Kew Gardens, Luton Hoo, Bulstrode Park, James Lee's Hammersmith nursery and gifts from admirers such as Joseph Banks. Mrs Delany and Her Circle, Ed. Laird, M and Weisberg-Roberts, A, 2009.

<sup>88</sup> Mrs Delany's Letters, Vol V, 1774 – 78 NRL: QM 416.6 012 DEL, letter of 26<sup>th</sup> October 1777.

<sup>89</sup> Mrs Delany's Letters Vol VI, 1779 – 86. NRL: QM 416.6 012 DEL. The letters in this volume are not numbered.

<sup>90</sup> The Opie portrait is now in a private collection in the United States and has been reproduced only for the purposes of this study. John Opie (1761–1807) was amongst the foremost portrait painters of the eighteenth century. This painting does not appear as a named commission in his posthumous catalogue but is understood to have been one of several 'Portraits of a Lady'. He painted Mrs Delany and, possibly, through her Mary Port. However, Mrs Delany denied either commissioning or paying for the portrait and the benefactor is unknown. Mrs Delany is, however, known to have helped in the purchase of the carriage! Mrs Delany's Letters Vol III 1748, 1770 – 1774, NRL: QM 416.6 012 DEL, letter 47



- 3.70 Unfortunately, an investment in the form of an estate plan or survey is not known to survive and so other public maps and records are depended upon to trace other landscape improvements and changes in the Ilam area.

*Improvements in the wider landscape*

- 3.71 Yate's county map of Staffordshire of 1775 provides some additional information about the evolving landscape although it does not record the realignment of the river. Most importantly it confirms the emparkment of land to the north of the house by the appearance of Lodge Lane. Similarly, it records a drive approaching the house from the east and the wooded nature of the hillside opposite, Hinkley Wood, with 'Hazel Clump' being marked for the first time above<sup>91</sup>. The map also records where the main river reappeared above ground in dry weather and also the village, with at least one building within the area known today as Wheel Orchard.



Fig. 24. Yates map of Staffordshire, 1775 SRO: 2 NE Sheet

- 3.72 Information on the eighteenth century village itself is also scarce but an account of one Mr Jos. Robotham 'bred and born' in the village<sup>92</sup> recalled the old Hall and vicarage<sup>93</sup>, which stood close to the later area of The Chains and where some good apple trees grew surviving from its old garden. The village contained a farmhouse, later converted into a post office, together with a row of 'four road side thatched cottages, so low that a tall man could easily have touches their eaves with his hands'<sup>94</sup>. Opposite the cottages stood a terrace of tiled houses which shared an attic space; the schoolroom<sup>95</sup>. In addition there was an inn and an old smithy and two cottages in the area, which later became the park.
- 3.73 The account continues with a description of a ford across the Manifold 'with stepping-stones for foot passengers'<sup>96</sup>, which were later removed to Dovedale. It also describes a second road from Blore to Ilam Hall and the vicarage, which 'turned off just above the steepest part of the Ox Leasow' to approach the hall via St. Bertram's Bridge, 'which was then the main road'<sup>97</sup>.
- 3.74 During Robotham's childhood the vicar at Ilam was 'Owd' Mr Port, a bachelor, and presumably a younger brother of the Lord of the Manor. Port was a popular figure and very

<sup>91</sup> Hazel Clump, later known as Hazleton Clump was not in the ownership of the estate which suggests that its contribution to the landscape was either serendipitous or that Port negotiated with his landowning neighbors to improve the wider setting of Ilam.

<sup>92</sup> Ilam in the Early Part of the (18<sup>th</sup>) century, Copied from 'The Deanery Magazine', June 1897, p. 2. National Trust site archive

<sup>93</sup> The vicarage is most probably the building to the north of the church recorded by Mrs Delany in 1756.

<sup>94</sup> Ilam in the Early Part of the (18<sup>th</sup>) century, Copied from 'The Deanery Magazine', June 1897, p. 2. National Trust site archive.

<sup>95</sup> This description appears to contradict that included in Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2012 3.23, which records a school in Ilam from 1754 located to the north of the old vicarage. This school was replaced by a new one in or near the old Inn in Wheel Orchard, which correlates with Jos Robotham's account.

<sup>96</sup> Ilam in the Early Part of the (18<sup>th</sup>) century, Copied from 'The Deanery Magazine', June 1897, p. 3. National Trust site archive.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid p. 3. St. Bertram's Bridge is understood to date from the late C18, built to take carriages and carts across the river, in place of the earlier ford, Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2012 3.25.

social, often spending Friday nights away from the village dining with friends. He farmed his own portion of the estate at Far Wall, near Throwley which had a resident bailiff<sup>98</sup>

- 3.75 A 're-conveyance of the estate' of 1788 is also useful in recording established field names, such as 'Great Rushton Field', 'Little Field', 'Buddy Close', 'Moat Gate' (?), 'Great Stad Flat', 'Little Stad Flat' and 'Bridgeford Orchard' around the village. Unfortunately no map accompanies this document<sup>99</sup>.

### After the Improvements – Ilam as a Tourist Destination

- 3.76 Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Port family was in increasing financial difficulty<sup>100</sup>. George Port's will remained in Chancery<sup>101</sup> and John Port was eventually forced to let the estate in 1779, while he and Mary Port retired to Derby<sup>102</sup>.
- 3.77 Despite this, Ilam had become an established destination for travellers of taste.
- 3.78 An early account is provided by the noted tourist, John Byng, 5<sup>th</sup> Viscount Torrington, who visited Ilam as part of his northern tour in 1792. He was given an impromptu tour by a gardener:

*Descending the hill, we came to a lock'd gate of Mr Ports of Ilam ....Here nature has done wonders; an amphitheatre of wood, a rapid stream, with the curiously formed hill, call'd Thorp Cloud, to close the valley, altogether form an assemblage of the most picturesque and beautiful scenery; but the banks of the water are not sloped, nor is it properly staunch'd to produce cascades, or fullness.....*

He was also shown 'a small grotto' where Congreve sat.

- 3.79 Crucially Byng recorded that the river banks 'are not sloped' suggesting further canalisation of the river corridor had taken place. Byng also noted an apparent lack of weirs, or similar devices, to control the water along the river, which suggests that the existing weirs and pool before the boil holes are later additions.
- 3.80 A further recollection by Byng is both amusing and revealing. It appeared that he and the gardener were in agreement that Mr Port could do more with his landscape, despite the obvious expense of his 'great family' stating 'yet two labourers with spades and mattocks might do wonders of walks here', which suggests that the path system was still in its infancy. Byng similarly wondered about diverting the underground streams to a hilltop to 'form a wonderful cascade over the rocks, through the wood'.
- 3.81 In the spring of 1794, William Pitt, a surveyor and agriculturalist employed by the Board of Agriculture, made a tour through Staffordshire<sup>103</sup>. He described Ilam as 'A pleasant seat,

<sup>98</sup> Ilam in the Early Part of the (18<sup>th</sup>) century, Copied from 'The Deanery Magazine', June 1897, p. 4-5. National Trust site archive. The account continues with a story of Port building a pigsty on unthithed land at Far Wall to escape payment. He similarly brought sheep off the moor to lamb to safeguard the economic value of his flock!

<sup>99</sup> SRO:D(W) 1756\1/11-20. (Many of these field names are also recorded in 1756, Deeds of Manor of Ilam, SRO: D(W) 1756/1/1).

<sup>100</sup> Phil Mottram speculates that the cost of the river diversion may have also contributed to this. 'A Landscape Mystery at Ilam Hall, Staffordshire', 2000. p. 11.

<sup>101</sup> Papers concerning a disputed inheritance and possible bankruptcy between a George Port and Issac Wood survive in the Staffordshire Record Office. A schedule includes a list of high status goods ranging from 'sale of the colliery £1200' to 'damask, mahogany, walnut chairs and stools, Japan Dressing Table with crimson cover', 'circular mahogany table' and 'fine old family pictures'. The schedule also notes an outstanding payment for the gardener included in an overall sum of 82 2 5 made in June 1776. SRO: D(W)1747/25 1-5

<sup>102</sup> The tenant may have been Matthew Bolxam, who is described 'of Ilam' in papers relating to the lease of lands belonging to Tissington Hall, Derbyshire, in 1781 DRO: D239/M/E/5082 or a Mr Clive, who was in residence by 1794 (see Pitt General View of Agriculture, 1796). Mrs Delany had written to Mary's mother in January 1778 'Mary Port bears her great reverse of fortune with uncommon fortitude'; The Letters of Mrs Delany, Misc. Vol X NRL: QM 416.6 012 DEL. Money had been becoming scarce since 1775 with Mrs Daleny purchasing superior 'spermaeek' candles for Mary. In 1780 Mrs Delany even asked a favour of Queen Charlotte who added the Port's second son, George, to her 'Royal List' thereby guaranteeing him a place at Charter House.

<sup>103</sup> 'A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Stafford: with Observations on the Means of its Improvements'. Pitt, W, 1796, WSL: EA/7 1-9 5978/2 p. 195-97. This account includes 'Remarks and Observations made on a tour through the County in the Spring of 1794'. The Board of Agriculture 1793 – 1822 was established with the intention of promoting agricultural improvement in England. It was supported by Prime Minister William Pitt (no relation to the surveyor here).

the property of Mr Port but now occupied by Mr Clive. The romantic situation of this place suggests the idea of a glen in the Alps'. He found the pleasure grounds 'Well clothed with oak and other wood; and the pleasure-walks from the seat on one of these precipices are wonderfully romantic and various. These pleasure-walks resemble shelves, one almost perpendicularly above another; by the side of which, Nature with scarcely any assistance from Art, has furnished a profusion of flowers of no contemptible appearance' (Pitt noted Herb Robert, Scabious and Wild garlic). He also described 'in a limestone grotto .... There are several specimens of petrified fish' before going on to record how the rivers burst up under the grotto to 'form two very fine cascades' and concluding 'from these pleasure grounds we view a very bold and romantic prospect of two hills, called Thorpe Cloud and Bunster'<sup>104</sup>.

- 3.82 Pitt's account is particularly interesting as it conveys an idea of an established circuit walk coming down *from* a seat<sup>105</sup> – location unknown but possibly near the house – on steep paths through the woodlands and/or the surviving zig-zag paths to reach the Grotto and Boil Holes with the view of Thorpe Cloud concluding the visit.
- 3.83 Pitt also offered advice on improving the wider landscape, which included the replanting of the Bunster slopes on account of 'the stumps of some very large ash which have been sawn down' which together with quicksett fences and plantations on the declivities would restore order to what he saw as 'neglected' and 'naked' uplands. However, he did acknowledge the suitability of the land for grass, which could be further improved by clover, noting cows and 'long-wolled sheep' in the vicinity of Ilam.
- 3.84 Richard Colt Hoare, the third generation of the great landscaping family of Stourhead, Wiltshire, visited Ilam c1800 and was also shown around by a gardener. His short account is interesting for two things i) the house was still tenanted, 'let to a gentleman' and ii) his attention was particularly taken by the meadow, presumably Target Field, the 'extreme flatness' of which acted 'as a fine relief to the perpendicular wood above which forms nearly an amphitheatre, in some parts the whole circle is surrounded with wood'<sup>106</sup>.

#### *A possible Pemberley connection*

- 3.85 One of the most tantalising descriptions of Ilam Park is offered by Jane Austen who, it has been suggested visited Ilam during her tour of the Peaks in 1806<sup>107</sup> and may have based her description of the home of her hero, Mr Darcy's Pemberley on Ilam.
- 3.86 Certainly, there are similarities between parts of her description and the landscape. Most specifically Austen could be describing the pinch point at the north end of Target Meadow where the walk contracts, the sense of enclosure exaggerated through the massing of yew in the immediate woodland above and the steep rise of Hinkley Wood on the opposite of the bank of the river. The simple bridge also fits as does the 'rough coppiced' woodland along the west bank of the Manifold:

*... they pursued the accustomed circuit; which brought them again, after some time, in a descent among hanging woods, to the edge of the water, in one of its narrowest parts. They crossed it by a simple bridge, in character with the general air of the scene; it was a spot less adorned than any they had visited; and the valley, here contracted into a glen,*

<sup>104</sup> Pitt's description was included in an edited version in an account by the Rev. J. Nightingale in 1813. *The Beauties of England & Wales* Vol XIII pt II Staffordshire p. 976-80. WSL: S.1343 PN4246

<sup>105</sup> This suggests that the seat noted by Arthur Young in 1771 had been removed.

<sup>106</sup> NT site archive, Ilam Park. In contrast another popular tourist, Mrs Lybbe Powys does not appear to have visited Ilam, her tour of Derbyshire in 1800 being confined to views of Dovedale 'and other parts of Derbyshire', while staying near Yoxall. Mrs Lybbe Powys, *Staffordshire Journal*, 1800.

<sup>107</sup> 'Jane Austen and the English Landscape', Batey, M 1996 p. 65 and 76. Batey caveats her comments by reminding the reader that the manuscript of *Pride and Prejudice* was virtually complete by the time of Austen's Derbyshire tour and her description is as likely influenced by a general appreciation of Gilpin's work together with first-hand knowledge of other ornamental circuit walks such as that at Great Bookham, Hampshire which belonged to her relatives, the Cookes. Batey also speculates that Austen's Derbyshire tour would have followed that of Mrs Lybbe Powys 'from Hamstall Ridware to Cromford and along the Via Gallia to Matlock and Dovedale' and possibly not Ilam because Powys was the mother of her hostess, Caroline Cooper of Hamstall Ridware, Staffordshire.



*allowed room only for the stream, and a narrow walk amidst the rough coppice wood, which bordered it.*

- 3.87 Of particular interest is the reference to ‘the accustomed circuit’, which suggests that if Austen was describing Ilam Park, she also described an established walk and the preferred direction of travel along it i.e. north – south, which reflects the route described by William Pitt in 1794<sup>108</sup> but contradicts Whateley and Gilpin amongst others, which suggests that visitor circuit at Ilam had actually expanded by the late eighteenth century.

#### *The inconspicuous house*

- 3.88 A feature missing from many of these descriptions is the actual house around which these landscape improvements would have been made. A fleeting impression was provided by Francis Venables in 1749 of a house, which is understood to have replaced the Tudor mansion by the mid eighteenth century<sup>109</sup>. However, the first clear record of any house dates from 1807 (Fig 25), described as the house of ‘the late John Port’. This shows a relatively plain seven bay house, executed in a simple classical style set on a southeast-facing terraced platform. An account of 1897 claimed, perhaps unfairly, it ‘could lay no more claim to any architectural beauty than many a factory’. In this account the house is understood to have been ‘a little above’ the site of the present Hall’ but this is unsubstantiated<sup>110</sup>. The chimneys of the house are certainly substantial and may evidence an earlier building while the crenelated service court to the rear introduced a fashionably Gothic element.



Fig. 25. Ilam Hall c. 1807 drawn by John Port's niece, Fanny de Bunsen. National Trust Ilam Park

- 3.89 While the immediate landscape around the house accords with many of the descriptions the wider landscape is more circumspect, indeed it appears as if Bunster Hill has been moved wholesale to the west to provide a more dramatic backdrop.

<sup>108</sup> 'A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Staffordshire', Pitt, W., 1796 WSL: EA/7 1-9 5978/2

<sup>109</sup> Baylis, A. 'The Life and Works of James Trubshaw', 1978. Anne Baylis describes Ilam as a Queen Anne house in her biography of the architect James Trubshaw but provides no further evidence for this. A later account refers to a description by Ebenezer Rhodes in 1820 of a house containing an enormous carved fireplace dated 1561. This fireplace was incorporated into the Victorian house and later sold to Pinewood Studios. Apparently the buildings historian R. Brunskill had suggested a mid C17 date based on an examination of the De Bunsen drawing: Mottram, P. 'Local History Briefing for Excavation at Ilam', 2000, The National Trust, Ilam Park.

<sup>110</sup> Ilam in the Early Part of the (18<sup>th</sup>) Century, Copied from 'The Deanery Magazine', June 1897, p. 1. National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.90 An unidentified and undated view of a similar house (Fig 26) has been found in the collection at Dunham Massey, which shows broad similarities with de Bunsen's Ilam and the general character of the surrounding landscape<sup>111</sup>.



Fig. 26. Possible view of Ilam Hall, White House at the foot of a Hillside. National Trust Dunham Massey, NT 930045.

## The Nineteenth Century

- 3.91 Following the death of John Port in 1807 the estate was sold to industrialist Jesse Russell of Darley Abbey, Derby in 1809<sup>112</sup>. He bought the Ilam estate as a marital home for his son, Jesse Watts-Russell<sup>113</sup> who oversaw significant changes to the estate before his own death in 1875.

### *Jesse Watts-Russell*

- 3.92 Greenwood's county map of Staffordshire c1818 is useful, albeit at a large scale and schematic, in tracing the development of the landscape at Ilam after the Ports and ahead of the main improvements by Watts-Russell. The map shows an apparently landscaped park with scattered trees with a drive leading from the east and northeast down to the house from a scatter of cottages in the village. A path follows the north bank of the river to the east of the house, which continues along the river, and presumably through the pleasure grounds/park, to Rushley. Of particular note is the notation 'Water rises', presumably a reference to the Boil Holes acknowledging by their specific inclusion that that they were a recognised 'public' feature. In addition the map no longer records a deer park at Throwley<sup>114</sup>.
- 3.93 The map is interesting in only recording one village road approaching Ilam from the east, from Thorpe, and not a second from Cheadle/Blore via Bertram's Bridge as shown

<sup>111</sup> While this connection with Ilam is purely speculative, the Earls of Stamford were well known to Mary Port. The family was keen amateur artists and many sketchbooks are known to survive in the Dunham Massey collection, which would be worthy of further investigation.

<sup>112</sup> A series of mortgage releases and covenants survives in the DRO of c1809 when property belonging to John Port was leased or sold. Documents DRO: 231M/7/338 and DRO: 231M/T/339 are particularly interesting as the guarantor was the Industrialist Richard Arkwright. The purchase of Ilam Park by Jesse Russell is the established history but an on-line article of May 2016 suggests that Ilam was sold to David Pike Watts, whose daughter married Jesse Russell junior becoming his home on the death of his father-in-law in 1816. *Ilam Hall, Demolished Houses, Staffordshire* <https://housenadheritiage.org/tag/ilam-hall>

<sup>113</sup> His son adopted his wife's maiden name, Watts, in respect of her equally rich industrialist father, David Pike Watts, the family name becoming Watts-Russell.

<sup>114</sup> Although 'Great Park' is recorded on the Tithe map of 1839!

previously. This indicates that the southwest approach as a form of public road had already been lost, or downgraded to the footpath shown.

- 3.94 Similarly, the map only records woodland to the south of the park (the east end of Hinkley Wood) and not continuing around the natural amphitheatre of the river opposite Target Meadow. The southwest slopes are notably unplanted. This suggests either earlier descriptions of the extent of woodland planting had been exaggerated or significant tree felling may have taken place around the time of John Port's death, possibly to help clear his debts.
- 3.95 However, an account of c1810 still records an impressive if surprising landscape at Ilam: 'A show-place from which we did not expect much pleasure; we found it, however very beautiful; rocks, wood, water, all were admirable'<sup>115</sup>.



Fig. 27. Detail from Greenwood, c1818 SRO: Folder No. 4 (open shelves).

- 3.96 A county description published in 1817 supports the general depiction of the Greenwood map, recording eight or ten houses in the village, which peep out 'amid the embowering trees', the white rectory being particularly conspicuous<sup>116</sup>.
- 3.97 Perhaps more usefully the description also records the 'stately mansion of Jesse Russell Esq. situated on a gentle eminence, with two verdant terraces, and a pleasant lawn, in front, terminated by the church-yard'. Oak, elm and ash were noted in the 'flourishing wood', the ground rising above the wood to a coppice, Hazleton Clump, described as 'a conspicuous and pleasing object'. This was still very much the Port house although the garden terraces have apparently already reduced to two from the three recorded in 1807.

#### *A new house*

<sup>115</sup> Journal of a Tour & Residence in Great Britain: During the Years 1810-1811 by a French Traveller etc. Louis Simond, 1815, p. 83

<sup>116</sup> 'A Topographical History of Staffordshire', Nightingale, J, c1871 pp 38-39, 238 - 39, WSL: S.1429/1



- 3.98 In 1820 Jesse Watts-Russell inherited a considerable fortune following the death of his father. He wanted to build a new house and commissioned architect, John Shaw<sup>117</sup> to design a new house in the fashionable Gothic taste. Ahead of the build the Port house was dismantled and sold off. An article in the Derby Mercury, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1820 recorded the sale of black marble chimneypieces, plate glass windows, a staircase window and mahogany doors. Contents including Brussels and Kidderminster carpets (presumably woven on order for particular rooms), a library bookcase, a glass chandelier and a clockwork roasting jack, were also included<sup>118</sup>.
- 3.99 Architect and civil engineer, James Trubshaw<sup>119</sup>, built the house between 1821- 1826 using sandstone from Stanton about 4.5km to the south. Trubshaw had begun measuring up in 1820<sup>120</sup>. Ilam was Trubshaw's largest commission in Staffordshire.
- 3.100 The project did not get off to a good start. Trubshaw's diary of 24<sup>th</sup> January recorded Watts-Russell's displeasure at travelling to Ilam to lay the foundation stone on 29<sup>th</sup> January considering it a 'great personal inconvenience'<sup>121</sup>.
- 3.101 However, work must have proceeded well as by the end of 1821 Watts-Russell owed Trubshaw £3674 for work undertaken at Ilam.
- 3.102 Given the scale of the project many of the bricks used in the building were made locally. William Acton of Armitage (near Rugeley) made five thousand by late October 1821. Watts-Russell supplied the clay from an unknown but local location<sup>122</sup> and the bricks were made at a rate of 10/6d per 1,000<sup>123</sup>. Evidently no expense was spared, a further entry from 1824 recording a special journey made by Trubshaw to a foundry in Derby where bronze casements were being made for 'the grandest windows for Ilam'<sup>124</sup>.
- 3.103 Ilam Hall was completed on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1826. In 'Gem of the Peak' written in 1851<sup>125</sup> William Adam commented 'we do not remember at any time to have visited a mansion, in which both exterior and interior magnificence are in such happy union as at Ilam'. Watts-Russell was apparently happy for people to visit the house so long as they came with 'a satisfactory introduction'<sup>126</sup>.
- 3.104 Trubshaw completed other commissions for Watts-Russell at Ilam, such as works to the church in 1824, which included the octagonal Pike-Watts memorial chapel<sup>127</sup>. In 1828 he

<sup>117</sup> John Shaw (Sn) 1776-1832 started his career working with landscape designer Humphry Repton, producing Gothic designs for Beaudesert, Staffs for the Earl of Uxbridge. Other Gothic houses or remodeling commissions included Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire. However, Shaw's designs for the church St Dunstan-in-the-West on Fleet Street, London is considered to be his masterpiece, although it was completed after his death. It has been suggested that Ilam was built to compare with the Earl's of Shrewsbury's mansion at Alton Towers but no direct evidence of this has been found. The design and scale of Ilam reflected a popular taste exhibited by other architects, such as Robert Lugar, Anthony Salvin and James Wyattville, who were contemporary to Shaw. Some of Shaw's drawings for Ilam survive in the RIBA library, London

<sup>118</sup> Ilam Hall, Demolished Houses, Staffordshire <https://houseandheritage.org/tags/ilam-hall> 11 May 2016

<sup>119</sup> James Trubshaw (1777-1853) was one of the leading architects/engineers of the early Victorian age. He built houses and offices, churches, canals and bridges; his bridge at Chester over the River Dee is the largest single span stone bridge in the world.

<sup>120</sup> 'The Life and Works of James Trubshaw', Baylis, A 1978 p. 14. Some stone was brought in via St. Bertram's Bridge, the weight damaging it requiring repair in 1839; Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2012, 3.28

<sup>121</sup> James Trubshaw's diaries 1820 – 54. SRO: Mf 115/2 (the original manuscripts are held by the National Library of Wales 166352). Watts-Russell also had homes in Northamptonshire at Biggin Hall, Oundle and Benefield Rectory and a town house in Portland Place, 'The Life and Works of James Trubshaw' Baylis, A, 1978, 15

<sup>122</sup> The location of the clay is possibly the site of the present lorry yard on the road from Ilam to Dove Dale. Paul Mortimer as per comms.

<sup>123</sup> 'The Life and Works of James Trubshaw', Baylis, A, 1978 p. 14

<sup>124</sup> A note contained within the transcripts of Trubshaw's diaries shows that Ilam was not all work. Trubshaw entered a race with the family's 'tall tutor' celebrated for 'his swiftness of foot'. Trubshaw won, carrying Sir Francis Chantry, a friend of the Watts-Russells and sculptor of monument to David Pike Watts in Ilam Church (see Chapter Four), on his back commenting that Chantry 'was only a little man' SRO: Mf 115/2.

<sup>125</sup> WSL: Pn4246 Open shelves

<sup>126</sup> 'The Life and Works of James Trubshaw', Baylis, A 1978 p. 15

<sup>127</sup> Trubshaw was evidently concerned that the local carvers, responsible for the interior detail of the chapel, might have let down the quality of the main memorial by Francis Chantrey. He requested that the heads at the base of the vaults were made 'Christian like and not hobgoblins as Mr Watts-Russell likes good looking subjects'. Baylis A. The Life and Works of James Trubshaw, 1978 p. 16

built the river bridge for £600<sup>128</sup> and the new vicarage (Dovedale House) to designs provided by architect, Edward Blore<sup>129</sup>.

- 3.105 While no evidence in the forms of landscape drawings or accounts have been found, the scale of the building suggests that much of the Port landscape immediately around the house was either removed or significantly redesigned as part of these improvements<sup>130</sup>.



**Fig. 28. Two views of the new house c.1830. The watercolour is based on John Buckler's drawings commissioned by Watts-Russell to mark the completion of the project. National Trust, Ilam Park**

<sup>128</sup> The Life and Works of James Trubshaw, Baylis, A 1978 p. 16

<sup>129</sup> James Trubshaw's Diaries SRO: Mf 115/2 and Graves, J. Jottings of a Staffordshire Parson's Son, 1998 National Trust: Curator's Black Box.

<sup>130</sup> Any surviving papers relating to Ilam Hall have been deposited in the SRO or WSL. Mr Julian Watts-Russell as per comms.

## A New Park

### *The Glebe Map, 1824*

- 3.106 The first indication of a new phase of landscape improvement is found on a plan of Glebe land at Ilam dated 1824 (Fig 29)<sup>131</sup>. This detailed map records the landscape to the north and east of the house. It establishes the historic accesses and buildings and indicates the creation of the form of the surviving landscape in its general expansion and arrangement, in new circulations and new ornamental planting.
- 3.107 The map shows the footprint of the as yet unfinished house and stables connected to the village by a new curving drive, which emerges from shrubbery to travel through 'Pleasure Grounds' to the house. A wide rectangular lawn is set out to the northeast of the house and before the church. Little information is shown of the gardens but a vast new kitchen garden is recorded to the northwest of the house containing two long ranges of hothouses. The kitchen garden is peculiar by not being wholly enclosed by regular walls. Instead an outer circular boundary is indicated which may have been a fence or a ditch associated with the Ha ha, which survives today, recorded to the west of the drive and around Dovecote Wood.
- 3.108 A second drive, apparently demoted to a service drive, is also shown running north of the main drive across the park to approach the house from the northwest. This drive, which also survives, is shown in blue, which may indicate that it was already in existence; its route reflects the drive recorded by Greenwood in 1818 (Fig 27). The drive is bisected by a boundary, probably a fence, close to the west boundary of the kitchen garden, which continues west towards the river. Several footpaths, many with associated measurements, are also shown within the park, while a lane (identified by the letters E-F) is also shown approaching the church from the village. The Lane is particularly wide, which suggests that it is the old road from Blore/Cheadle now terminated at the church. Again, this lane is very similar to that shown by Greenwood and it confirms that the section between the church and St. Bertram's Bridge had already been removed.
- 3.109 The map records other buildings in the park such as the church, the rectory in its own grounds to the northeast of the Pleasure Grounds, a lodge or cottage set in the shrubbery on the north side of the old road<sup>132</sup> and at least two dwellings standing in their own grounds within the northeast boundary of the park.
- 3.110 The Glebe Map records four distinct forms of planting. The first is found in the relatively unplanted Park where two lines of trees, which run north/south and northeast/southwest/southeast respectively, evidence historic field boundaries and possibly those of the medieval common fields.
- 3.111 The second form of planting is isolated, possibly specimen, trees loosely scattered across the park. Most notable is pair of 'Ash' recorded close to the northeast boundary. Why these trees were specifically identified is unknown but it is possible that they marked the route of an old entrance or lane within the historic field system.
- 3.112 The third form of planting is examples of traditional clumps or groups. A young plantation in a triangular, fenced enclosure is shown to the west of the service drive, while two groups of conifer trees are arranged on either side of the Ha ha/fence, one in the Pleasure Grounds and one in the park. Two small groups of three and two trees respectively are also shown to the south of church and north of St. Bertram's Bridge, which probably mark the route of the old road.
- 3.113 The fourth form of planting is the dense shrubbery or woodland between the main drive and the service drive and the possible emergence of a boundary belt between the cottages on

<sup>131</sup> LRO: D412/18

<sup>132</sup> This is possibly the school founded c1754



the northeast boundary of the park. An orchard associated with 'Horse Shoe' the village Inn, is also shown within the meadow (Wheel Orchard) to the northeast of the house.



Fig. 29. Glebe Map of Ilam, 1824. LRO: D412/18 (also included at A3 in Appendix I)

- 3.114 The 1824 map pre-empted a series of orders presented to the Michaelmas Sessions in Stafford in 1827 and 1828 (Figs 30 – 33) to close or re-direct public footpaths and the surviving fragment of the old road in the area of Wheel Orchard. The 'useless and unnecessary' paths were removed either from land Watts-Russell already owned 'now called the park and other land now occupied as shrubberies also belonging to him' or land he was prepared to buy, the proceeds of the sale going towards 'the general repairs of the Highway and bridleway in the said township of Ilam'. The actual owner of the land prior to sale is unknown<sup>133</sup>.

<sup>133</sup> SRO: Q/SB Mich 1827 19/1-4. It has been suggested that the main route across Wheel Orchard was in fact a road (Motttram. P 'Local History Briefing For Excavations at Ilam, 2000, National Trust, Ilam Park)

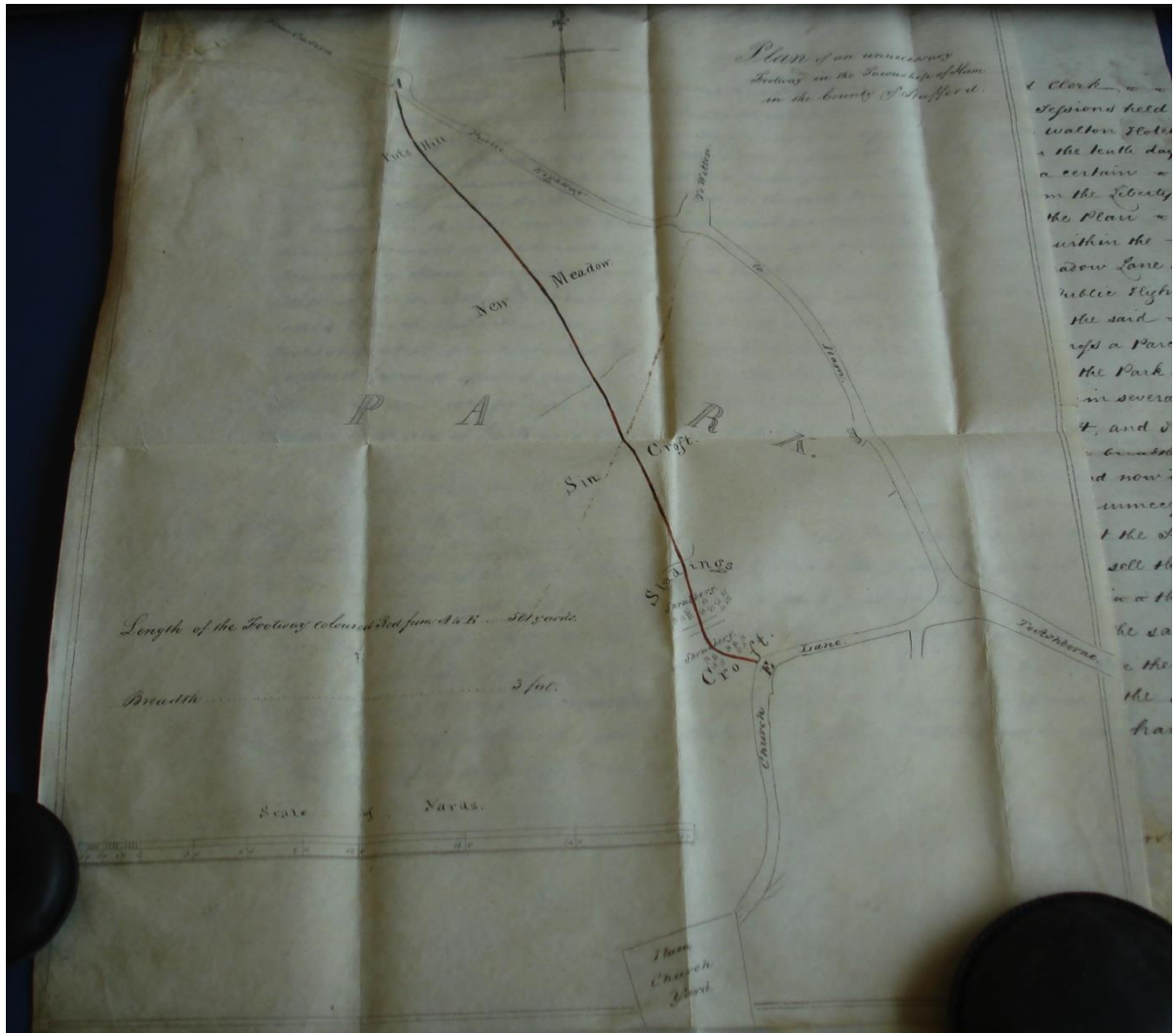
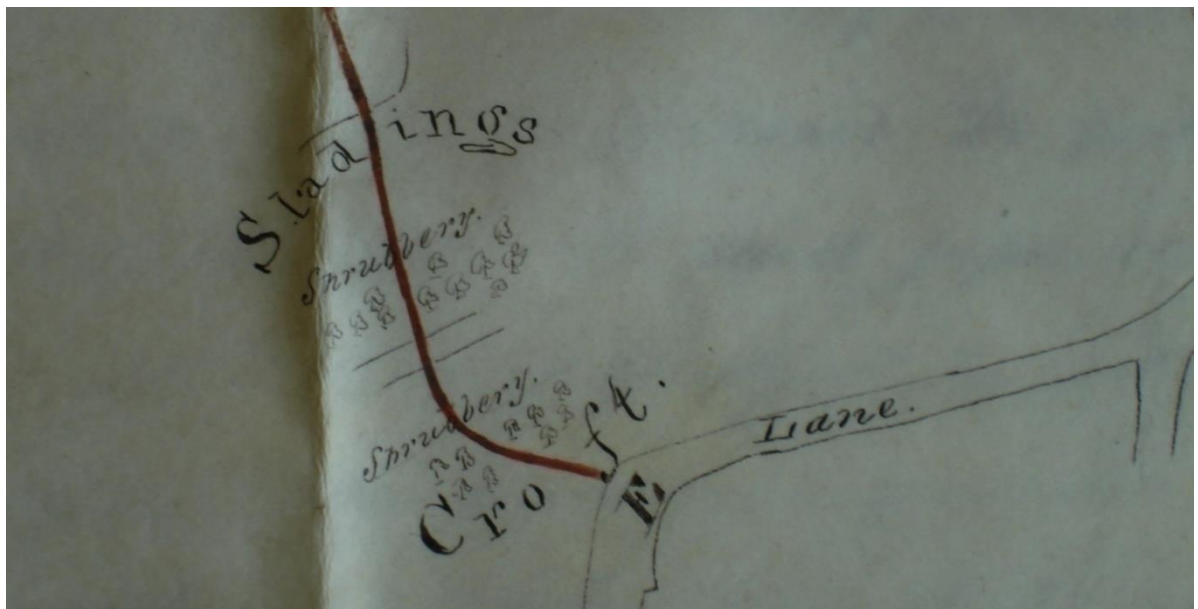


Fig. 30. Closure order for footpath running north from near the site of the later Gate Lodge. SRO: Q/SB Mich 1827/19/4.



Detail of same closure order showing new shrubberies alongside a new drive to Ilam Hall. SRO: Q/SB Mich 1827/19/4



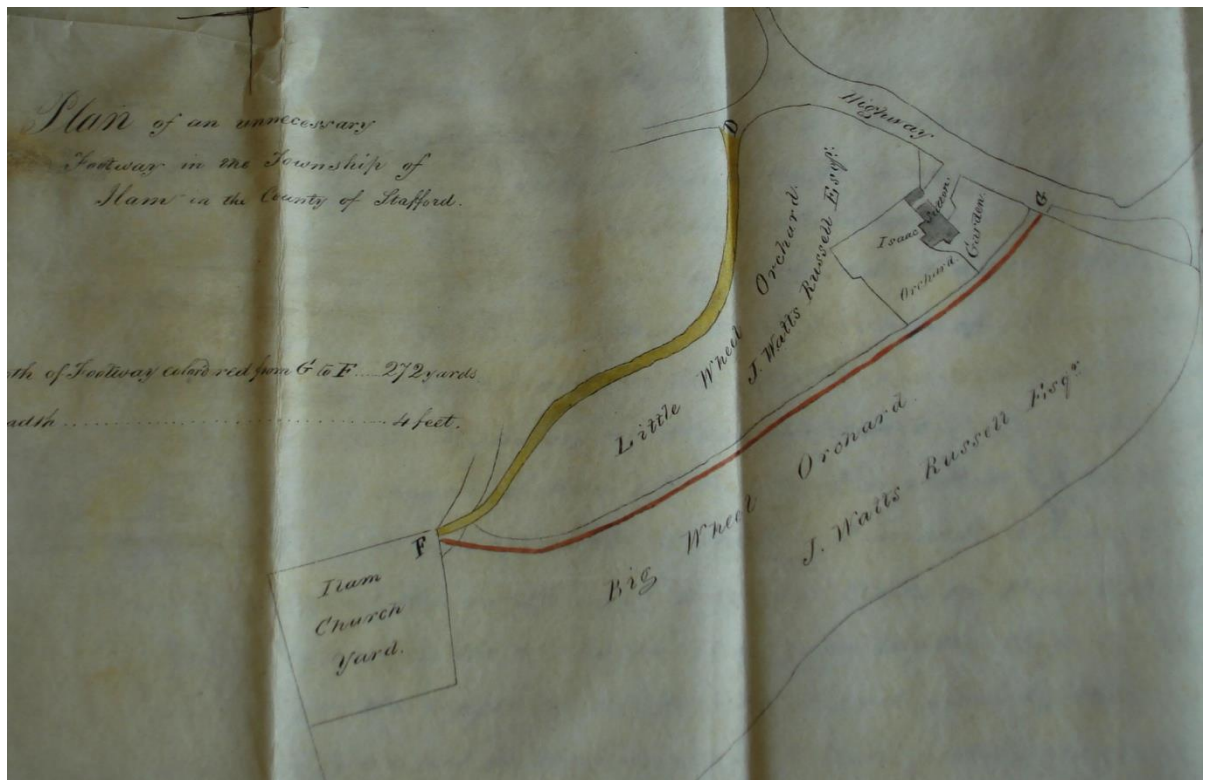


Fig. 31. Detail of a footpath closure order showing the 'footway' to be removed (red which brought the two areas of orchard into the park as 'Wheel Orchard'). This path survives as an earthwork in the park today SRO: Q/SB Mich 1827/19/3

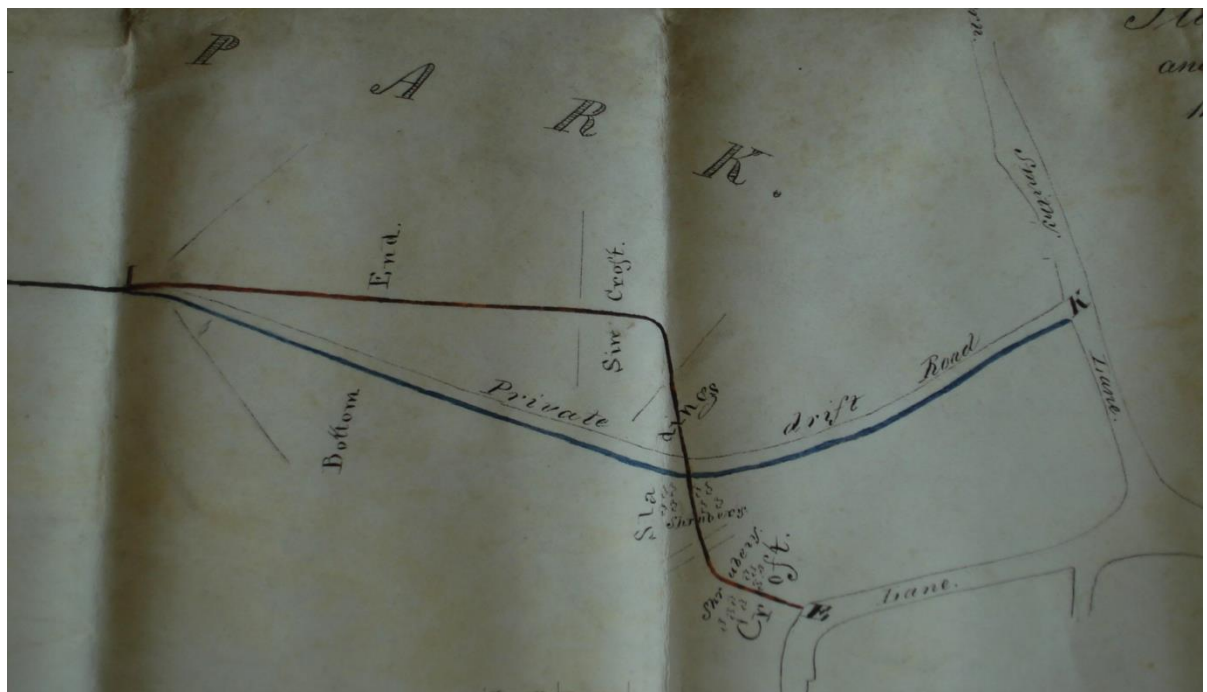


Fig. 32. Detail of a closure order of a path in the park. The 'Private drift Road' survives as the service drive/public footpath to the north of the main drive. SRO: Q/SB Mich 1827/19/2.





Fig. 33. Detail of a closure order of a road in the park. SRO: Q/SB Mich 1827/19/1. This plan is related to SRO: Q/SB Mich 1827/19/3 and shows a new drive to the church (yellow) as well as the 'New Site' for the rectory (Dovedale House). The fragment of the old road is shown in red/brown.

- 3.115 It would seem that Watts-Russell was fast completing his Staffordshire seat. An amusing letter survives in the Derbyshire Record Office addressed to his neighbours at Tissington Hall, 'My dear Tissington Hall, if anybody in you likes to turn out from such a comfortable fireside on Wednesday the 26th to tea at me, some most delicious music and singing will have arrived from London by the railway to waste its sweetness on almost a family party, unless you rescue it from such an affront. No answer is requested from your affectionate neighbour, Ilam Hall' 19th December, 1838.<sup>134</sup>

#### *The Cobb Survey, 1839*

- 3.116 One of the most beautiful and informative records of the landscape of Ilam Hall is the 'Map of Ilam Hall and other Estates Adjoining' with an accompanying written schedule (which equates to the field numbers shown in this section of the report). This survey of 1839 prepared by Henry Cobb, records the achievements of the Ports and Watts-Russell at Ilam and it is partly reproduced at A3 in Appendix 1.

<sup>134</sup> DRO: D239/M/F/9302



Fig. 34. Overview plan of the Ilam Estate, Map of Ilam Hall and other Estates Adjoining, Henry Cobb, 1839. The National Trust, Ilam Park (see also Appendix I).

### Ilam Park

- 3.117 The survey confirms the layout of the park shown on the Glebe map and clearly records the improvements along the river. It also provides more detail confirming the nature of the boundaries around Dovecote Wood, within the pleasure ground (both apparent Ha ha's) and the fence around the outer boundary of the kitchen garden. In addition, the survey records a fence, which effectively follows the paths and woodland edge from the garden area to the termination of the park in the far north where the fence separates the path (and woodland) from the waterside meadow.
- 3.118 The footpath and road closure orders had been implemented leading to a new arrangement of paths and drives within the park, which are recorded by this survey. The most significant changes occur in the area of the old Rectory where the line of the old lane is retained as a reduced path, which links the main drive to the church where it becomes a tree-lined walk to the house. To the south two paths lead from St Bertram's Bridge around the west and east sides of the church yard, that on the east linking to Church Lodge, built c1830, and the reconfigured drive around the grounds of the new Rectory. Most significantly, the wide, open area of Wheel Orchard (6) has become an uninterrupted meadow, providing a pastoral setting to the new rectory and the church.





Fig. 35. Detail from the Cobb survey showing the general area of the park. National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.119 However, some older features still remained in that area such as the cottages within Wheel Orchard, described by the survey as 'Double Cottage and gardens, Girls and Boys School', the orchard and the productive garden associated with the old vicarage.
- 3.120 Cobb shows the large village green, The Chains, for the first time to the east of the main entrance, together with an established shrubbery alongside the main drive, which was first recorded in 1824. The drive sweeps southwest towards the house, passing between Dovecote Wood on the west and the pleasure grounds on the east, now containing a small circular pool. Dovecote Wood probably included the earlier planting recorded in 1824 but the woodland within the pleasure ground has either been removed or severally depleted. The establishment of this woodland would have also seen the removal of the southwest extension of the Ha ha recorded in 1824.



- 3.121 The footprint of the vast new hall and stables contrasts with a small formal garden set out in a lattice arrangement around a central fountain (the present Italian Garden) shown to the south of the house<sup>135</sup>. A series of zig-zag paths lead from this area down a well-planted hillside towards the river. A semi-circular enclosure containing two small buildings is recorded on the north side of this hillside overlooking the park. On the east side of the house two broad grass terraces echo the earlier layout recorded by De Bunsen in 1807, opening out onto tree-planted lawns which descend to St. Bertram's Bridge, part screened from the house on its northwest side by a small coppice.
- 3.122 A third path follows the north bank of the river from the bridge back towards the gardens and the Boil Holes, which are indicated by an indentation and two rocks (?) on the survey. As the path continues to the west along the base of the zig-zag paths it passes a peculiar formal planting of trees and possible beds<sup>136</sup> set out on a triangular piece of ground besides the river. The planting is separated by cross-paths within a perimeter path with an outer fence, that to the west correlating with a surviving Ha ha.



Fig. 36. Detail of the Cobb survey, 1839 showing the garden areas. The National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.123 The main garden path continues to the west as a broad walk running beneath newly planted woodland, or even orchard on the steep slope above, before continuing to the north to return to the park via a sharp dog-leg path at the north end of the established woodland (Paradise Woods). A second path also extends from the area of the Boil Holes as a circuit around Cow Close Lee (3) today known as Target Meadow.
- 3.124 However, no path or ride is shown within the southern area of the park<sup>137</sup> where the dogleg path emerges from the woodland to suggest a wider circuit. In this area the park is still relatively open although more tree planting has occurred in its northern area since 1824, which includes a loose group of trees close to west boundary. Interestingly, while the numbers of trees along the old field boundaries has also declined since 1824, the lines of

<sup>135</sup> The accompanying schedule records the core of the park as 1. The Mansion and Offices, Lawns, Pleasure Grounds, Kitchen & Flower Gardens, Shrubberies etc.

<sup>136</sup> The hatching is similar to that used to identify the growing beds in the kitchen garden.

<sup>137</sup> Despite an internal boundary the accompanying schedule appears to record one area of The Park (2) to the west and northwest of the hall.

the two principal boundaries survive, which include six trees along a bank to the northeast of Dovecote Wood (Fig 35).

- 3.125 Views to the east across the park would have been dominated by a vast walled kitchen garden, with associated service buildings and drives, built to the north of the house. This complex had expanded since 1824 and was now fully enclosed with walls set within an outer fenced boundary. It is possible that the ridges of the hothouses were visible from the park on account of topography<sup>138</sup>.
- 3.126 The 'Private Drift Road' or service drive recorded in 1824 and 1827, is clearly recorded to the north of the kitchen garden and Dovecote Wood. The boundary, which runs off this drive to the west had, however, been moved north to follow the line of a footpath recorded in 1824.
- 3.127 Outside Dovecote Wood the northern park contained only one small area of recognized woodland, the fenced plantation close to the junction of the drive and internal boundary/footpath (Fig 35). This planting is notable as it appears completely coniferous, contrasting sharply with the dominance of broadleaves shown elsewhere. Small areas of woodland are also found in association with cottage plots alongside Lodge Lane, the northeast boundary of the park, which was composed of a tree-planted hedgerow.
- 3.128 The survey also contains a detail of Hinkley Wood, although this is not included on the overview plan. This suggests that this whole area had only recently come into the possession of Watts-Russell, the western area historically being separated from the Ilam estate.

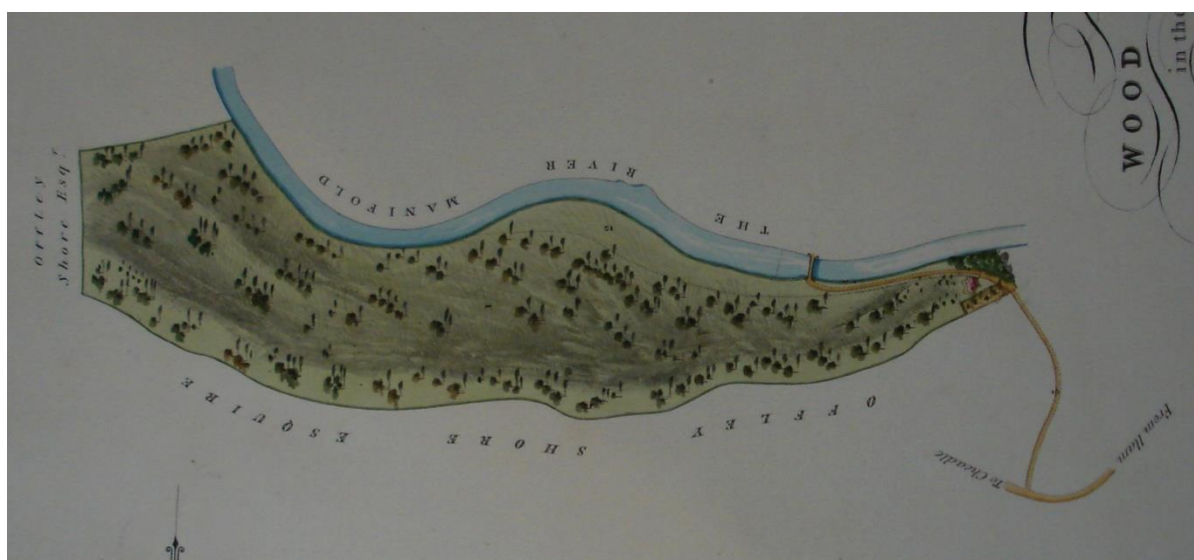


Fig. 37. Detail from the Cobb survey showing Hinkley Wood. National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.129 This drawing shows the hexagonal-planned Porter's Lodge built in c1830 (now known as Wood Lodge) with its associated woodland screen and private garden. It was built besides a drive on or close to the line of the historic road to Ilam which entered the site via St. Betram's Bridge<sup>139</sup>. The bridge is shown, as is the existing weir to its west, the only weir recorded at this time. A piece of meadow described as 'Hinkley Wood Lee' (2) is also shown opposite the Boil Holes and apparently fenced off from the wood along its south side. Of particular interest is the way in which the woodland is recorded. It appears sparse which may evidence replanting or natural regeneration within the area recorded without any planting by Greenwood in 1818 (Fig 27).

<sup>138</sup> The Horticultural Register and General Magazine Vol 1. 1832, p. 135 records 13 year old glasshouses in the kitchen garden placing their erection c1819 <https://books.google.co.uk>

<sup>139</sup> The drive is described as 'Carriage Road to Cheshire' in the accompanying schedule.

### *The wider Estate*

- 3.130 Cobb's survey of the wider estate (notably land within the present study area) is remarkable for its detail and in the way it successfully conveys the different landscape characters of the pastures and uplands of Bunster Hill. The survey also shows how land to the northeast of the park was beginning to evolve a parkland character through the judicious placement of woodland, or augmentation of existing woodland, at the north end of Fish Pond Field (21), even though the land remained subdivided. The woodland closed the mid-ground view while two further linear plantations established along the northern edge of Ilam Moor (43) effectively concluded the whole view to the northeast.
- 3.131 The large fishpond itself lay just to the north of Home Farm surrounded by its own plantation. Two smaller water bodies lay immediately to its south, close to the surviving icehouse. Ornament elsewhere in the farmland was confined to an unidentified building in Lamber Close (22) and the robust tree-planted hedgerows.
- 3.132 To the north of the park Steeple House Farm is recorded as a virtual eye-catcher, looking down over Ilam through its surrounding orchard.

### *The Tithe Map, 1839*

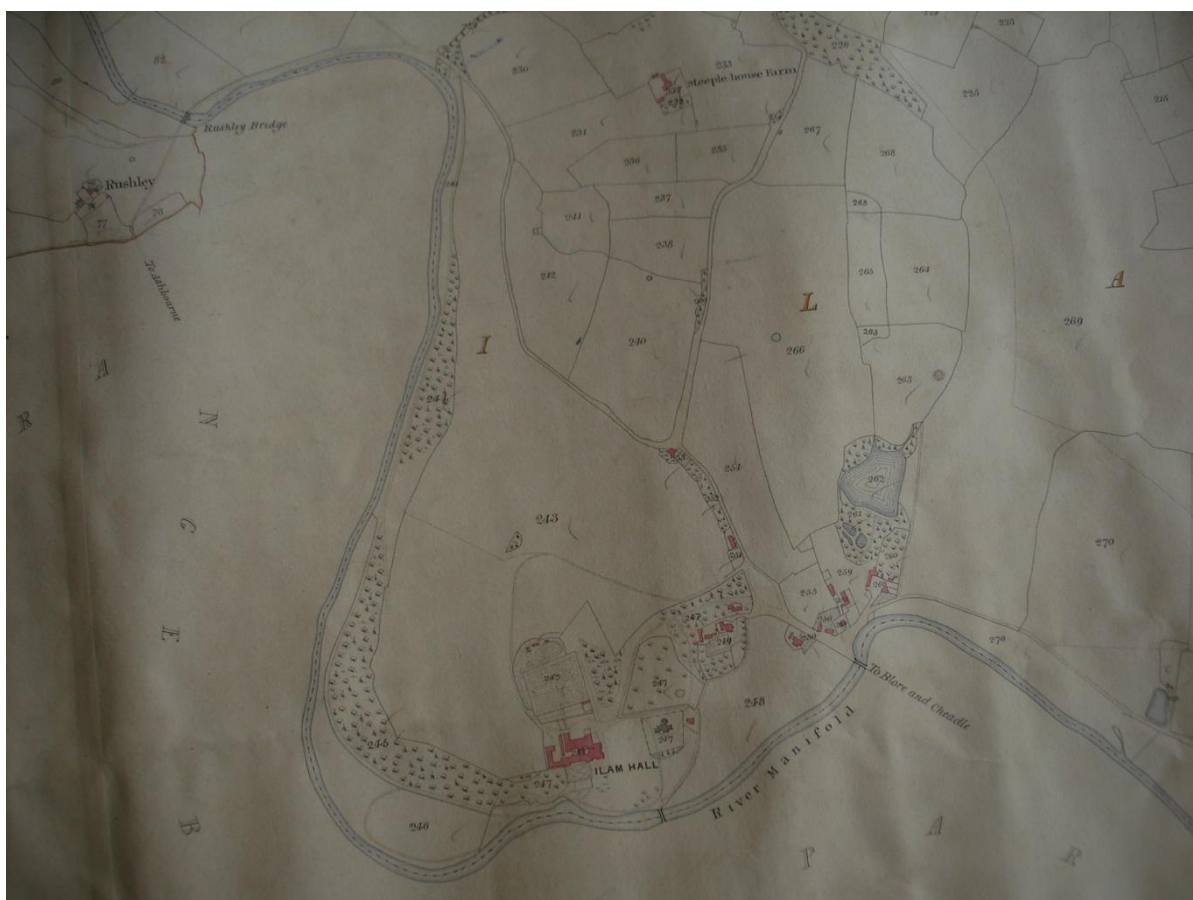


Fig. 38. 1839 Tithe map of Ilam showing landscape improvements. SRO: D4932/1

- 3.133 The tithe map of Ilam Parish of 1839<sup>140</sup> records the same arrangement as Cobb's 1839 survey with some minor changes. These include the extension of the building south of the entrance to Ilam Hall and an apparent increase in planting in the Pleasure Grounds to the east of the drive (both recorded under 247, The Mansion and Offices, Lawns, Pleasure Grounds, Kitchen and Flower Gardens, Shrubberies). The woodland between The Park (243) and the river is named for the first time as Cow Close Wood (245). The triangular

<sup>140</sup> Tithe map of Ilam Parish and accompanying apportionment, 1839. SRO: D4932/1 and D4932/2.



garden area to the east of the meadow Cow Close Lay (246) had been simplified with the loss of its paths although the clear boundary of the Ha ha along its west side is recorded. The circuit path in Cow Close Lay is also shown, as is an extension to the north of the main garden path/drive. This runs alongside the plantation, Putshill Bank (244) before concluding in new plantation, Plantation adjoining Caster (229) at the north end of North Barrow Meadow (230) in the north park. However, no other planting is recorded beyond the plantations.

- 3.134 Beyond the park, the layout of the land within the study area was also broadly unchanged since 1839. The field names recorded are Nether Field (254)<sup>141</sup>, Fish Pond Field (266), Lamber Close (263) [still with its unidentified circular building], Little Pasture (264), Long Lands (265) and Lees (268).
- 3.135 The plantations shown on the tithe are also largely unchanged from Cobb's survey, the principal outlying woodlands being Plantation (266), Ilam Moor Wood (184) and Bunster Plantation (220). An interesting addition is 222, which is described as 'Two Clumps' perhaps indicating the beginning of a conscious emparkment in this area of land.
- 3.136 The tithe also offers the last mapped record of village ahead of its improvement. Dense plantation is still shown around the fishpond (261) with orchard (260) to the northeast of The Croft, the farm (255, 259), Buildings and Gardens in the Croft (258) and Homestead Yard, Garden and Orchard (260). Within the park the area of The Wheel Orchard (248) is also clearly shown.
- 3.137 A frustrating aspect of the tithe is the fact that the land immediately to the south of the Manifold was untithed being in the ownership of the Bishop of Lichfield Diocese and therefore not recorded<sup>142</sup>. We therefore have very little evidence of the development of land-use on the south side of the river apart from Cobb's survey of Hinkley Wood. However, the Blore Tithe is useful in providing an overview of land within the area of Ilam, which evidences the continuation of common ownership and the relatively poor agricultural lands of upland Staffordshire.
- 3.138 The accompanying apportionment to the Blore Tithe identifies the land parcels such as Dennis's Common Piece (31), Common Piece (32), Gorsey Lees (44), Lime kiln Piece (45) and Rough Wood Piece (49). Small linear woodlands are also recorded between the land parcels along the narrow valleys.

<sup>141</sup> According to the accompanying apportionment, this field was rented from Watts-Russell by the Revd. Bernard Port, recorded as the son of John Port of Ilam Hall and Vicar of Ilam in 1839.

<sup>142</sup> Tithe map of Blore Parish 1845 LRO: B/A/15/404. Tithes were paid to the church authorities, their own land being in effect 'un-taxed'.



Fig. 39. Extract from the Blore tithe map, 1845 showing land to the south of Ilam Park. LRO: B/A/15/404

- 3.139 In 1839 the antiquarian and architectural surveyor, John Buckler<sup>143</sup> visited Ilam and prepared a set of sketches of different parts of the estate. This valuable record, which survives in the William Salt Library, brings Watts-Russell's landscape to light and include a view of the Grotto containing the stone writing desk and a semi-circular seat<sup>144</sup> and a view from the southeast of the church (Fig 40) showing the curtain wall of the kitchen garden, containing the Pepperpot Tower, evidently built by 1839 but not recorded by Cobb or on the tithe, sweeping down to join the service range's of the house.
- 3.140 The census returns of 1841 offer a glimpse of the domestic arrangements of Watts-Russell at Ilam. The occupants of the house are recorded at John Watts-Russell, then 55 years old and recently widowed, and his children Isobel, Grace and John<sup>145</sup>. 16 staff attended the family in the house but no details are provided beyond the gender of the individuals<sup>146</sup>.

<sup>143</sup> J. Buckler (1770-1851) British artist and sometimes architect. His five domestic commissions include Abbey House, Glastonbury Abbey, Somerset. Buckler's eldest son, J. C. Buckler also drew and painted Ilam Hall. His sketch of the house and grounds is also held by the WSL.

<sup>144</sup> The view of Congreve's Seat WSL: SV V.16 (oddly dated 1847) and J. C. Buckler's view of the house WSL: SV V.12 (dated 1826) are not included here.

<sup>145</sup> John would go on to found Ilam, near Christchurch New Zealand.

<sup>146</sup> SRO: H0107/1004/6



Fig. 40. John Buckler's view of Ilam Church from the southeast also showing the wall of the kitchen garden with the Pepperpot tower, 1839. WSL: SV V.5a Reproduced by permission of the WSL

## The Second Phase of Improvements 1839 – 75

### *The model village*

- 3.141 Having established his seat, Watts-Russell decided to add further embellishments and in 1839 retained the leading Gothic Revival architect, George Gilbert-Scott<sup>147</sup> to design a new model village, an entrance gate and lodge and to undertake a wholesale repair and reordering of the church, which included 'Scotting' the tower by adding a pitched roof.
- 3.142 Scott designed a series of Gothic cottages to line the east side of the village road. The cottages are notable for the polychromatic hanging tiles, 'ginger-bread' timber detailing and long front gardens, which were separated from the road by a low stonewall. Only one cottage, Bridge View Cottage, is known to have survived from the earlier village.
- 3.143 The most extraordinary feature of the new village was a memorial built for Watts-Russell's first wife, Mary, built in 1841 at the junction of the village roads on the north side of the river (Fig 41). This memorial is a virtual copy of the medieval Eleanor Crosses found between Lincoln and London built by the heartbroken King Edward I in memory of his beloved wife<sup>148</sup>. The cross was located to be visible from the park to the east of the house.
- 3.144 Gate Lodge, executed in a similar style to the village houses, was erected on the north side of the drive c1839. This coincided with the erection of a grand entrance gate and screen, with carriage and pedestrian gates executed in a similar style to the house, which necessitated the removal of the building to the south of the drive. Gilbert-Scott is understood to have designed the gateway but a different design by the architectural artist and designer Edward Blore<sup>149</sup>, whose preferred style of Tudor Gothic is arguably more sympathetic to the work of John Shaw, also exists (Fig 42) and is most probably contemporary to his work on the Rectory. It is therefore possible that Gilbert Scott was instructed to adapt an existing design.

<sup>147</sup> Sir George Gilbert-Scott (1811- 78) was a leading architect of the Gothic Revival. His most notable commissions include the Albert Memorial and the Midland Grand Hotel at St. Pancras Station, London but he also completed many parsonages earlier in his career c1833 on.

<sup>148</sup> The 12 crosses mark the resting place of Eleanor's body as she was transported from Lincoln to London, where the last stop gave its name to Charing Cross (La Cherie Croix). They were erected between 1291 and 1294 and only three survive intact.

<sup>149</sup> Edward Blore (1787-1879) Architect of Buckingham Palace and Great Morton Hall, Cheshire. The drawing is dated 1800, which is unlikely.





Fig. 41. The new village with the memorial cross c.1850. The National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.145 The expansion of the village was recorded in 1851 by the census. The account described 'a small, secluded village, picturesquely seated in the vale of the Manifold' with 244 inhabitants<sup>150</sup>. The census identifies garden staff living in the new village: John Mason (flower gardener) at Church Lodge, Henry Long (gardener) at No. 5 and garden labourers John Hodgkinson, Thomas Ditchfield and William Twiggs at No's 7, 8 and 10 respectively<sup>151</sup>. However, no Head Gardener is recorded either within the village or at the Hall<sup>152</sup>.
- 3.146 A later account of 1868 adds more detail, describing the model village 'scrupulously neat and clean'<sup>153</sup> with flower filled cottage gardens, the memorial cross, the gabled roofed church and the school children each wearing 'a scarlet cloak with a blue ribbon across'<sup>154</sup>. The new school was built in the village in 1854.

<sup>150</sup> 'History, Gazetteer and Directory of Staffordshire', 1851 p. 777. SRO: open shelves.

<sup>151</sup> SRO: H0107/2146/15

<sup>152</sup> No Head Gardener is recorded at Ilam until 1871 when the census noted Head Gardener, John Mason resident in Gardener's Cottage. 1861, 1871 census, SRO: RG9/2522 and RG10/3600 respectively. The 1871 census also records the recently re-married Watts-Russell at 84 years and his wife, Martha at 39 years. A shepherd, William Chadwick, is also specifically identified in residence at Ilam Tops farm.

<sup>153</sup> A later account described the houses as 'well-built and trimly kept little Gothic tenements' more pleasing than 'the square and hideous red-brick boxes of which so many of our midland villages unfortunately consist'. 'The Land of the Dove', Ford, D. c.1920. WSL: open shelves.

<sup>154</sup> 'On Foot through the Peak', Crosten, J, 1868 pp.289-293 WSL: PN42511



Fig. 42. View of the gateway and lodges, Ilam Park, Edward Blore c1800 RIBA:37938

- 3.147 However, an article of 1897 is less generous. Recounting the memories of a villager it was suggested that the transformations wrought on Ilam by the Watts-Russell's may not have been approved by certain members of the community, remarking that 'they (the Watts-Russells) could do well enough without bringing down Russell Square to Ilam'<sup>155</sup>.

*Developments within the park*

- 3.148 The last lodge to be added to the composition was River Lodge, built in 1840 (Fig. 43). This ornée building concludes the walk alongside the east bank of the river Manifold at Lodge Lane. Curiously, the lodge was dedicated to the exotically named Jemima, Countess of Montgelen who laid the foundation stone.

<sup>155</sup> 'Ilam in the Early Part of the (18<sup>th</sup>) century' copied from 'The Deanery Magazine' June 1897, p. 6. National Trust Ilam Park





Fig. 43. River Lodge, c1840 from the south. The National Trust, Ilam Park

#### *Later accounts of Ilam Park*

- 3.149 William Adam's 'The Gem of the Peak', published in 1851<sup>156</sup> records Watts-Russell's achievements at Ilam. He approached from the east, noting how the house and surrounding scenery were 'peculiarly rich and beautiful' seen within the context of Bunster Hill<sup>157</sup>. A public circuit around the grounds was also enjoyed; the area around the Boil Holes described as 'fine pleasure grounds .... laid out with exquisite taste ... calculated rather to give effect to nature than detract from her charms'. A weeping ash was noted near the Boil Holes 'to give a dash of melancholy to the scene' while the 'series of rustic steps and terraces' are recorded running across the slope with rustic seats 'in two or three natural cavities'. To the east, the 'smooth level lawn' is described with beds 'of the loveliest flowers, and shrubs studding it here and there' with everything in 'admirable order'. In many ways the form of the gardens were largely unchanged since at least c1800.
- 3.150 The description of the woodlands is useful as it suggests that Hinkley Wood had expanded and consolidated on the slopes above the river, 'a hanging forest, reaching half-way to the zenith', with the land *above* i.e. towards Hazleton Clump being bare<sup>158</sup>.
- 3.151 John Burke, writing in his 'Visitations of the Seats and Arms of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of Great Britain and Ireland', the following year describes a distinct circuit at Ilam Park starting at the church, progressing along the river and climbing up towards the house: 'Ascending several winding flights of Rustic Stone Steps, hewn out of the side of a mass of

<sup>156</sup> WSL: PN4246 Open shelves

<sup>157</sup> Adam's would have travelled along the Thorpe Road prior to its realignment in c1860 closer to the river. Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal 2012 3.44

<sup>158</sup> This reflects an account of the woodland included in 'Topographical History and Description of Staffordshire', Nightingale, J c1816: 'a flourishing wood of oak, elm, ash, &c, rises along the side of the hill ....and above it the ground gradually rises in a cultivated eminence to a great height'. Nightingale's work is, however, frustrating, as he has reused the work of others including the Revd. Wilkes and William Pitt without acknowledgement, which could lead to misunderstanding in terms of dates and descriptions. While this is not uncommon with popular tours and descriptions it needs to be recognized!



disjointed rocks, a path leads to the Fountain Garden (at centre) and the Handsome Conservatory attached to the house’.

- 3.152 James Crosten’s account of 1868 offers other useful information on the village and the grounds of the Hall. On approaching from the east ‘the village itself is screened by an intervening grove of trees, but the mansion, with its lofty flat-tower and embattled parapets, the lawns and gardens and conservatories, appear before us in all the fullness of their beauty and magnificence, environed by majestic woods, whose sombre foliage is delightfully relieved and contrasted by the delicate colouring of the masonry; the whole presenting a combination of architectural grandeur and sylvan loveliness rarely equalled’<sup>159</sup>. The account continues referring to the ‘hedge-row fences’ dividing the outer fields of the estate, a lodge-gate into the park and a gravelled path to the church, which was separated from the mansion lawns by “a wire fence and a border of dwarf shrubs and flowers’.
- 3.153 The grounds at Ilam were evidently highly ornamental but almost no record survives of the planting, of preferred shrubs, perennials or annuals or even of hothouse exotics or houseplants. A single record survives in the William Salt Library, an undated note from Watts-Russell to an unidentified recipient asking if they would like seeds from China and the Prince of Wales Island, which he was willing to send down to Hackney<sup>160</sup>.
- 3.154 Indeed, it is notable and significant that Watts-Russell appears not to have employed any named landscape designer at Ilam Park. Given that he did employ leading architectural figures, such as John Shaw, Edward Blore and George Gilbert Scott one could have imagined him calling on figures such as Alexander Roos, W. A. Nesfield or even Joseph Paxton. Similarly, Ilam Park was one of the few gentry estates which is not known to be featured in any of the popular journals of the nineteenth century, such as ‘The Builder’ or ‘The Gardener’s Chronicle’.

### **The Hanbury Family 1875 – 1910**

- 3.155 Watts-Russell died in 1875 and the house and 998-acre estate were sold to Robert Hanbury, MP for Tamworth for a reputed £73,000<sup>161</sup>.
- 3.156 Like his predecessor, Hanbury was immensely rich, his family fortune originating in coal and land. He also married twice, his first wife dying in 1871 and his second out living him to marry and take the name Bowring-Hanbury.
- 3.157 In many ways Hanbury purchased a complete estate with few changes being recorded within the landscape apart from the erection of Home Farm house in c1880, which first served as a residence for his Bailiff.

<sup>159</sup>. ‘On Foot through the Peak’, Crosten, J, 1868 pp.289-293, WSL: PN42511

<sup>160</sup> WSL: S. MS. 478/18/32. Two conversations with the RHS Lindley Library have failed to cast any light on this. Like the Ports, Watts-Russell was in a position to be given or to buy exciting new plant introductions, with many London nurseries acting as middlemen. Therefore we can only speculate what seeds Watts-Russell may have had.

<sup>161</sup> South Peak Estate Archaeological Survey, Ullathorne, 2006, Vol. 1 p. 30. Hanbury is notable for having served as the President of the Board of Agriculture in Lord Salisbury’s Government, 1895-1900, DRO:2606/3/20

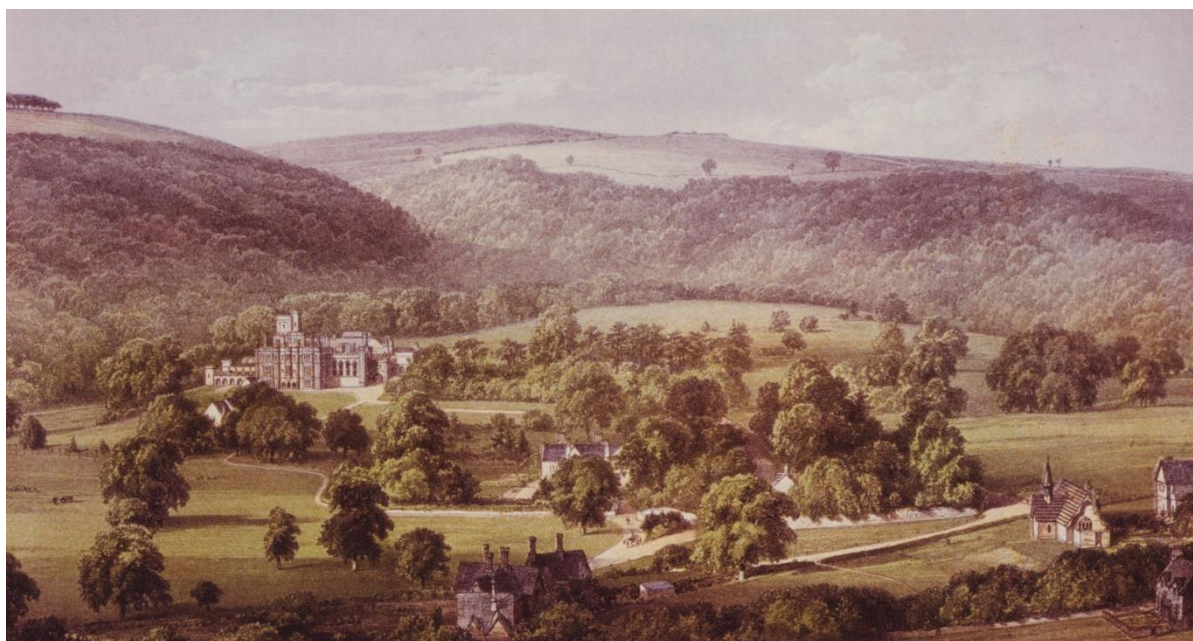


Fig. 44. Image c1870 showing the Vale of Ilam with the Watts Russell improvements. National Trust, Ilam Park

### *The First Edition Ordnance Survey*

- 3.158 The First Edition Ordnance Survey (Fig 45) provides an accurate record of the landscape within ten years of Hanbury's purchase.
- 3.159 The map shows the landscape generally as recorded in 1839 with the addition of a few buildings, such as Gate and River lodges and, finally, the identification of the circular building to the northeast of the farm pond, the 'Old Kennels'. A cottage, together with its associated enclosures and orchards, had, however been removed from the northeast boundary on Lodge Lane. New footpaths/possible drives had been added to the landscape, such as the one running northeast from the old service drive to Lodge Lane and one running west from the stables to the dogleg path to reach a footbridge across the river. A series of circular ponds had also appeared in the landscape: in the west park, in the pleasure grounds near the church and in land to the northeast of the village, while a second weir had also been constructed across the river closer to the Boil Holes.
- 3.160 Planting within the park had increased by 1884 but it still retained the character of the earlier field boundaries. However, the conifer plantation recorded in 1839 had gone, replaced by a new planting on the rock outcrop to the northwest, close to the main riverside plantations. In the farmland beyond the park, tree planting was generally confined to the field boundaries, although the fields immediately east of Steeple House Farm contained a good scatter of trees continuing the parkland character out into the landscape.
- 3.161 Ornamental planting within the park also included a row of trees along the bank associated with the Ha ha to the east of Dovecote Wood and a row of trees along the bank of the river in Wheel Orchard. However, no trees are shown lining a straight formal walk extending to the west of the Boil Holes, which became known as 'Paradise Walk'<sup>162</sup>. An account of 1888 described the walk 'like a bowstring across the bow formed by the old channel of the river'<sup>163</sup>, which is appropriate as a rifle range had been established in the meadow adjacent with a flagstaff target on the river<sup>164</sup>. The old circuit walk had also been removed.

<sup>162</sup> The width of this walk was apparently to accommodate the wide skirts of the ladies. Paul Mortimer as per comms.

<sup>163</sup> 'Three Ancient Cross Shafts, The Font and St. Bertram's Shrine at Ilam', Revd. G. F. Browne, 1888, p. 14. The National Trust, Ilam Park.

<sup>164</sup> The status of the rifle range at Ilam is unclear i.e. if it were for civic use or for private pleasure. New issues of national security saw an increase in rifle ranges on private estates c1859 – 1908. Another notable example is found at Alderwasley, Derbyshire.



Fig. 45. First Edition, Ordnance Survey, 1884; National Library of Scotland. Reproduced at A3 in Appendix 1.

- 3.162 A new path had also been created on the west of the river between the target and the dogleg path. A path diverted off the main walk crossing a ford to continue along the northern edge of Hinkley Wood. At the target it headed south uphill through the densely depicted woodland.
- 3.163 The most significant change from 1839 was the great kitchen garden, now completely removed apart from structures – walls/fences – on the east and south. The area is shown put back to pasture and containing specimen trees. A new, small, partly tree-planted enclosure with an apparent service use is shown instead to the southwest of the stables. This enclosure contained two unidentified buildings.
- 3.164 Instead, a new productive garden appears to have been laid out at Garden Farm to the north of the park. The Ordnance Survey records a substantial rectangular area, albeit without any internal detailing, with a semi-circular yard with glasshouses and buildings, to the north and a large orchard to the south. A belt of woodland along the west boundary of



the site would have provided shelter from the prevailing winds while the southern slope would have been beneficial for fruit production. However, no other accounts of this garden have been found.

- 3.165 Also in the wider landscape, Townend Farm had appeared to the east of the village (the present National Trust offices) with a gasometer and orchard separating it from the farm pond to the north. The land immediately to the northwest is shown subdivided with a small cottage but not Home Farmhouse, which was built in 1881.
- 3.166 A track is shown heading north from Townend Farm along the western foot of Bunster Hill. This track, which survives today, passes the circular kennels and St. Bertram's Well before continuing north. The Hanbury's created an ice store near here c1880<sup>165</sup> on the south side of the farm pond, which would have been a very late example of its type.



Fig. 46. The relative austerity of Ilam Hall seen from the east

Fig. 47. The Hanbury family in the winter garden c1888

Both images National Trust, Ilam Hall

### *Second Edition Ordnance Survey*

- 3.167 In 1898/1900 the Second Edition Ordnance Survey (Fig. 48) recorded a consolidated landscape. The area of the park is shaded grey, and included land to the northeast of Lodge Lane containing three fenced clumps. Although few structural changes are shown the park is remarkable for a significant increase in tree planting in the north and central areas with a dense scatter of trees also appearing to the west of a new kitchen garden within the park.
- 3.168 This kitchen garden has been set out on a piece of triangular ground to the southwest of the stables recorded in 1878 with its two buildings. A traditional cruciform arrangement with a deep, central dipping pond is shown with a semi-circular projection part way along the northwest wall. To the south is a glass-yard with four large houses and associated frames set out on a terrace above the river. The early nineteenth century kitchen garden was now an established paddock/park with two, fenced specimen trees.
- 3.169 The decision to move a kitchen garden for the second time is highly unusual. The original Watts-Russell garden appeared to contain all that was necessary to support a gentleman's residence. The removal of this facility in favour of a similar establishment at Garden House Farm appears to have been driven by aesthetics, with a wish to return the park to parkland. The creation of a third rendition of this, albeit on a more modest scale, is particularly interesting. As it is unlikely that this was a question of economy it must have simply reflected the Hanbury's interests and the (by-now) established convenience of a railway station at Thorpe for regular deliveries.

<sup>165</sup> Ilam Conservation Area Appraisal, 2012, 3.52



Fig. 48. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey, c1900. The National Library of Scotland. Reproduced at A3 in Appendix 1.

- 3.170 Elsewhere more modest changes within the park included the apparent loss of the footpath on the north side of the wood beside the river but the addition of a new footbridge at the east end of Target Meadow, recorded as a lattice-arched design in a photograph c. 1900 (Fig.51). More practical changes included the installation of a Blakes Hydram pump system<sup>166</sup> (Fig. 49) to the south east of St. Bertram's Bridge to pump river water to the Hall for service use. In addition, a ditch was excavated alongside the path on the south side of the river in c1900 to supply water to a proposed hydroelectric plant, which was intended to provide electricity to the house. However, Hanbury's death stopped the project, the plant never being unpacked. It was finally removed as a contribution to the war effort.

<sup>166</sup> The gardens contained two water ram pumps, the Blakes Hydram, which dates from the late nineteenth century and one on the north side of St. Bertram's Bridge, which pumped spring water up to the Hall. This second pump originated in the late eighteenth century.





Fig. 49 C19 Blakes Hydram pump



Fig. 50 View northwest across tree planted lawns



Fig. 51. A view west along the river towards the Boil Holes c1900 with the lattice bridge far left



Fig. 52 A view of the Italian Garden c1900. All images, National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.171 Subtle but important changes had also occurred in the area of Home Farm. Since c1839 a second group of farm buildings had been constructed to the northwest of Townend Farm and south of Home Farm pond. A single, long range is recorded on the Ordnance Survey of 1884 (Fig. 45), which is extended into a cruciform arrangement by c1900 (Fig. 48).





Fig. 53. The south elevation of the cow sheds. National Trust vernacular building survey, 1997.

- 3.172 These buildings included a double-storey barn with a hayloft, a cowshed and a double storey projecting range of cow stalls with a central feeding passage (Fig. 53). This last addition is the most interesting as it was ornamented with red brick, stone dressing and ornamental ventilation holes<sup>167</sup>. The architect is unknown but this 'model' addition may reflect Hanbury's tenure as President of the Board of Agriculture, 1895 – 1900.



Fig. 54. Ilam Park c1900 showing the retaining wall along the river through Wheel Orchard. National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.173 Again it is surprising to note given the status of the Hanbury family and the beauty of Ilam that it was not written up in any popular magazines of the time such as the fledgling 'Country Life Magazine' or 'The Garden'. However, a cartoon did appear in June 1886 in the 'Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News'<sup>168</sup>, 'Fly Fishing on the Manifold', which is unusual in showing a smartly dressed woman fly fishing by the main weir close to St. Bertram's Bridge (Fig. 55).

<sup>167</sup> Vernacular Building Survey, Home Farm Outbuildings, The National Trust, 1997

<sup>168</sup> National Trust, Ilam Park. This weekly newspaper later became 'Sport and Country', one of the most popular outdoor 'titles' of the late twentieth century.



Fig. 55. Cartoon taken from *Illustrated and Sporting News*, 1886, The National Trust, Ilam Park

### Twentieth Century Change

- 3.174 In 1910 the estate was partially sold by the Hanbury family following the death of Robert Hanbury in 1903<sup>169</sup>. Ilam formed only part of the wider sale of Hanbury holdings, which amounted to 26,550 acres. Described as a 'Freehold, Residential and Sporting Estate', the Ilam lots totalled 1,140 acres<sup>170</sup>.
- 3.175 The accompanying sales particulars described Ilam Hall as surrounded by 'beautiful old gardens', laid out with taste 'but inexpensive to maintain'. Among the notable features were the 'Terraced Lawns', 'An Avenue of Stately Limes' at 'the Entrance to Paradise', the 'Italian Garden' which linked to a conservatory or winter garden '84ft x 71ft with Minton's tiled flooring, and raised alcove' and a 'Walk by the River guarded at the end by Wood or Blore Lodge'. River Lodge and Church Lodge were mentioned together with a 'Productive Kitchen Garden with a Range of Glasshouses, Early and Late Vineries, Peach-House, Stove and Greenhouses etc.'. An accompanying photograph also recorded the tree-lined walk to the north of the church, which dated from c1839.
- 3.176 'A Long Drive through the Magnificently Timbered Park' was also described, the park being 'studded with Ornamental Timber and Shrubs of every variety'. Hinkley Wood formed part of the ornamental woodland which, 'with the pleasure grounds etc.' amounted to c106 acres. This wood was noted for its valuable timber and potential for 'affording good cover for game'. Notably the estate had no active shooting interests at this time; sport was focussed instead on the 4 ½ miles available for fishing Trout and Grayling along the Manifold, the perch-stocked fish 'pool' and a 9-hole golf course set out near the Izaak Walton Hotel.
- 3.177 Beyond the park lots such as Home Farm were described as 'a capital dairy holding' of c204 acres with a 'SUPERIOR FARMHOUSE' and 'SUBSTANTIAL FARM PREMISES'. As today, some of the pasture included land within the park. Garden Farm was described as 'A Capital Small Dairy Holding' of c29 acres with 'good Gardens and Orchard'.

<sup>169</sup> Hanbury's widow and her second husband had continued to use Ilam intermittently since 1903. Ilam Park Conservation Plan, 2010 -16 p. 7

<sup>170</sup> Brief Particulars with Photographs of a Landed Estate for Disposal, c1911 WSL: S.C. 5/2/42. A copy is also held at the National Trust office, Ilam Park (c.1909/10)



- 3.178 However, it appears that the sale did not proceed but that the house and gardens were leased apart from the wider estate and developed as a sporting hotel<sup>171</sup>.

#### *Ordnance Survey, 1922*

- 3.179 The Ordnance Survey offered a useful record of the landscape at Ilam at this time, showing how much of the Hanbury's improvements, namely tree-planting, had been retained. The general arrangement of the park and garden was unchanged since c1898 although a line of trees has in-filled along the western fringes of the park suggesting an intention to plant up the bank below above the river and footbridge. The old area of kitchen garden was still shown planted up as paddock with structures from the garden on the east and south also being retained.
- 3.180 Interestingly no limes were yet shown along Paradise Walk but the limes lining the north bank of the river through Wheel Orchard are clearly recorded. Two dense groups of trees are also shown on the sloping lawn between the house and St. Bertram's Well, showing the maturing of earlier planting while an unidentified structure is shown on the Ha ha in Target Field, the rifle range apparently having been removed.



Fig. 56. Extract from the Ordnance Survey, 1922 showing the almost over-planted park inherited from the Hanbury's. The National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.181 By 1926 the hotel operation appeared to be well established and recorded in 'A Guide to Ilam Hall and Grounds'<sup>172</sup>. This described 'several tennis courts', presumably in the area of the lawn, 'an excellent 18-hole miniature golf course' on the slope between the house and the river and a cricket pitch in the park with 'ample room for other games'. Residents could bath in the river as well as fish for trout and grayling, enjoy the convenience of the hotel's

<sup>171</sup> The Hanbury's held on to much of the surrounding land and it was not until 1952 that Ilam Tops Farm, Steeple House Farm, The Home Farm, Ilam, 'A valuable block of woodland and part of the River Manifold' and various cottages were sold separately at auction. SRO: D6920/5/7/2 1952 Sale Catalogue, all land being sold on behalf of the Rt. Hon. R. W. Hanbury Will Trust. Other documents in the SRO record the transfer of ownership and remortgaging of Hanbury land in the Ilam area c1912 and 1927 (SRO: D3539/30-35)

<sup>172</sup> WSL: pbox/ILAM/7



car 'in charge of an experienced driver' and a coal fire in the bedroom, but only at extra cost!

- 3.182 Unfortunately, the economic reality of the mid-1920s told another story and in August 1926 the 'Settled Estate of the late Right Honourable Robert William Hanbury' again put up Ilam Park for sale<sup>173</sup>.
- 3.183 The revised sales catalogue is clearly based on the text of c1909 but includes some additional information to entice prospective owners. In 1926 the 'Freehold Residential, Agricultural & Sporting Estate' included the mansion, Izaak Walton Hotel, seven 'excellent farms', ten cottages, four lodges, valuable woodlands, Dovedale Hill & Wood within the total c1140 acres. The 4½ miles of fishing remained on offer together with a now disused 9-hole 'Sporting' golf course on Bunster Hill and the opportunity to hunt with the Harrington foxhounds.
- 3.184 The attractions of the mansion were augmented by mention of water tanks in the roof, supplied by pumped spring water, the 'BOIL HOLES', the Battle Cross, 'Winding Walks with sheltered seats in the Cliff' and an 'Ornamental Stone Dovecote (the Pepperpot)'. Mr A. J. Cartwright, Gardener, was also mentioned as the present tenant of Gardener's Cottage.



Fig. 57. Images of Ilam Hall taken from *A Guide to Ilam Hall and Grounds*, 1926 WSL: pbox/ILAM/7

- 3.185 The park was split into three additional lots: Lot 10, the Northern Part c27 acres, Lot 13, River Lodge c13 acres which included 'RICH MEADOW LAND, a belt of woodland, and area of PARKLAND and fishing rights' and most alarming, Lot 11, The Western Part, including 'The Woodlands forming a BEAUTIFUL SITE FOR A RESIDENCE and having access from Lodge Lane ... two enclosures of rich meadow land on the banks of the River Manifold and part of Hinkley Wood'. An accompanying map (Fig. 58) shows Lot 11.

<sup>173</sup> A copy of the Sales Particulars is held by the National Trust at Ilam Park.

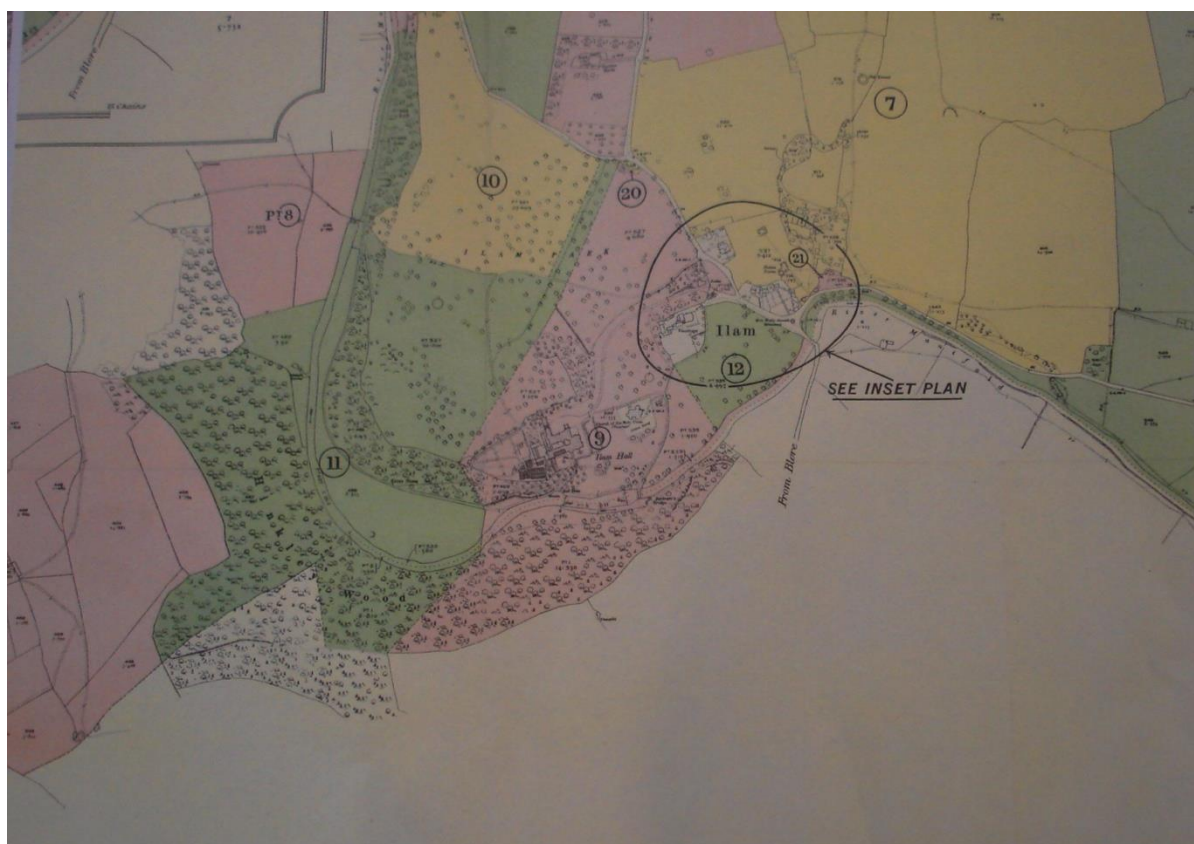


Fig. 58. Detail of the map accompanying the 1926 Sales Particulars. The National Trust, Ilam Park

- 3.186 Outside the park the farms Ilamtops, Steeplehouse, Garden Farm and the Home Farm are described with their 'sound' pasture and arable. 'Useful' woodlands are also mentioned, 'MOORE PLANTATION and part of SANDBROOM WOOD containing valuable Beech, Elm and other Timber' at Steeplehouse, more useful woodland containing a 'timber-built hut' besides the fish pond at Home Farm and a belt at Garden Farm together with 'good gardens and the 'large WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN and a good Orchard' at Garden Farm. Other cottages in the village were also to be sold separately.
- 3.187 In 1927 Ilam Hall and its gardens were sold to a restaurateur, Mr E. C. S. Backhouse, who continued to run the Hall as a café/restaurant with rooms. He also had ambition to develop an amusement park in competition with Alton Towers<sup>174</sup>. However, the business failed initiating a third sale in September 1933. The text of the catalogue is a simplified version of that of 1909 and 1926 offering the core c21 acres of ground and the mansion with further lots including Lot 5, Gate Lodge and Lot 6, a c9 acre 'Close of Park Land' (Wheel Orchard). There were now only three tennis courts and a 9-hole golf course close to the house. New attractions were limited to a Renton & Gibbs Hydraulic Boiler and a new hot water supply in the house.
- 3.188 In 1934 Sir Robert McDougall, the flour magnate purchased the hall, grounds and park with the intention of gifting it to the city of Stoke-on-Trent for public use<sup>175</sup>. In June, the city council chose to decline the offer 'purely on economic grounds' dismissing a suggestion that it could have been converted to hospital use as while 'a wonderful Hall to look at ... inside it had all the faults of the architecture of a hundred years ago', which included 17 staircases<sup>176</sup>.

<sup>174</sup> Ilam Hall, Demolished Houses, Staffordshire May 2016 <https://houseandheritage.org/tag/ilam-hall>

<sup>175</sup> McDougall was aided in his purchase by donations from the Cadbury and Carnegie families; Ilam Park Conservation Plan, 2010-16 p 7

<sup>176</sup> DRO: D2605/3/20 including article of June 29<sup>th</sup> 1934

- 3.189 McDougall 'arranged for the greater part of the 19th century hall to be pulled down'<sup>177</sup> selling to the demolition contractors, Twiggs of Matlock. They removed two-thirds of the building with material subsequently being used in buildings in Cromford, Derbyshire, while a fireplace ended up in the Pinewood film studios outside London.
- 3.190 The loss of the west range and conservatory of the mansion resulted in the reconfiguration and present arrangement of the Italian Garden. This work includes the peculiar flight of steps, which connect the terrace and lawn below, and the re-use of various pieces of the house, such as window lintels, chimneys and miscellaneous pieces of stone ornament, within the garden area.
- 3.191 In November 1935 McDougall gifted the remains of the Hall and between 50 – 60 acres of land to the National Trust on the understanding that the building would become a youth hostel<sup>178</sup>. The 21 acres of grounds immediately around the Hall were passed directly to the Trust.
- 3.192 However, there followed protracted negotiations between the Trust and the Youth Hostel Association over the lease, the terms of which had been a condition of McDougall's gift<sup>179</sup>. In the event, the Trust's Estates Committee agreed on 8<sup>th</sup> November to a reduced lease of 21 years at £1 per annum to reduce risk of the property being a drain on the 'General Funds'. The youth hostel finally opened on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1935 (Fig. 59).

*F. A. Holmes, Sir Robert McDougall and the National Trust*

- 3.193 Robert McDougall had been buying up land in Dovedale, such as Lode Hill, Hurts Wood and Hall Dale, since the late 1920s with the original intention of forming a Dovedale National Park. He had been encouraged by the campaigning of a Bakewell Solicitor, F. A. Holmes who was aware of the increasing vulnerability of land within the Peaks to quarrying or similar unsympathetic land management.
- 3.194 Holmes was also corresponding with the National Trust to buy or take on land in the area and a series of letters held in the Derbyshire Record Office trace these delicate negotiations<sup>180</sup>.
- 3.195 Holmes lacked a local champion. Instead he initially looked abroad for support and in early 1927 he received commendations and some funds from wealthy Americans with Derbyshire connections, such as the Cadman and Van Dyke families of New York, before being introduced to McDougall.
- 3.196 By 1936 Holmes and McDougall were still campaigning for Dove Dale to become a National Park to further secure land McDougall had already purchased. Holmes gave evidence before a Parliamentary Committee but continued his campaign with the Trust as Honorary Secretary to the local committee for the transfer of McDougall's holdings to the conservation charity<sup>181</sup>.

<sup>177</sup> DRO: D2605/3/20 Nottingham Weekly Guardian, 3 Nov. 1935. This article also claimed that the demolition was intended to reveal 'the old house, built about 1600' i.e. the stables.

<sup>178</sup> The North Midlands Regional Council of the Youth Hostel Association had rented the right wing of the hall in the winter of 1932 but vacated on account of the weather and relative isolation of the property. Ilam Hall, Demolished Houses, Staffordshire, May 2016 <https://houseandheritage.org/tag/ilam-hall>

<sup>179</sup> McDougall wanted a 60 year lease at £1 per annum.

<sup>180</sup> DRO: D2605/1/5 A letter of 10 April 1923 to Holmes from the Trust's Secretary S. H. Harmer encouraged the formation of a local action group, ideally with support from a 'well-known resident' to campaign for the preservation of Dove Dale i.e. to encourage the gifting or purchase of the land. However, Harmer was clear that the Trust 'could hardly approach any of the owner's direct'.

<sup>181</sup> In early January 1947 fears were raised that the National Trust wanted to 'divert' funds arising from the gifts of McDougall – the authors stated they had evidence to show that Mrs Haythornwaite was actively trying to interfere to shift focus to the area of the Dark Peak where her own family had become Trust benefactors. McDougall having given money for 'Dovedale National Park', had identified three areas to add to Dove Dale: 'Lady Gaunt's land in the Manifold valley, Thor's Cave owned by the Duke of Devonshire, land from Tissington Hall estate. DRO: 2605/1/5





Fig. 59. The opening of Ilam Hall youth hostel, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1935. Taken from 'Staffordshire Moorlands and the Churnet Valley', 2000.

#### *The National Trust at Ilam post 1934*

- 3.197 The National Trust continued to manage the land at Ilam Park as part of a working estate. The village, the park and wider landscape were established visitor destinations but at first the Trust offered no facilities, instead a teashop operated in the village from 1944<sup>182</sup>.
- 3.198 The hall had remained in operation during the war, housing 29 Czech refugees in 1938/39 and residents of a Blind Institution in 1943, before reopening as a Youth Hostel at the end of the war<sup>183</sup>.
- 3.199 In 1947 the National Trust bought a further 12 acres of land adjoining Ilam Hall which included the woodlands above Paradise Walk along the river that brought the Battle Stone back into the property (presumably having been sold as part of wider park by the Hanburys)<sup>184</sup>.
- 3.200 In c1960 the entrance gate was rebuilt on its south side to accommodate large vehicles accessing the hall. The south pedestrian gate was taken into store while a rendered stone block closed off the previous opening.
- 3.201 As new tenancies became established within the park, ancillary structures such as a single-storey block-work garage were erected on the main drive opposite Gate Lodge.
- 3.202 The churchyard also expanded to the south c1940, the graveyard being enclosed by iron railings.
- 3.203 However, the most significant development in the village occurred in c1954 when part of an old orchard was developed with Council housing, 'Orchard View'. This work coincided with the removal of several field boundaries in the land to the east, which created the open setting of Home Farm, which remains today.

<sup>182</sup> 'Jottings of a Staffordshire's Parsons Son', Graves, J, 1998. This account also notes that between c1950- 1998 only four new houses were built in Ilam.

<sup>183</sup> Ilam Hall, Demolished Houses, Staffordshire May 2016 <https://houseandheritage.org/tag/ilam-hall>

<sup>184</sup> DRO: 2605/1/5

- 3.204 By 1987 the National Trust was presenting Ilam Hall as a Country Park where 84 acres of park and woodland were open daily to visitors and offered camping and caravanning<sup>185</sup> in the area of the Watts-Russell kitchen garden.
- 3.205 As the park and youth hostel grew in popularity new services, such as a sewage system, had to be provided which has allowed for targeted archaeological investigation. Some of the most interesting finds concern the drain runs to the southeast of the hall<sup>186</sup> while the dry summer of 1995 revealed the layout of the original parterre of the Italian Garden and, possibly, the three terraces recorded by de Bunsen c1807 as faint lines between the Watts-Russell terraces of c1826 (Fig 60).
- 3.206 More recent changes in the landscape include the implementation of a 50-year tree planting strategy and the on-going management of rhododendron and Himalayan Balsam along the river corridor. Elsewhere a timber bridge was created across the river on line with Paradise Walk as part of a circuit c1990. This circuit also saw the construction of an extensive stepped path, which runs up and through Hinkley Wood. More recently a set of stone steps has been built c2014 at the north end of the site of the Hanbury's kitchen garden, now known as the Oaks, following the removal of a campsite in the area in the 1990s.
- 3.207 Over the past nine years significant clearance and conservation work has taken place in the area of the zig-zag paths, opening up the hillside above the river. The bases of some of the late nineteenth century glasshouses have also been represented as simple growing beds to create an informative and attractive setting for an outdoor seating area close to the tearoom.



Fig. 60. Parch marks recorded in summer 1995 showing the original lattice layout of the Italian Garden and, potentially, the remains of three terraces reduced to two c. 1830. National Trust, Curatorial Black Box

<sup>185</sup> WSL: pbox/ILAM/4

<sup>186</sup> Ilam Park, Ilam, Staffordshire, Archaeological Watching Brief, Archaeological Research Services Ltd. 2014. The National Trust, Ilam Park

## 4. Ilam Park, A Cultural Landscape

### ILAM PARK AND THE PICTURESQUE, A PLEASING LANDSCAPE

'We find the Works of Nature still more pleasant, the more they resemble those of Art'

Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, 1712.

- 4.1 During the eighteenth century the English landscape, particularly landscape considered relatively untouched by man, became the backdrop to philosophical and aesthetic debate. This aspect of the Enlightenment witnessed the application of moral principles, through ideas of taste and improvement, onto the experience and the perception of landscape by an educated elite. The debate was essentially urban, which celebrated the ideal countryside of the Classical world with a newfound interest in the works of Roman poets such as Pliny and Virgil, which imparted something morally good about country life. In 1757, philosopher, Edmund Burke discussed this in his seminal work, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideals of the Sublime and Beautiful*.
- 4.2 At Ilam Park these ideas were reflected in contemporary art theory and art works, in inspiring contemporary literature and in being partly realised on the ground.

### The Philosophy of the Picturesque and Gilpin

- 4.3 Of the cultural commentators to have visited Ilam Park, none was so influential on eighteenth and early nineteenth century taste as the Revd. William Gilpin (1724 -1804). Gilpin promoted the application of landscape art theory onto landscape, explaining how to appreciate and judge a landscape view and what crucial components were needed to render it good or poor. This became known as the Picturesque, an eighteenth century Anglicisation of the Italian *pittresco* 'like a picture'.
- 4.4 A landscape was to be revealed through a series of views, one often hidden from the other, to retain a sense of excitement and adventure. Over time such views became formalised, described by Gilpin as 'viewing stations', from where prescribed views and effects could be experienced.
- 4.5 Gilpin published a series of *Observations* on different parts of Britain including the Wye Valley (1782), 'Picturesque Beauties' (1786), the Lakes (1789) and the Highlands of Scotland (1800). His work was satirized in the popular 'The Tour of Dr Syntax in Search of the Picturesque' by William Combe published in 1812.
- 4.6 Gilpin favoured wild scenery of mountains, caves, ruined buildings and deep river valleys. He advocated irregularity in art, which became known in contemporary culture as the 'rough' or 'sublime'. In 1791 he wrote to artist Joshua Reynolds that 'such objects, as are proper subjects for painting'<sup>187</sup>.
- 4.7 However feelings evoked by the rough landscape became as important as their actual visual quality<sup>188</sup> and, while Gilpin acknowledged this aspect of landscape tourism, he was made uncomfortable by it believing it led to indulgent behaviour. His moral undertone challenged the work of the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 78) whose sentimental novel *Julie, ou la novella Héloïse* became highly popular, particularly among

<sup>187</sup> Quoted in 'The Search for the Picturesque', Andrews, M, 1989 p. 57

<sup>188</sup> This idea was expanded by Gilpin's successors such as Shropshire landowner Uvedale Price (1747 – 1829) in his *Essays on the Picturesque* first published in 1794. He recommended Gilpin's own landscaper son, William Sawrey-Gilpin (1762-1843) to potential clients and even to the eminent landscape designer, Humphry Repton (1752 -1818) who created a carefully judged 'domestic' interpretations of Gilpin's ideas in his own work. Gilpin's picturesque differed markedly from the perceived smooth uniformity, or 'beautiful' found in the work of the landscape designer Lancelot Brown (1716-83), which echoed the earlier and highly influential treatise on aesthetics, Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, published in 1757. This, like Gilpin's works, would have been a standard reference in a Gentleman's library such as Ilam Hall.



gentry women, through its avocation of 'authenticity' of feeling, which could be translated into the appreciation of landscape<sup>189</sup>.

- 4.8 Part of the reason for Gilpin's success was the impact of the French Revolution and subsequent European wars, which effectively closed down the Grand Tour. This had been a prerequisite journey for young aristocratic men in the eighteenth century to complete their education. They gathered in Italy particularly and often with private tutors to learn how to appreciate Classical taste in landscape and architecture and to buy artworks by figures such as Claude Lorrain and Salvatore Rosa, to be shipped home. These paintings often showed Biblical scenes set within an idealised Italian landscape.
- 4.9 The loss of the Grand Tour encouraged artists such as J. M. W. Turner, Paul Sanby, Richard Wilson and Joseph Wright of Derby to 'discover' the Lake District, Wales, the Highlands and the Peak District, and to interpret them for a domestic audience. Many of their works were reproduced as popular and affordable prints, such as James Mason's own engraving of Thorpe Cloud (Figs. 19 & 20), based on Thomas Smith's painting, which made the ideas of the Picturesque accessible in the minds and on the walls of the new middle classes.
- 4.10 These prints were important as they clearly set out a preferred composition. Writing in 1792, Gilpin was clear that pictures/views needed a tight composition by demonstrating a foreground, a well lit mid ground and a background. The distant prospect was less important than the foreground, which he considered 'essential to landscape'<sup>190</sup>.
- 4.11 Gilpin's travels in the wilder parts of England therefore coincided with the growth of domestic landscape tourism, which was also becoming increasingly available to the growing middle classes, who avidly read such instructions and related popular fiction<sup>191</sup>.

#### *Gilpin at Ilam*

- 4.12 Gilpin's visit to Ilam in 1772 is therefore particularly important as it informed his later observations. Pages 8 – 15 of his notebook<sup>192</sup> includes heavily amended text, re-worked to get the desired tone and description, which is finally presented as a fair copy. Of particular interest are the apparent discrepancies with his later instructions, most notably his fascination with Thorpe Cloud and that he did not appear to find its regularity displeasing: 'the hill on the south of the house stands is worth seeing ... more of yr characteristic perpendicularity', also described as a 'square form (which) points a river in the view of Ilam' and as a 'conic hill at the entrance to Dovedale'<sup>193</sup>. This attention to Thorpe Cloud may have been influenced by the relatively limited circulation available to Gilpin on his visit and the visual dominance of the hill close to the house. However, the situation of Thorpe Cloud, particularly when viewed from close to the river, can be said to contradict all of Gilpin's instructions by creating a background, which both focuses and dominates the view.

<sup>189</sup> Jane Austen, who shared Gilpin's dislike of excessive emotion, was one of many who parodied this novel; consider Marianne Dashwood's sensibility contributing to her near downfall in *Sense and Sensibility* published in 1811.

<sup>190</sup> Three Essays: - on Picturesque Beauty, on Picturesque Travel; and on sketching Landscape, to which is added a Poem on Landscape Painting, 1972 quoted in *The Search for the Picturesque*, Andrews, M, 1989.

<sup>191</sup> The sublime landscape was a key component of the Gothic novel, one of the first great genres of popular fiction. Young women were particularly taken with the Gothic romance; witness the success of writers such as Ann Radcliffe 'The Mysteries of Udolpho', Mary Shelley 'Frankenstein' and even Jane Austen.

<sup>192</sup> BOD: MS. Eng. MISC. f.179 (1)

<sup>193</sup> The notebook also appears to contradict a more recent suggestion that Gilpin was not impressed by Thorpe Cloud on account of its regularity and 'not in accordance with his ideas of natural beauty', Jacques, D. *Georgian Gardens, The Reign of Nature*, 1983 p. 100.

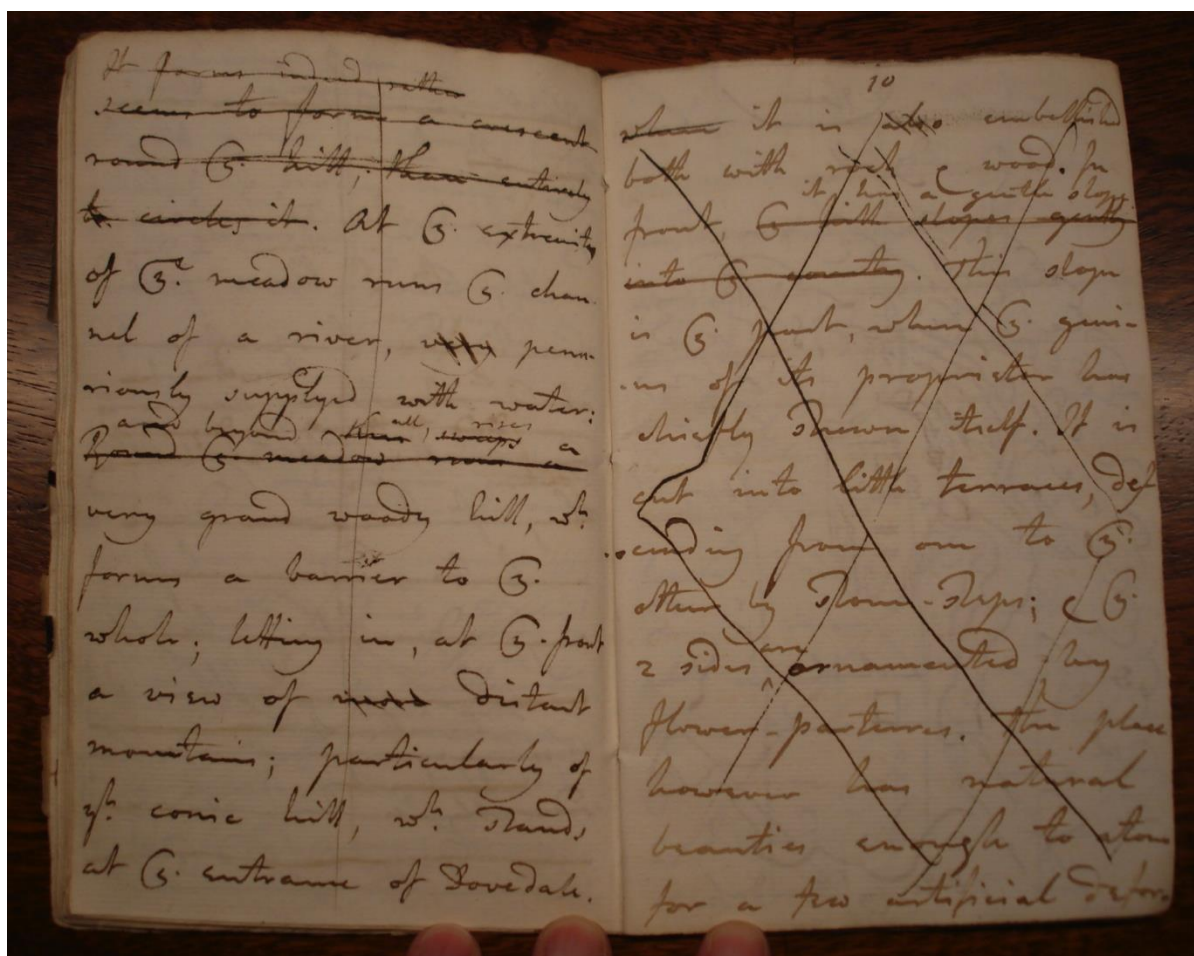


Fig. 61. Extract from Gilpin's notebooks showing his revisions and crossings-out. BOD:Ms Eng. Misc. e 488

- 4.13 Gilpin was, however, able to provide a wider context for Ilam. He noted with satisfaction how the river drew the eye 'into the county and the neighbourhood of Dovedale, which lie within the distance of a short evening walk, are such common sense of beautiful circulations as we rarely meet with'.
- 4.14 It is worth speculating whether Ilam also coloured Gilpin's later work, *Remarks on Forest Scenery, and other Woodland Views (relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty)*, published in 1791 even though it was illustrated with images of his home county, Hampshire. When discussing natural beauty he advised 'You cannot well have more fortunate circumstances. But great care should be taken not to load it with ornament. Such scenes admit little art: Their beauty consists of their natural wilderness'<sup>194</sup>. As such he criticised the landscape at Hagley Hall as a 'paltry imitation of the genius works of Nature'<sup>195</sup>. This robust advice may likewise have influenced Ilam itself, which is notable for its lack of the landscape buildings and ornaments so popular in the eighteenth century landscape, perhaps taking to heart his advice 'We wish for simple ornaments on all occasions – ornaments which the eye is not obliged to notice'<sup>196</sup>.

#### Other Observations

- 4.15 Thomas Whately visited Ilam in 1770 and appears to have experienced the same circulation as Gilpin, writing up his remarks in his influential book, *Observations on Modern Gardening*,

<sup>194</sup> Quoted Jane Austen and the English Landscape, Batey. M, 1996 p. 76

<sup>195</sup> Ibid p. 70 Hagley was known to the Ports through their relations the Lytteltons.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid p. 72

published 1771<sup>197</sup>. He too was greatly taken by 'the conical hill' seeing the contrast of Thorpe Cloud's regularity with 'the rude slopes which are heaped about it' as both contributing 'to the character of the place'. Whately was not given to admiring regularity in landscape, and much of the sections 'On Ground' and 'Of Extraordinary Effects' encouraged irregularity, including physical intervention when necessary! However, so impressed was he by the 'extravagance' of Thorpe Cloud, it has its own section on p. 22 which concludes the effect of the juxtaposition of this hill with those surrounding is 'so wonderful that we cannot wish the extravagance corrected'. Whately had attributed exceptional Picturesque qualities to the landscape at Ilam.

*William Mason*

- 4.16 Although not an acknowledged visitor to Ilam, the emerging landscape composition can also be seen to reflect the influence on the poet/critic William Mason (1724-1797). Mason, a friend of Mrs Delany, William Gilpin and Samuel Johnson, also advocated a 'lowered viewpoint' when appreciating landscape. More importantly by 1772, Mason was popularising a new sense of landscape composition in his long, illustrated poem *The English Garden*, published in three volumes by 1782, where a series of interconnected views replaced the set pieces of the earlier Georgian garden to create 'A different picture, new and yet the same' which advocated an increasingly natural and less artificial landscape.

## THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE

- 4.17 Many writers such as Lord Byron and John Ruskin have been affected by the beauty and majesty of the landscape of Derbyshire and Dovedale but relatively few write specifically about Ilam. It is the Ilam texts that shall be considered here.
- 4.18 The accounts of Ilam can be separated into two main types, those inspired by the landscape and those which provide a record of what was actually seen (see Chapter Three).

## The Inspirational Landscape c.1600 – 1700

*Michael Drayton*

- 4.19 The earliest known literary association with Ilam is Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, 1622, which describes the emergence of the River Hamps (Hanse) into the Manifold:

*No sooner thrust his head into the cheerful light* (is captured by the Manifold)

*Him, ere he was aware, about the neck doth catch*<sup>198</sup>

- 4.20 It is unclear if Drayton had any personal connection with Ilam, or rather depended on contemporary accounts of the two rivers to inspire his poetry.

*Izaak Walton*

- 4.21 Although more commonly associated with Dovedale, the figure of Izaak Walton (d1683) is worth considering in respect of the contemplative and secluded character of the landscape at Ilam Park.

<sup>197</sup> Observations on Modern Gardening, Whately T., 1771, BOD: Digital copy of First Edition, 'The Making of the Modern World' on-line resource.

<sup>198</sup> Phil Mottram 'A Landscape Mystery at Ilam Hall, Staffordshire' p. 6 and An Account of the Three Ancient Cross Shafts The Font and St Bertram's Shrine at Ilam, Rev. G. F. Browne, 1888p. 2. Poly-Olbion is among the earliest topographical poems of England, produced as a mammoth volume in c1612 and split into thirty songs composed of couplets. Drayton (1563-1631) was a contemporary of the court poets such as Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser who contributed to a new ideal of Albion centred on the figure of Queen Elizabeth I.



- 4.22 Walton was born in Stafford, later moving to London where he married a descendant of Archbishop Cranmer. A Royalist in the Civil War, Walton 'retired' to Stone, Staffordshire, spending long periods of time in Dovedale, where he wrote *The Compleat Angler*, published in 1653. Walton may have been a spy for the Royalist cause, passing correspondence between England and France ahead of Charles II's restoration in 1660. *The Compleat Angler* can be considered as much a treatise on Christian tolerance as it is on fishing, the relative isolation and security of Dovedale giving Walton the opportunity to think and write.
- 4.23 There is a connection too with the Granville family at Calwich<sup>199</sup>, who created a Waltonesque fishing house, a *piscatoreum* in the eighteenth century, close to the Upper Fairy Pool, a watery glen, recorded in pen and ink by Mrs Delany.

#### William Congreve

- 4.24 One of the foremost Restoration playwrights and critics, William Congreve (1670 – 1729), wrote the first part of his first play, 'The Old Bachelor' at Ilam in 1693 while he was recovering from illness. The play was championed by the then poet laureate, John Dryden, and opened to great success at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Congreve's connection with Ilam remains unclear but the Grotto, close to the water, and a terrace above it, has both been associated with him. In 1794 William Pitt described the situation of the Grotto as 'very advantageous for composing; the shady bower above, the murmuring stream below, the recluse and retired situation, without the reach or hearing of noisy intruders, all conspire to fix the mind upon its individual object, and enable it to send forth an effusion of its collected powers'<sup>200</sup>. The background of Geoffrey Kneller's swagger portrait of Congreve appears to show the Manifold towards the later site of St. Bertram's Bridge, which, if true, must be based on a description given to the artist by Congreve (see Fig 62).

### The Inspirational Landscape c1700 - 1820

- 4.25 The literary work most closely associated with Ilam is Dr Johnson's *Rasselas*<sup>201</sup>, published in 1759, and his 'Happy Valley'. The story concerns a young prince, Rasselas, who with his sister, Nekayah, her ladies maid and a wise poet, Imlac, escape the gilded cage of their valley kingdom to seek out 'CHOICE OF LIFE' i.e. happiness<sup>202</sup>. The novel includes two Happy Valleys; the kingdom and that belonging to a generous and kind benefactor who is betrayed by human greed.
- 4.26 The opening description of the valley kingdom of Abissinia suggests Ilam:
- The sides of the mountains were covered with trees... the bank of the brooks were divested with flowers .... All animals that bite the grass, or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey, by the mountains that confined them*
- 4.27 It was a place of love and music with a palace, which 'stood on an eminence raised about 30 paces above the surface of the lake'.
- 4.28 However, the security and delight, which Nekayah later described as 'tasteless tranquillity' is more of a prison with 'a mountain blocking the pass'. They escape and meet with various characters through which they discover different types of happiness against a background of moral enquiry and humour.
- 4.29 In Chapter Twenty, *The Danger of Prosperity*, they come to a second hidden valley, which is similarly reminiscent of Ilam, and may even provide additional glimpses of the 1759 landscape. Venturing into a thick wood the travellers find:

<sup>199</sup> Mary Port's uncle, Bernard Granville, resided at Calwich Abbey, Staffordshire.

<sup>200</sup> A General View of Agricultural, Staffordshire, Pitt, W, 1796. p. 198

<sup>201</sup> Dr Johnson's Works, Life, Poems and Tales, Vol. I. A Public Domain Book

<sup>202</sup> Rasselas is ultimately caught by his own vanity which sees him form a kingdom become unsatisfied, expand it through force and subject others to his own vision of happiness. Nekayah behaves as a proto-feminist by recognizing the worth and value of education in establishing a 'college of learned women', while Imlac finds contentment in going where life takes him.

*Shrubs were diligently cut away to open walks, where the shades were darkest, the boughs of opposite trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowering turf were raised in vacant spaces, and a rivulet, that wantoned along the side of a winding path had its bank sometimes opened into small basins and its streams sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone, heaped together to increase its mummer.*

- 4.30 They find 'a stately palace, built upon a hill surrounded by woods' and occupied by a master 'a man liberal and wealthy'. However, the master is aware of the precariousness of his position, offering hospitality and freedom in the knowledge that others are already plotting his downfall.
- 4.31 The ideas of reflection and contemplation run throughout the novel. It is hardly surprisingly, therefore, that there is a grotto occupied by a hermit. Johnson's description of the grotto is amusing. Despite mocking its appearance that a grotto was included at all in his novel shows how important a feature it had become in a polite landscape<sup>203</sup>:

*It was a cavern in the side of the mountain ... at such as distance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur ..... The first rude essay of nature had to be so much improved by human labour, that the cave contained several apartments, appropriate to different uses, and often afforded lodging to travellers.*

- 4.32 Johnson notes the hermit sitting on a bench by the door with his books, pens and paper and mechanical instruments.
- 4.33 The grotto is significant as if Ilam directly inspired *Rasselas*, it may be that there was an earlier grotto or a natural cliff being used as a 'grotto' as the existing feature appears contemporary with the realignment of the river c1772.
- 4.34 *Rasselas* became extremely popular and was read, often in the landscape, by both authors and their characters such as Charlotte Bronte and her heroine *Jane Eyre*, Elizabeth Gaskell and various characters in *Cranford* (the book is passed around for comment) and George Eliot and the Brooke sisters in *Middlemarch*. It is highly likely that the novel was included in the library at Ilam, alongside many other popular novels, biographies and treatises of the day. However, without any known surviving lists the overall quality of the library<sup>204</sup>, whether of the Ports, Watts-Russell's or Hanbury's is unknown.

#### *Jane Austen*

- 4.35 As touched upon in Chapter Three, one of the most tantalising literary connections with Ilam Park is Jane Austen's Pemberley, the house of her hero, Mr Darcy in her most famous novel *Pride and Prejudice* published in 1813. Jane was touring Derbyshire in 1806 and is understood to have visited Dovedale and therefore possibly Ilam. Her description of Pemberley reflects many of the characteristics of Ilam Park:

*It was a large, handsome stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of woody hills; and in front, a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal, nor falsely adorned .... She (Elizabeth Bennett) had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste .... They had now entered a beautiful walk by the side of the water, and every step was bringing forward a nobler fall of ground, or a finer reach of the woods to which they were approaching .... They entered the woods, and bidding adieu to the river for a while, ascended some of the higher grounds; whence, in spots where the opening of the trees gave the eye power to wander, were many*

<sup>203</sup> The origin of the grotto as a landscape feature is found in the idea of social isolation in the natural world to aid contemplation and prayer, common to many religions. In England one of the earliest 'new' grottos was created by the antiquarian William Stukely at his house in Stamford c1738, while one of the most famous of the period belonged to poet/critic Alexander Pope at his villa in Twickenham built from c1719 as the main feature of his contrived and theatrical garden.

<sup>204</sup> A glimpse of the varied interests of Jesse Watts-Russell is given by book titles included in a sale of his library in 1876 such as Dryden's works, A Monograph of the Trochilidae or Family of Humming Birds, Architecture & Cathedral Antiquities of Great Britain by J. Button and Essays on Physiography, 1789. Ilam Hall Demolished Houses of Staffordshire, <https://houseandheritage.org/tag/ilam-hall>

*charming views of the valley, the opposite hills, with the long range of woods overspreading many, and occasionally part of the stream ... they pursued the accustomed circuit; which brought them again, after some time, in a descent among hanging woods, to the edge of the water, in one of its narrowest parts. They crossed it by a simple bridge, in character with the general air of the scene; it was a spot less adorned than any they had visited; and the valley, here contracted into a glen, allowed room only for the stream, and a narrow walk amidst the rough coppice wood, which bordered it. Elizabeth longed to explore its windings, but ... they took their way towards the house on the opposite side of the river ... The walk being here less sheltered than on the other side.*<sup>205</sup>

- 4.36 If not based on first-hand knowledge, Austen's description shows her to be aware of fashionable taste and particularly of the work of William Gilpin and William Mason, which she explored in her novels, such as *Mansfield Park* (c1813) and *Northanger Abbey* (1817), where landscape improvement and the picturesque is as much ridiculed as applauded.
- 4.37 Austen was also a great admirer of Dr Johnson and his robust views of life and preference for simplicity over ostentation in all things. Her brother Henry noted her favourite moral writers were, for verse, William Cowper<sup>206</sup> the poet with his love of gentle nature, and Johnson for prose<sup>207</sup>.

### The Inspirational Landscape, 1820 - c1900

- 4.38 While the novelist George Eliot is understood to have been a relation of the Watts-Russell family, her own recollection, 'I have never remained in either of those two counties (Derbyshire or Staffordshire) more than a few days together, and of only two such visits have I more than a shadowy, interrupted recollection<sup>208</sup>' suggests that her recognisable descriptions of towns such as Oakbourne (Ashbourne) and Eagledale (Dovedale) in her novel, *Adam Bede* (1859), came from her father who grew up in Ellastone and Norbury.
- 4.39 John Ruskin, one of the chief arbiters of taste in nineteenth century England, recounted a day-trip to Dovedale in his *Tour to the Lakes in Cumberland*, c1830. Ruskin commented on the 'very singular conical shape' of Thorpe Cloud and the river Dove rolling 'beautifully at the foot of the hills' but does not appear to have ventured west into Ilam.

### THE PAINTED LANDSCAPE

- 4.40 A property such as Ilam Park would have attracted art. Art would have been specifically commissioned – portraits, landscapes, prize livestock etc. – or purchased in London or on travels. Art would have also been a part of the accomplishments of the household, particularly of the ladies, and so sketchbooks, primers and canvases would have been created. In the autumn of 1859 the Watts-Russell's even instigated the Ilam Anatomic Drawing Society. However, like the library, all of this has been dispersed with few known close associations. It is possible, that art works closely associated with Ilam survive in other collections un-noticed<sup>209</sup>.

<sup>205</sup> *Pride & Prejudice*, Austen, J, 1813, Vol. III, Chapter I (Doubleday Edition, 1970. P. 177-183)

<sup>206</sup> William Cowper 1731 – 1800 poet and naturalist. 'Scenes must be beautiful, which daily view'd, please daily', quoted in Jane Austen and the English Landscape, Batey, M, 1996 p. 22. His long poem, *The Task* published in 1785, recorded aspects of his own picturesque garden at Olney, Northamptonshire. Austen's character, Fanny Price in *Emma*, is a lover of Cowper, his simplicity sometimes acting as a foil for her ignorance.

<sup>207</sup> Henry Austen's biographical notice of his sister, quoted in Jane Austen and the English Landscape, Batey, M, 1996 p. 22.

<sup>208</sup> *Images of the Peak District AD 1150 – 1950*, Shimwell, D. W. p. 27 (online source)

<sup>209</sup> There are two known sales of art from the Ilam estate. The first c1747 when 'fine old family pictures' were sold (SRO: D (W) 1747/25 1-5) and c1879 when the collection of Jesse Watts-Russell was sold, which included a notable collection of paintings from 'The English School'. This apparently included works by Constable, Turner and Gainsborough. More significantly, an Opie was included, possibly of Mary Port and brought with the house, and a painting of Congreve misattributed to Sir Peter Lely (d. 1680), *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 29<sup>th</sup> June 1875 quoted in *Ilam Hall, Demolished Houses, Staffordshire* <https://houseandheritage.org/tag/ilam-hall>



### Godfrey Kneller

- 4.41 German born Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723) became England's leading portrait painter; appointed Principal Painter to the Crown by Charles II and elevated to the peerage by George I. One of his greatest works is his 40+ painting catalogue of members of the Kit-Kat Club<sup>210</sup>, which included William Congreve. Kneller painted Congreve in 1709 apparently at the mouth of a cave overlooking a river in a wooded landscape. The view is similar to that from the sites of the present 'Congreve's Seat' or the Grotto allowing for a little artistic licence. This portrait would have been painted in London with Congreve presumably describing or sketching the background landscape associated with his early success, *The Old Bachelor*.



Fig. 62. Godfrey Kneller's portrait of William Congreve, 1709. The National Portrait Gallery

### John Opie

- 4.42 Among the many artists, writers and scientists noted by Mrs Delany was the portrait painter, John Opie (1761-1807). Opie was born in Cornwall where he established himself as a portrait painter. He moved to London in 1781 and was introduced to the leading English painter Sir Joshua Reynolds and the socialite Mrs Boscawen who introduced him to Mrs Delany. Through Delany and Boscawen Opie was brought to the attention of George III who, in 1782, commissioned the most famous portrait of Delany, which now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery. Opie painted over 580 portraits, mostly in oils, and included many cultural figures of the day, such as Samuel Johnson, Mary Wollstonecraft and Henry Fuseli. His work, which was noted for its realism, fell from favour in the late eighteenth century and

<sup>210</sup> The Kit Kat Club was an early eighteenth century gentleman's club, sympathetic to the Whig cause (Liberal) and with strong political and literary associations. Please see footnote 52 for further information.

he was reduced to supplementing his income by painting famous literary scenes. A catalogue, printed after his death, listed every portrait but did not clearly identify that of Mary Port, painted c1776 (Fig 23).

#### *Thomas Smith of Derby*

- 4.43 Thomas Smith (d.1767) was a landscape painter and the father of the more successful artist John Raphael Smith (c1751-1812). Surviving oil paintings and engravings by Smith include A Valley in Derbyshire (possibly Dovedale), the Cascade below Matlock, Hopping Mill Weir and the cascade at Belton House, Lincolnshire. His views of Coalbrook Dale became popular engravings and are among the earliest industrial views in English Art.
- 4.44 The original painting by Smith of the view of Thorpe Cloud from the gardens is presumed lost but its commission illustrates the artistic and social ambition of George Port. The two subsequent engravings by James Mason (Figs 19 & 20) became popular prints in the late eighteenth century and helped promote ideas of the Picturesque but less so, it would seem, the actual charms of Ilam, which appears to have remained little visited.

#### *Thomas Peploe Wood*

- 4.45 A self-taught county artist, Thomas Peploe Wood (1817-1845) left an extraordinarily accomplished body of work before his death at the age of 28<sup>211</sup>. He benefited both from the patronage of the banker and antiquarian, William Salt, and from Thomas Trubshaw, elder brother of engineer/builder James Trubshaw who built the Watts-Russell house at Ilam. Either Salt or Trubshaw may have introduced Peploe Wood to Watts-Russell, who it is assumed commissioned the two great nineteenth century views of Ilam shown below.
- 4.46 Both The Bridge at Ilam, 1836 (Fig 63) and Ilam Hall, c1840 (Fig 64) record the maturing landscape of the Watts-Russell park. The Bridge reflects the Cobb survey by showing the old school within the extended, but relatively unplanted, park of Wheel Orchard, together with James Trubshaw's new river bridge. Ilam Hall, c1840, shows the completed hall in its park from the northeast from the slopes of Bunster Hill. The woodland wrapping around the house (and river valley) is perhaps exaggerated but this, together with the earlier painting, convey a Classical landscape in terms of light, colour and composition.

<sup>211</sup> The WSL contains over 3,000 prints and original pictures by Thomas Peploe Wood



Fig. 63. The Bridge at Ilam, Thomas Peploe Wood, 1836. Staffordshire Past Track 83/15653



Fig. 64. Ilam Hall, Thomas Peploe Wood, c. 1840 Staffordshire Past Track, 83/15654



## OTHER ARTISTIC REPRESENTATIONS

*Josiah Wedgwood, The Green Frog Dinner Service*



Fig. 65. View 239 'at the bottom of the Gardens of Geo. Port, of Ilam Esq' included in the 'Green Frog' dinner service created by Josiah Wedgwood for Catherine the Great of Russia. Reproduced by permission, The Wedgwood Museum.

- 4.47 A particularly significant record of Ilam Park and of the landscape improvements of the late eighteenth century is found on an oval plate within the famous 'Green Frog' dinner service, created for Empress Catherine the Great of Russia, for her Gothic summer palace at Tsarskoye Selo, by Josiah Wedgwood in 1773-74. Wedgwood's business partner, Thomas Bently, was tasked to commission artists to record the most famous picturesque views in England<sup>212</sup>; these included an adaptation of Thomas Smith's view of Ilam c1750. The catalogue, which accompanied the service, recorded George Port as the owner of the 'Gardens', confusing the commissioning of the original painting/engraving with the date of the actual improvements<sup>213</sup>.
- 4.48 So important was this commission for the Wedgwood Factory the whole dinner service was put on public display in London before being shipped to Russia. It was here that Mrs Delany saw this plate and commented to her niece, Mary Port, that it had recorded the recent improvements to the Manifold.

<sup>212</sup> The Green Frog dinner service included views of the landscapes at Hagley Hall, Staffordshire and West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, ruins such as Glastonbury Abbey, Somerset and more locally views of Haddon Hall, The Dove valley and Reynard's Hall in Dovedale.

<sup>213</sup> Included in the 'Catalogue of Service' prepared by Thomas Bently. Nurnberg. 'A The Green Frog Service, Wedgwood and Bently's Imperial Russian Service', 1995 pp. 184-5, 267. This is interesting as this attribution suggests that due to the failure to resolve George Port's estate Ilam was still legally assigned to him five years after his death (please see footnote 84).

- 4.49 The plate shows the landscape composition, which had been proposed as early as 1750, but the details are reminiscent of the variation of the Smith view with the dairymaid and her cows and not the tourists. Aesthetically, this was probably the better choice, as the dinner service was intended for the most private of country residences.



Fig. 20. Thomas Smith's variation of the view of Thorpe Cloud, engraved by George Mason c1750 WSL: SV IV 31b. Reproduced by permission of the WSL

*Philip de Loutherbourg, The Wonders of Derbyshire*

- 4.50 One of the most peculiar and delightful connections with Ilam Park is the pantomime, *The Wonders of Derbyshire or Harlequin in the Peak*, which opened in Drury Lane in 1779. Philip de Loutherbourg (1740 – 1812), a painter who became one of the chief scenery creators for the leading theatre impresarios David Garrick and Richard Sheridan<sup>214</sup>, designed it. Among the twelve scenes was 'the site of a healing spring situated under a great Tor, which is understood to be St. Bertram's Well'<sup>215</sup>. This inclusion indicates that the well was also part of the Tourist route, as de Loutherbourg would have only included sites well known to his, primarily, London-based audiences<sup>216</sup>. However, this again raises the question of why the Boil Holes were not featured, given their known public profile, particularly after the descriptions of Gilpin and Whately and the landscape improvements featured on the Green Frog Dinner Service.

<sup>214</sup> David Garrick (1717-1779) actor, producer and owner/manager of Drury Lane Theatre. Garrick was born in Hereford by raised in Lichfield where Samuel Johnston taught him before following him to London 1737. Garrick was drawn to the theatre, his first comedy being performed at Drury Lane in 1740, and a year ahead of his celebrated performance as Shakespeare's Richard III. Through Thomas Sheridan he became owner/manager of the theatre in 1747. Thomas's son, Richard Sheridan (c1751-1816), was an Irish playwright and Whig politician who rose to become confidant of the Prince Regent. His most famous works include *The Rivals* (1775) and *School for Scandal* (1777) both comedies of manners. By 1776 he had taken on his father's interest in Drury Lane and was responsible for a resurgence of interest in the Restoration playwrights William Congreve and John Vanbrugh.

<sup>215</sup> Other scenes included the cavern of Castleford, Eden Hole, Mam Tor, Poole's Hole and Tideswell. The model for the cavern survives in the Victoria & Albert Museum and is one of the oldest surviving theatrical models. The sketchbook, which accompanied the performance, is held in the Huntingdon Library, California.

<sup>216</sup> Writing in 1976, the critic John Dixon Hunt remarked, perhaps unfairly, 'It was a rare spirit who actually preferred the Derbyshire Peak to representation of it', *The Figure in the Landscape, Poetry, Painting and Gardening in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 54



*Francis Chantrey, the Pike-Watts memorial*

- 4.51 Francis Leggatt Chantrey (1781 – 1841) was born near Norton, Derbyshire, and became an apprentice wood carver. However, John Raphael Smith, who gave him drawing and painting lessons, noted his artistic talent. Having bought himself out of his apprenticeship, Chantrey established himself as a sculptor in Sheffield and London, rising to become the foremost sculptor of the Regency period. He was knighted in 1835. His works were praised for their naturalism often chosen as the memorial artist of leading figures of the Establishment and society. One of his most famous memorials, *The Sleeping Children* (1817) is found in Lichfield Cathedral erected in memory of the two Robinson sisters.



Fig. 66. The Pike Watts memorial by Chantrey, Ilam Church

- 4.52 Chantrey knew Ilam through his friend the Revd. Bernard Port, Vicar of Ilam<sup>217</sup>, but also became involved at Ilam during the great rebuilding c1820, meeting with James Trubshaw in London to discuss the logistics of their two commissions, the erection of the Pike-Watts memorial chapel on the north side of the church and the execution of the actual Pike-Watts memorial (Fig 66), the centrepiece to the space<sup>218</sup>.
- 4.53 Trubshaw would go on to work with Chantrey at other sites including the monumental memorial to the Duke of Sutherland south of the Potteries. Trubshaw erected the monument in May 1836 with its architect Charles Barry looking on. The monument housed a great bronze statue of the Duke by Chantrey.

## THE LANDSCAPE OF SCIENTIFIC IMPROVEMENT

<sup>217</sup> Trubshaw's drawings for the new Ilam Rectory, now in the RIBA, include a cartoon of 'FC' meeting his friend Bernard Port at the entrance of the new Rectory. Baylis, A *The Life and Works of James Trubshaw*, 1978 p. 16

<sup>218</sup> Anne Baylis suggests, somewhat surprisingly, that Trubshaw was responsible for sourcing the marble for the statue of David Pike Watts. Baylis A. *The Life and Works of James Trubshaw*, 1978 p. 15



- 4.54 By association, Ilam Park can also claim to be a landscape of scientific improvement. The most notable association is with Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of the evolutionary scientist Charles Darwin. Erasmus Darwin (1731 -1802) was a physician in Lichfield but also a natural philosopher, a founding member of the Lunar Society of Birmingham<sup>219</sup> with Joseph Priestly, philosopher and scientist, and David Hartley, a campaigner for the abolition of slavery. In 1791 he published a set of two poems, *The Economy of Vegetation* and *The Love of Plants*, under the title *The Botanic Garden*. Part II, *The Love of Plants*, promoted and illustrated Linnaeus's classification system and began to explore ideas of natural selection/theory of evolution, which were developed by his grandson.

- 4.55 Canto III verse 85 is about Ilam:

*Where Hamps and Manifold their cliffs among  
Each in his flinty channels winds along,  
With lucid lines the dusky moor divides,  
Hurrying to intermix their sister tides.  
Three thousand steps in sparry clefts they stray  
Or seek thro' sullen mines their gloomy way;  
On beds of lava sleep in coral cells  
And sigh o'er jasper fish and agate shells,  
Till where fumes Ilam leads his boiling floods  
Thro' flowery meadows and impending woods,  
Pleas'd with light spring they leave the dreary night  
And mid circumfluent surges rise to light.*

- 4.56 The verse is also accompanied by detailed observations:

*where the rivers Hamps and Manifold sink into the earth, and rise again in Ham gardens, the seat of John Port, Esq. about three miles below. Where these rivers rise again there are impressions resembling Fish, which appear to be of Jasper bedded in Limestone. Calcareous Spars, Shells converted into a kind of Agate, corallines in Marble, ores of Lead, Copper, and Zinc, and many strata of Flint, or Chert, and of Toadstone, or Lava, abound in this part of the country.*<sup>220</sup>

- 4.57 Darwin's poems also reflect broader ideas of the Enlightenment and yet another connection is made through Mrs Daleny, who is personally identified:

*So now Delany forms her mimic bowers  
Her paper foliage, and her silken flowers*<sup>221</sup>

- 4.58 Darwin had met Mrs Delany, possibly at Calwich or in London, and through her some of the most remarkable scientific men of the age, such as botanists, naturalists and nurserymen Philip Miller, Peter Collinson and Daniel Solander, botanical artists Georg Dionysius Ehret and James Bolton (who was employed as a drawing master for her great-niece Georgiana), Joseph Banks and Lord Bute. Many of these people were drawn to the Delany's great friend the Duchess of Portland, amateur scientist and funder of expeditions. Indeed, on their return from the first South Seas voyage of Captain Cook in 1771, Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander, travelled first to the Portland residence of Bulstrode House.

<sup>219</sup> A dining club and learned society promoting the ideas of the Enlightenment who met between 1765 – 1813. The members included Matthew Boulton (engineer and business man), James Watt (engineer), Josiah Wedgwood (potter) and Thomas Day (author and abolitionist).

<sup>220</sup> *The Botanic Garden, Part II, The Love of the Plants, Part II Canto III vs 85*, Darwin, E. 1829 edition [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org) The same lines also appear in *A History, Gazetteer and Directory of Staffordshire*, 1851, p.277 SRO: open shelves

<sup>221</sup> *The Botanic Garden, Part II, The Love of the Plants, Part II vs155* Darwin, E. 1829 edition [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)

*Agricultural Improvement*

- 4.59 Agricultural improvement in the mid – late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was very much the concern of the enlightened landowner. However, even though it is known that leading agricultural surveyors such as Arthur Young and William Pitt visited Ilam and that Robert Hanbury served as President of the Board of Agriculture, the lack of estate records provides very little insight into what, if any, ‘improvement’ took place at Ilam.

## 5. Comparative Landscapes

### *Hafod, Ceredigion*

- 5.1 Amongst the most comparable landscapes to Ilam is Hafod, Ceredigion. This Welsh estate stands in relative isolation in the picturesque Ystwyth valley within the Cambrian Mountains. It originated as a monastic holding of the Cistercian abbey at Strata Florida but following the Dissolution the managed uplands were neglected and it became a poor and rough land. In c1780 Thomas Johnes, a cousin of Richard Payne Knight<sup>222</sup>, who brought wealth and vision to the landscape, inherited the estate.

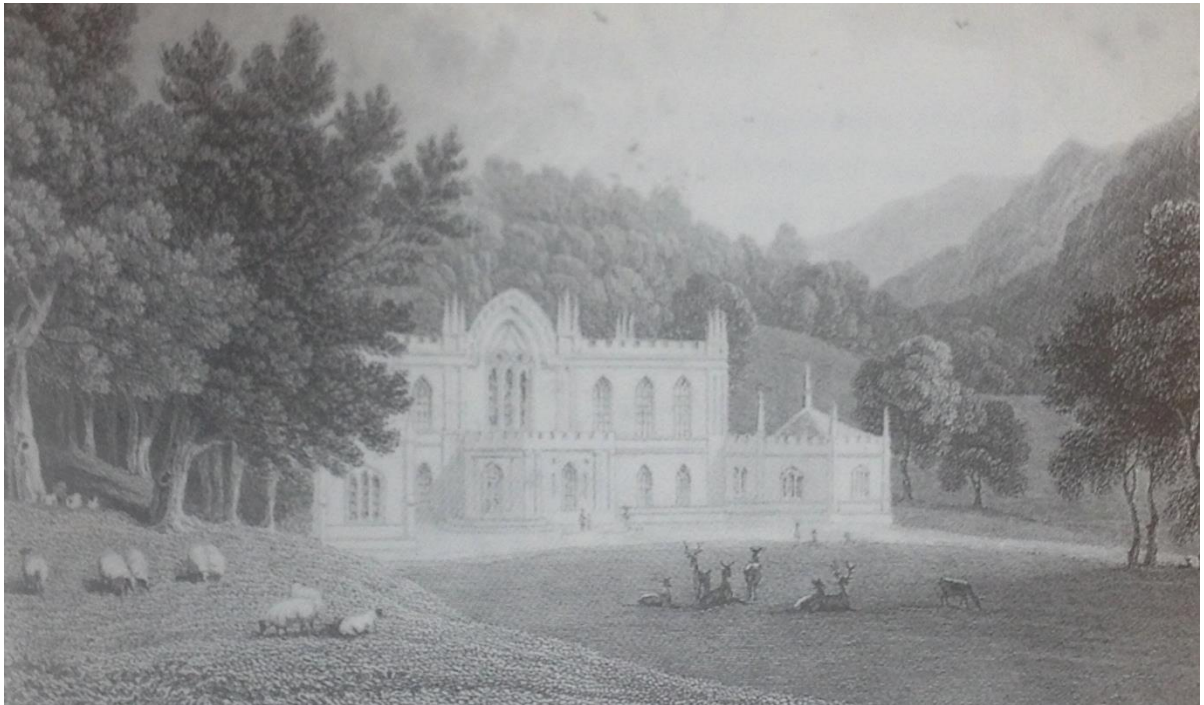


Fig. 67. Hafod. H. Gastineau c1830. Taken from *Peacocks in Paradise*

- 5.2 Between c1780 -1813 Johnes created one of the most celebrated houses and landscapes of the Picturesque, where he confidently commissioned established and emerging talents. A large Gothic house was designed by Thomas Baldwin, city architect of Bath, and quickly embellished with oriental additions by the young John Nash. Artist J. M. W Turner painted the idealised architectural composition in 1798, while poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge drew on Hafod to inspire his epic poem *Kubla Khan*.
- 5.3 The situation of the house in relation to the landscape was very similar to Ilam Park. The house stood at the 'head of the valley, sheltered by mounting woods, while in front of it lawns swept gently down toward the river'<sup>223</sup>.
- 5.4 However, Johnes created a far more ambitious picturesque circuit than that at Ilam. A walk over two miles long took visitors through a series of carefully constructed landscape 'incidents' to be admired as separate but connecting pictures. These included a long, grazed meadow close to the river, the Peiryan cascade, the Gentlemen's Walk, the Cascade Walk and the American Gardens, which was the private two acre flower garden of Johnes's wife, Jane. Johnes was keen on the 'sublime' and had waterfalls and rock work

<sup>222</sup> Payne Knight and Uvedale Price were both regular visitors to Hafod and may have advised on the landscape. Having seen his work at Hafod, Price commissioned John Nash to build a Gothic villa at Aberystwyth. Thomas Johnes grew up at the family home, Croft Castle, Herefordshire, which has its own ancient and picturesque landscape.

<sup>223</sup> *Peacocks in Paradise*, Inglis-Jones, E, 1990 p. 95



opened up to full advantage, threw alpine bridges across the torrents and created a number of small sheltered seats and buildings, one with brilliant coloured glass to further enhance the view. In c1794 critic George Cumberland wrote a virtual guidebook *An Attempt to Describe Hafod*, which was illustrated by the artist William Blake. Other artists, John Warwick Smith and Paul Sanby, also recorded the incidents in a series of views, and the National Gallery of Wales now holds both collections.

- 5.5 Between 1782 – 1813 Johnes planted extensively at Hafod establishing over 400 ha of woodland on the slopes around the house. Larch and Scots pine dominated the uplands while oak and beech were planted along the course of the river. Johnes was subsequently awarded five gold medals by the Royal Society for Arts and Commerce for his silviculture.
- 5.6 Johnes referred to Hafod as 'Happy Valley', quoting *Rasselas* (see paragraphs 4.25 – 4.34). However, his Happy Valley was that of the 'master' and not of the Prince, as he strove to improve the living of the landless peasants and estate staff by building houses, opening schools and providing medical care. His paradise was as much focussed on the well being and stimulation of his only child, Mariamne. She was a child protégée who counted Sir Joseph Banks and Dr James Edward Smith, President of the Linnaean Society<sup>224</sup>, amongst her friends and who developed her own natural 'garden' with the Scottish agriculturalist Dr James Anderson, where she conducted important botanical research.
- 5.7 However, Mariamne's premature death in 1810 signalled the end of Paradise. A house-fire and growing financial troubles saw her father leave Hafod for the last time in 1813. On her death, her father had commissioned a monument from a relatively unknown sculpture, Francis Chantrey (see paragraphs 4.51 - 4.53), which remains in Hafod church despite also being extensively damaged by fire.
- 5.8 Following Johnes death the estate remained within the family until 1833 when it was sold to the Dukes of Newcastle who added a campanile to the house, which increased its resemblance to the Watts-Russell's Ilam Park. By 1870 it was in the hands of the Waddington family who retained the estate until 1940. The estate was very much in decline with buildings and landscape deteriorating; the house was finally demolished in 1958.
- 5.9 Today, the Forestry Commission, who runs the site in partnership with The Hafod Trust, owns Hafod. Over the past twenty years external funding, including a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, has helped to restore the landscape, re-establishing Johnes famous circuit walk for visitors. Hafod is registered Grade I on Cadw's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*.

#### *Doldowlod House, Powys*

- 5.10 Doldowlod is amongst the most famous sporting estates of the Wye valley in Wales, lying north of Llandrindod Wells in the village of Llanwrthyl. The Jacobean revival house stands above the River Wye within a landscape park and wooded uplands in a situation similar to Ilam Park. The inventor of the steam engine, James Watts, purchased Doldowlod in 1803 as a country retreat. His son, James Watt junior, pulled down the old house in c1843 having commissioned architect Robert Mylne to design a new one in the fashionable Jacobean Revival style. This house was set up on a series of terraces above the lawns and the River Wye. However, the older stables and offices remained. The house was loosely based on the family's principal home, Aston Hall in Birmingham.
- 5.11 The River Wye was the principal ornament of the park with walks extending through the formal gardens to the east of the house and down to the river. However, the character was more open than that at Ilam, without rockwork but with ornamental fishing shelters. The kitchen garden lay to the east of the house and was unusually large in comparison with the

<sup>224</sup> The Linnaean Society was founded in 1788 by botanist Sir James Edward Smith. It is the oldest naturalist society in the world dedicated to natural history and taxonomy and was awarded a royal charter in 1802. Charles Darwin made his first public presentation on his Theory of Evolution at the Society in July 1858, when the stage was shared with Alfred Russel Wallace whose own contribution to our understanding of evolution was subsequently overshadowed by Darwin's success.

mansion, as at Ilam. While the walls survive, the interior is now lost and the area is used as a combination of caravan park and Christmas tree plantation.

- 5.12 A lodge in the style of a Jacobean banqueting house stands besides one of the most ornate entrances in Wales, off the main road, with pierced balustrading and stone obelisks, the drive descending through woodland to the house. Sadly the Grade II\* lodge and entrance are now in poor repair. Cadw has also listed the mansion Grade II\* while the landscape is registered Grade II.



Fig. 68. Doldowlod House set in its park from the west side of the river Wye

### Chatsworth House

- 5.13 Chatsworth House is included as a comparator to Ilam Park more in consideration of the work and interests of the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire than in the size and style of the estate, which is obviously much larger and more complex than that at Ilam. As the premier estate of Derbyshire, the gardens and landscape at Chatsworth would have been familiar to gentry families such as the Ports<sup>225</sup> and Watts-Russell's. Chatsworth would have set the standard and, to a degree, fashionable taste and interests. Chatsworth House remains one of the most important designed landscapes in England and is registered Grade I on Historic England's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*.
- 5.14 William Cavendish, who inherited in 1811, and who is known as the 'The Bachelor Duke', was among the most progressive aristocrats of his age. He supported Catholic Emancipation, the Abolition of Slavery and championed the arts and scientists. A passionate horticulturalist, he served as President of the Royal Horticultural Society for over 20 years and was instrumental in the establishment of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. He also poached an RHS gardener, Joseph Paxton, as Head Gardener for Chatsworth, establishing an extraordinary partnership, which ended with Paxton becoming a Knight of the Realm and a millionaire businessman.
- 5.15 With Paxton the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke embarked on a number of improvements in the landscape at Chatsworth such as the outstanding collection of horticultural glass, which included the

<sup>225</sup> Mary Port was actually a relation of Georgiana Spencer, wife of 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire. However, although they were correspondents it appears that Mary's poor health prevented her from visiting her cousin at Chatsworth, the main contact being made through Mrs Delany. Mrs Delany's Letters NRL: QM 416.6 012 DEL.

Orchid Houses (c1832), the Great Stove (1840<sup>226</sup>) and the Conservative Wall (1842) to care for the Duke's extensive plant collection. Although the Ilam glass could not compete in scale it was extensive. The hothouses of the Watts-Russell's kitchen garden, and the conservatory within the house, provided opportunities to grow and admire edible and ornamental plants safe from the vagaries of the weather and the long winters of the South Peak.

- 5.16 Paxton also added other areas to the gardens for specific plant collections and to bring picturesque elements of the natural landscape into the garden. These included the massive Rock Garden of the 1840s with the Wellington Rock and the Strid, an interpretation of a natural landscape feature found at Bolton Abbey, Yorkshire, another Cavendish estate. In addition an arboretum and pinetum were laid out on high ground to the southeast of the house. This tree planting surrounded the Great Fountain Pond and its associated flues, which descended through the gardens feeding various water features and the magnificent Emperor Fountain, completed in 1843. Unlike Ilam Park, the more benign situation of Chatsworth in the Derwent valley was seen to require additional drama.



Fig. 69. Edensor, Chatsworth's model estate village c1840. By kind permission of Historic Landscape Management

- 5.17 Beyond the garden, the Duke and Paxton retained much of Lancelot Brown's eighteenth century landscape park while adding new conifer plantations on the ridges to the east for enclosure and exotic trees within the park<sup>227</sup>. In c1840 the old estate village, with the exception of one cottage, was moved west out of view of the house and rebuilt almost wholesale by Paxton, aided by the architect John Robertson. This was the second re-siting of Edensor village, the work having been started by the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke c1760. The new buildings were executed in a distinct ornée character, similar to that seen at Ilam Park and in other contemporary estate villages such as Old Warden<sup>228</sup>, Bedfordshire and Glanusk or Leighton Hall, Powys.

<sup>226</sup> This building can be considered a prototype for Paxton's most famous work, the Crystal Palace, which housed The Great Exhibition in 1851.

<sup>227</sup> A tree with close associations with Paxton is the Weeping ash. This appears both in the garden and park at Chatsworth and in Paxton's public park, The Pavilion Gardens, Buxton. At least one Weeping ash is found at Ilam, albeit a younger specimen, just to the east of the estate office and one was known to stand close to the river in Target Meadow.

<sup>228</sup> The core of Old Warden is in fact Regency, being contemporary with the Swiss Garden within the park of Old Warden house. However, the village was later extended with more flamboyant 'Swiss' style buildings.



## 6. Gaps in Knowledge

- 6.1 Archive evidence and other research undertaken to inform the ‘understanding’ of Ilam Park shows that there are many potentially rich opportunities for further study. It is also clear, despite the apparent lack of estate records and other material contemporary with the main phases of development of the landscape at Ilam, that there is evidence of substantial association between Ilam Park and key figures or places of the times.
- 6.2 Further areas of research may include:
- LiDAR survey to aid understanding of the engineering works associated with the river, former plantings, landscape development and the earlier history of the landscape;
  - Historic Building and archaeological investigation of the stables and their immediate surroundings to determine their date and the identification of any surviving fabric that might indicate adaptation from an earlier house;
  - Further archaeological investigation of the existing terraces to determine their construction and of any remaining evidence of the earlier Port terraces evidenced by parch marks;
  - Targeted geophysics to assist with the understanding of the earlier landscape history such as footpaths removed as part of the landscape improvements and the location of planting beds near the house(s);
  - Archaeological investigation of the greenhouses to help understand their technology;
  - Further study of the Hinkley limes to determine their significance as natural and/or planted lime woodland which has regenerated across the woodland slopes;
  - Further examination of the sixteenth century Port papers (mortgages and wills) to identify additional information on the origins of the Ilam estate;
  - A greater understanding of the connection with William Congreve and his family to Ilam, paying particular attention to a possibility of an early picturesque walk alongside the river and the origin of Congreve’s Seat and associated landscaping on the south side of the river;
  - On-going survey of eighteenth and nineteenth century traveller’s tales to identify any further accounts of Ilam Park and particularly of its gardens/riverscape;
  - A closer examination of the rock work below the house to attempt to date interventions and extensions to the path systems recorded c1836;
  - A closer examination of the wall alongside Paradise Walk to identify evidence of any earlier structure;
  - A close examination of the south bank/valley of the river to identify any signs of lost seats and viewing areas associated with the improvements of c1772 (this could include the further consideration of Phil Mottram’s viewing station);
  - On-going survey of the papers of families with a close association with Ilam such as the Granvilles at Calwich and Hagley Halls, which may contain correspondence and sketch books;
  - On-going survey of the papers of notable individuals who had a working association with Ilam during the ownership of Jesse Watts-Russell such as John Shaw, Edward Blore, George Gilbert Scott and Francis Chantrey;
  - A consideration of the landscape at Biggin Hall, Benefield, Northamptonshire, country house of Jesse Watts-Russell. This landscape is relatively unknown but it may reveal

useful comparators with Ilam and potentially named-individuals from the field of landscape design and/or horticulture;

- Research into the Staffordshire and Derbyshire rifle ranges 1859 – 1908 to identify any specific connection with Ilam with local regiments such as the Sherwood Foresters;
- An examination of papers concerned with the Hanbury family (various locations);
- Further research on possible botanical connections between Ilam and notable plant nurseries/collectors of the late eighteenth – mid nineteenth centuries;
- Further research and survey on the interim productive garden at Garden House Farm in collaboration with the present owners;
- On-going survey of national art collections to identify images of Ilam or works of art with proven association with the property i.e. part of the Port/Watts-Russell collections.

## 7. Analysis of the Designed Landscape

- 7.1 Any analysis of the designed landscape at Ilam Park must recognise the unusual natural beauty of the 'core landscape' and the manner in which it connects visually with Bunster Hill and Thorpe Cloud to the east. The 'core' can be described as the land southwest and east of the hall, which is composed of the rocky outcrop with zig-zag paths linking to the wooded slopes above Target Meadow, the river and steep wooded hillside of Hinkley Wood beyond and the lawns. Ilam Park is a place where the landscape has been enhanced rather than created, with each phase of improvement building on its predecessor.
- 7.2 As no evidence has been found to suggest the involvement of any named landscape designer the landscape at Ilam Park can be seen as the collective achievement of the respective owners. Ilam Park is therefore a very personal landscape, as through their wealth and social standing the Ports, Watts-Russells and Hanburys were all fully aware of the dominant landscape and architectural fashions and personalities of their times.
- 7.3 The first evidence for any ornamental landscape at Ilam Park dates to the late seventeenth century and its associations with William Congreve who referred to a riverside walk. Whether this was simply a walk alongside the river and through the meadows, or a planned example of the 'savage picturesque'<sup>229</sup> is unknown. If it were the latter then Ilam would be among the earliest examples of the 'savage picturesque'. John Buckler recorded Congreve's Seat or 'Retreat', which included at least part of the surviving stone writing desk, in 1839 somewhere within the main rock outcrop, most probably within the Grotto, but certainly in a different location to that existing<sup>230</sup>.
- 7.4 The evolution of the parkland before c1750 is also unclear but the quality and extent of surviving earthworks from the two village fields, Ilam and Elm fields, suggests that enclosure was relatively late and any earth moving within the park minimal. The first known record of Lodge Lane appears on Yate's map of 1775 (Fig 24), which formed the northeast boundary of the park.
- 7.5 It is suggested, therefore, that the key phases of landscape improvement at Ilam Park occurred in the mid-late eighteenth century and first part of the nineteenth century.

### Key Phases of Landscape Improvement (Fig. 70 i & ii)

#### *The Eighteenth Century*

- 7.6 By the mid eighteenth century the bones of the existing gardens and pleasure gardens had been laid out in the immediate vicinity of the house. The Revd. Richard Wilkes recorded the terraced gardens (paths) 'down the south side of a high and very steep hill'<sup>231</sup>. This included at least one path cut into the rock above the Boil Holes, which demonstrates a significant investment of time and money.
- 7.7 Wilkes' account of the view to the east from the gardens is interesting as while Bunster Hill and Thorpe Cloud are readily visible from the area of the house (based on Mrs Delany's 1756 sketch made from 'the door' of Ilam Hall (Fig 18), the order of his account suggests that he first descended to the river to view the hills. This implies that a circuit had been established in the area of the meadow and may help to date the associated Ha ha which formed an effective boundary to the gardens. This is also the arrangement suggested by the Smith/Mason images c1750 (Figs 19 & 20) and supported by the accounts of other

<sup>229</sup> Historic Gardens of England, Staffordshire, Mowl, T, Barre, D, 2009 p. 138

<sup>230</sup> Congreve's Retreat, John Bucker, 1839, WSL: SV.V.16 (45/8742). This is not included.

<sup>231</sup> WSL: S LS 466/6



visitors such as Thomas Whately, William Gilpin and Arthur Young. Young also recorded a seat within the area, which may have corresponded with the Smith/Mason view.

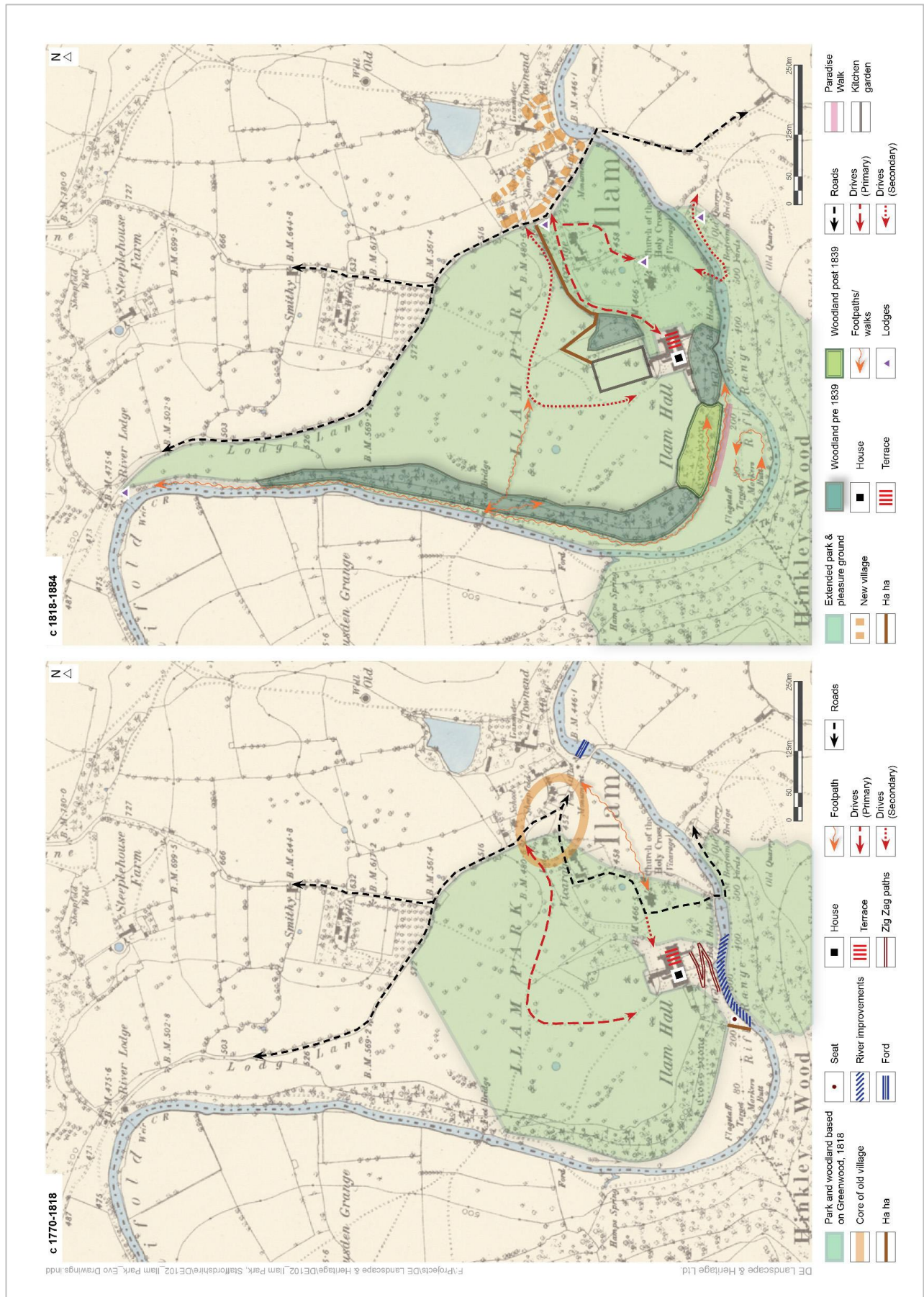


Fig. 70 (i) Key developments in the landscape c1770 – 1884 shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey [NTS]. Reproduced at A3 in Appendix 1.



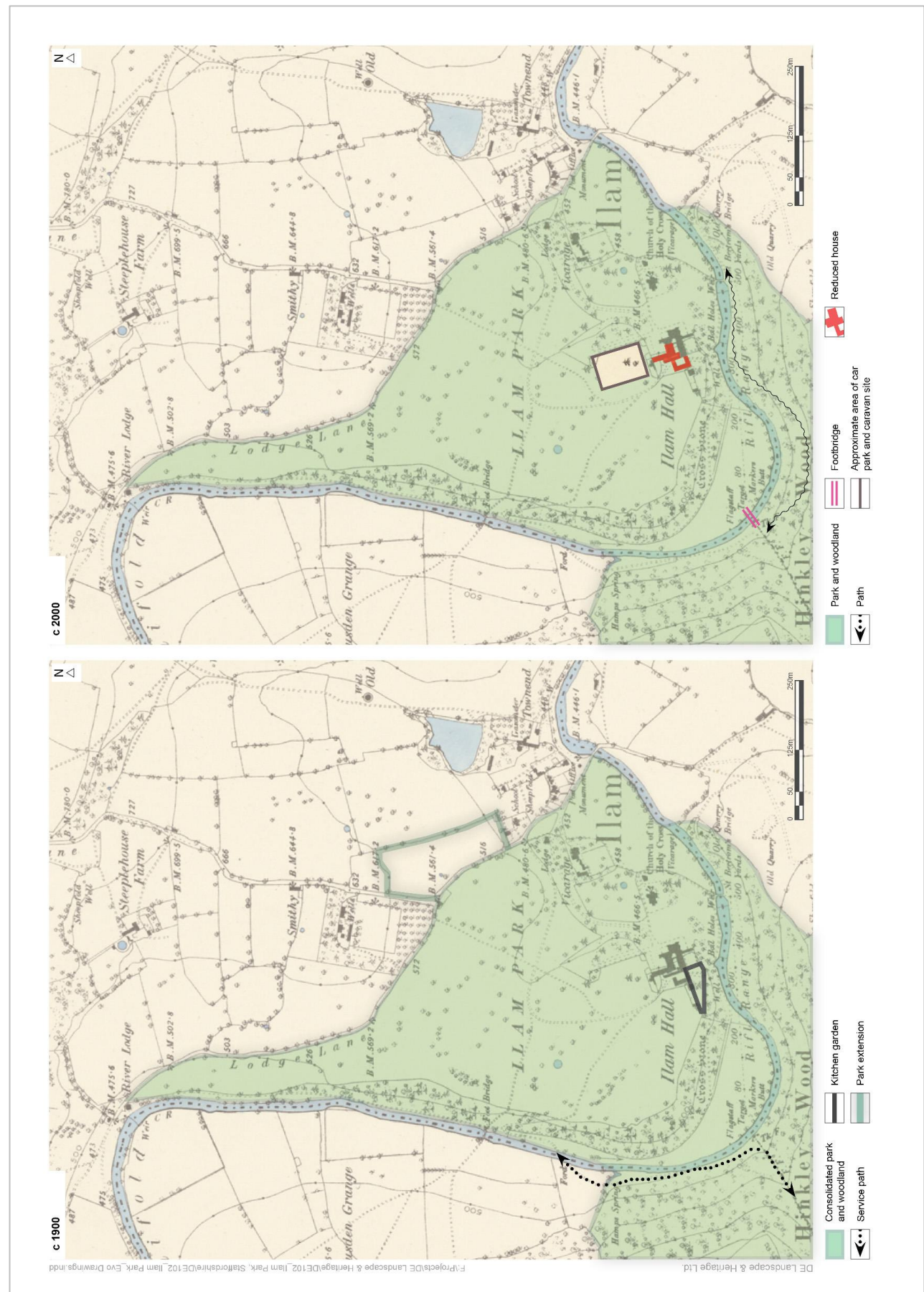


Fig. 70 (ii) Key developments in the landscape c1900 – 2000 shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey [NTS]. Reproduced at A3 in Appendix 1.



- 7.8 The most significant change in this area occurred c1774 when John Port implemented changes apparently planned by his father, and moved the course of the Manifold north to meet the Boil Holes. According to pictorial and site evidence this work also involved erecting a retaining wall along the north bank of the river, creating brick arched culverts for the emerging rivers Manifold and Hamps, erecting a bridge across the Boil Holes and creating, or extending, a path at ground level to connect the meadow to the land east of the house.
- 7.9 As no specific reference has been made to a Grotto prior to 1750, and given its relationship to the new course of the river, it is suggested that this feature was also part of John Port's improvements. However, no evidence has been found to support the idea that the Grotto, or indeed the second enclosure higher up the rock face where Congreve's desk now sits, looked out at anything in particular, or simply enjoyed views over the river, meadow and woodland beyond.
- 7.10 The accounts of people such as Gilpin and Mrs Delany are useful in establishing the presence of gravelled walks and flowerbeds close to the house. However, Gilpin was dismissive of the flower parterres set out on the grass slopes, which were linked by stone steps. Given the topography in the area of the rocks, and in appreciation of De Bunsen's c1807 sketch of the Port house (Fig 25), it is suggested that Gilpin was referring to the grass terraces on the east side of the house, where gravelled walks could be expected. Gilpin also helpfully noted 'a fair lawn which circles the house'<sup>232</sup>, which similarly must refer to the land between the house and the church. Interestingly, none of the visitors make any reference to seats close to the house until 1794 when William Pitt described a seat<sup>233</sup>. Similarly no visitor offers any account of a productive garden although this would likely have been beyond a visitor circuit<sup>234</sup>.
- 7.11 John Byng's account of 1792 is also useful in recording no improvement to the sloping banks to the river (east of the Boil Holes) and no weirs or cascades along the Manifold's course. This is understandable as Wheel Orchard was yet to be properly incorporated into the park and access to the riverbank might have been restricted.

### *Early-Mid Nineteenth Century*

- 7.12 Greenwood's map of 1818 (Fig 27) records the park at Ilam to the north of the house and slightly extending to the east of the church drive. A scatter of trees is also shown to the north of the house with a larger concentration of woodland to the south. A contemporary description (but not published until c1871) recorded two terraces and a 'verdant lawn' on the east side of the house, which suggests a reconfiguration of three terraces recorded in 1807.
- 7.13 The Cobb survey of 1839 (Fig 34), supported by the tithe maps, records the subtle but important improvements made at Ilam by Jesse Watts-Russell. The most obvious change was a new house, its associated service buildings, a kitchen garden, the rectory, the Pike-Watts memorial chapel, Church Lodge and 'Blöre' or Wood Lodge at the east end of Hinkley Wood and the extension of the park to the north. This work required the adjustment of the terraces to the east of the house and enabled the creation of the Italian Garden. Outside the gardens a new main drive was created while other lanes and footpaths were reorganised c1828 to bring Wheel Orchard into the park (Fig.71). This work included the removal of a public road from St.Bertram's Bridge to the village and the consolidation or extension of the pleasure ground walks. Cobb recorded only one weir along the river between the Boil Holes and St. Bertram's Bridge. This survives today and contributes to the flow, and therefore the character, of the river. The survey also recorded new areas of

<sup>232</sup> BOD: MS Eng Misc f 179 (1)

<sup>233</sup> Mrs Delany sketched the view (Fig 18) from the front door of Ilam Hall, which given that her visit c1756 predates her closer intimacy with the family may suggest a lack of seats along the east terraces.

<sup>234</sup> BOD: MS Eng Misc f 179 (1). Gilpin notes that 'we did not see' any of the house offices or fields.

woodland and shrubbery within the park and pleasure grounds, while parkland tree planting remained relatively sparse.



Fig. 71. Cobb survey overlaid with footpath diversion orders c1828 to show the re arrangement of the land to the east of the hall [NTS]. Reproduced at A3 in Appendix 1.

- 7.14 Outside the park, Cobb showed that the land to the north and northeast had been subdivided into large enclosures bound by tree-planted hedgerows, stonewalls and fences. These fields acted as a pastoral buffer, facilitating the transformation of the open uplands to the parkland. The buffer also contained distinct ornamental features such as the large pond, enclosed by woodland, and a circular kennels on the slopes of Bunster Hill.
- 7.15 By the mid century, Watts-Russell had embarked on another period of improvement which included a new model village and farms, the memorial cross, Gate Lodge, the main entrance gate, completion of the kitchen garden and River Lodge. A second weir was also added to the river closer to the Boil Holes to form a virtual pool. Ilam Church was similarly reordered and repaired with the addition of a new gabled roof.
- 7.16 An account of 1852 suggests that the visitor's circuit had also been reversed with people travelling to the river before proceeding up the rocks to the gardens around the house. This would fit with further improvements such as the creation of the formal Paradise Walk and the relocation of the Battle Stone, as a feature at the path junction (where a spur path returned diagonally back up the slope to the house). However, it is unclear if the actual lime trees along Paradise Walk also date from this time, as they do not appear on the Ordnance Surveys of 1884 or c1900 despite being noted in the sales catalogue of 1910.
- 7.17 Beyond the park the most significant addition to the landscape was the part ornamental Garden Farm, which lay to the north within its own woodlands and orchards. Elsewhere the field pattern remained largely unaltered although park planting was extended northeast of the village into the farmland. All these improvements were recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey c1884.

### *The Hanburys*

- 7.18 The main contribution of the Hanbury family to Ilam Park was to remove the kitchen garden in the park and create a new one on a smaller site near the stables with an associated glass yard. Intriguingly, this later garden was actually the third of its type, the Hanbury's having created a large detached productive garden, with its own glass yard and orchard, at Garden House Farm by the late nineteenth century which was itself reduced c1900 but not entirely removed<sup>235</sup>. This was recorded on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey of 1898/1900 (Fig. 48). This survey also showed the planting up of the area of the original productive garden and a general increase in tree planting particularly in the northern area of the park. The mapping record also officially incorporated the area of tree-planted farmland to the northeast as part of the park.

### *Late twentieth century*

- 7.19 Relatively little structural change occurred either in the park or wider landscape following the sale of Ilam Park and its immediate grounds in c1910. However, the greatest change in the landscape was the part demolition of the hall in 1934, which affectively removed the main part of the principal building from the landscape composition. In the post-war period further infrastructure changes included the creation of a car park/caravan site c1960 and the creation of a new woodland walk c2000, which linked to a new river crossing on line with Paradise Walk.

## **How the Landscape Worked**

### *Circulation*

- 7.20 The original routes into Ilam were from the south (Blore), east (Thorpe) or north (Stanshope). A ford and stepping-stones crossed the river to the east of the existing bridge in the village. Yates County map of 1775 (Fig 24) suggests the hall stood close to the end of a lane, or a drive, west of the village.



Fig. 24. Yates map of Staffordshire, 1775



Fig. 27. Greenwood's map of Staffordshire, 1818

- 7.21 St. Bertram's Bridge dates from the mid eighteenth century and carried a new carriage drive through the southeast end of Hinkley Wood to approach the hall on the west side of the church, before looping back to the village to the north of the old Vicarage. However, it is unclear how this road may have reached the hall. By 1818 Greenwood recorded a drive

<sup>235</sup> 'A large WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN and a good orchard' were advertised at Garden House Farm in the Sales Particulars of 1926. National Trust site archive, Ilam Park.



approaching the stables and house from the northeast. This drive was later down graded, described on the footpath closure map of 1827 as a 'private drift road', to the north of the sketched line of a new main drive (Fig 32).

- 7.22 The Cobb survey of 1839 confirms the reconfiguration of drives in the park recording the new drive approaching from the northeast to the north of the new Rectory and the retention of the earlier drive within the park. The old lane/carriage drive from St. Bertram's Bridge was also removed and replaced by a new curving drive/path, which ran to the east side of the church (Fig 35).
- 7.23 Cobb also recorded other routes in the landscape. These included a path, which turned west from St. Bertram's Bridge and followed the north bank of the river as far as the Boil Holes. Here the path joined the older network of paths ascending the rock face and a long walk/carriage drive, which continued around the base of woodland on the west side of the park as far as the later site of River Lodge. Cobb records this feature lined with railings on the survey of 1839.
- 7.24 By 1884 at least two spur paths ran from this route: the diagonal return at the Battle Stone and a second diagonal return midway along the riverside plantations. This second path appeared to follow a fence line back across the centre of the park to meet the old drift road. In effect, this path created a circuit linking the river with the wider park and the area of the kitchen garden. However, it is unknown if this was a polite, service or a dual-purpose route.
- 7.25 At least three polite circuit paths have been identified at Ilam Park (Fig. 72). The first dates from at least the mid eighteenth century and involved people travelling down the rock face from the house, probably out into the riverside meadow, and back around the base of the rocks passing the Boil Holes, to the church/house/village. This may have been a fixed circulation designed to create a series of views and experiences, while retaining the privacy of the family. However, by c1790 people appear to have been walking in the other direction, perhaps better to experience the view of Thorpe Cloud from the higher ground near the house than down by the river<sup>236</sup>.
- 7.26 The second circuit concerned the meadow by the river. This was accessed off the main path and was recorded by Cobb as an oval path in the meadow fenced off from the land to the west. It allowed for the full appreciation of the rock, the meadow and hanging woods and of views east towards the river and Dovedale. However it probably did not invite people to journey further west, the combination of a visual pinch point and the valley effectively concluding the view.
- 7.27 A third circuit on the Cobb survey was formed by the combination of the new main drive and a serpentine path running through shrubbery along the east side of the 'pleasure ground', which was recorded on the tithe map. This returned to the house as a formal tree-lined walk on the north side of the church.
- 7.28 However, no path is shown following the northern edge of the riverside plantations or the Ha ha around Dovecote Wood, which suggests the focus of the designed landscape was very much upon the river.
- 7.29 Similarly, while at least three crossing points across the Manifold are recorded by 1884, the focus remained on the landscape north of the river. Cobb records only the carriage drive running east of Wood Lodge and no other paths either within Hinkley Wood, or close to the river. By 1884 a path was recorded along the south bank but it headed south and steeply uphill opposite the meadow, which suggests a service use. This path was lost by 1922. An existing path, which runs along the south side of the river today between St. Bertam's Bridge and the more recent stone steps, is understood to post date c1926.

<sup>236</sup> Phil Mottram speculated that there was at least one viewing station on the south side of the river. This is unsubstantiated and given the number of tourist accounts of Ilam it does seem that the majority of visitors stayed on the north side of the Manifold. Indeed, Gilpin speculated that the ground of the other side was perhaps 'more irregular': he was unable to visit it. 'A Landscape Mystery at Ilam Hall, Staffordshire, Mottram, P, 2000 (National Trust Ilam Hall), BOD: MS Eng. Misc. f 179 (1)



Fig. 72. Circuits c1839 in the pleasure grounds together with circulation from the terraces. The Cobb Survey, 1839, National Trust, Ilam Park

- 7.30 Few paths are shown outside the park until the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1884, which recorded a series of tracks running northeast from the village to connect Townsend Farm with land to the northeast. This map also clearly records the line of the old road from Thorpe running across the pasture to the south of Bunster Hill, which was removed c1850.

#### *Views and Setting (Fig. 73)*

- 7.31 Note: This section provides a discussion of the identified historic views at Ilam Park contemporary with each of the key phases of landscape improvement. These views contributed to a wider appreciation of the designed landscape within the local landscape, which is described as it's setting. While the terms 'views' and 'setting' can hold specific meaning in current planning policy and guidance, this section is not intended to be used to establish key views or setting in relation to that policy and guidance. Should this be required for Ilam Park a distinct Landscape Appraisal, or similar, would be commissioned to be informed by information contained in this report and by current planning policy and guidance<sup>237</sup>.

#### Views within the park and garden

<sup>237</sup> Please see Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets and GLVIA Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition for further information.

- 7.32 The earliest known views at Ilam Park concern the famous view of Thorpe Cloud from the riverside (the Smith/Mason view) or from the east front of the house (Mrs Delany view). The subject of the view is clear: the picturesque contrast of the natural/pastoral landscape of Ilam with the dramatic uplands of Dovedale.



Fig. 20. Smith/Mason variation on the view of Thorpe Cloud WSL: SV.IV.31b



Fig. 18. Delany view NLI: P3896 2

- 7.33 Even though contemporary accounts record other views along the river corridor, as experienced through the established circulations, these were generally contained by Hinkley Wood and may be described as being incidental to the overall landscape experience.
- 7.34 In contrast, by the time of his death in 1875, Watts-Russell had devised a series of views and experiences across the landscape. The main entrance brought people through the model village, most probably from the station at Thorpe. A dense shrubbery alongside the drive opened out to reveal the park to the south, enclosed to the west by Dovecote Wood. To the north of the drive the ground was also reworked as a raised bank to neatly screen the associated Ha ha, removing any indication of utility from the view. As the drive curved southwest, views would be enjoyed across the tree-planted 'pleasure ground'/park towards the church, while the mass of the house would gradually come into view.



View towards the house from the main drive



View towards the village from Wheel Orchard

- 7.35 From the house and formal gardens, views were focussed east to the church. The redesign of the tower by George Gilbert Scott in c1850 created a pitched roof, which echoed the peculiar form of Thorpe Cloud when viewed from the garden terrace and/or loggia. The terrace also afforded views towards St. Bertram's Well and bridge, and possibly Wood Lodge, but these views became eroded over time as more tree planting took place.
- 7.36 The new village c1850 with its ornate cottages, memorial cross and river bridge would have drawn the eye across Wheel Orchard, and from the walks associated with the church, while remaining largely invisible from the house. Prior to this, views from the east of the church



would have focussed instead on the old inn/school, which stood near the east boundary of the orchard with little or no views of the cottages beyond. This earlier arrangement was as much a social as aesthetic choice as the school was directly funded and patronised by the family<sup>238</sup>.

- 7.37 Views from the gardens to the river were enjoyed primarily from the zig-zag paths and associated small terraces, the Italian Garden always remaining slightly detached and facing east. These provided a variety of prospects, at different heights, to the west and east over the river valley. The views from the grotto were, however, more controlled, looking across the river towards the lower reaches of Hinkley Wood or southeast towards the bridge only.



*View from upper terrace towards Target Meadow*



*View east from the grotto*

- 7.38 To the west of the Grotto a series of views would have opened up against the backdrop of Hinkley Wood. The formalisation of Paradise Walk c1850 orientated people to the west both visually and physically, an appreciation only accentuated through the maturing of the lime trees. The alignment of the existing footbridge with Paradise Walk is remarkable for showing how another circuit walk may have worked historically, should the owners have chosen to develop one there.



*View west along Paradise Walk*



*Approaching the pinch point from Target Meadow*

- 7.39 As the main path approaches the northern end of the meadow, the valley and associated planting contract to a pinch point, which closes in the view and creates a darker, more Romantic character. Once passed, the land opens up again to the west and includes views to the northwest and the open scrub around Musden Grange, with the higher ground beyond. These views are likely to have been more open historically with the riverside meadow opening onto the water. However, an overall sense of enclosure would have

<sup>238</sup> Watts-Russell's first wife was credited with setting up the new school c.1830. Jottings of a Staffordshire Parson's Son, Graves, J, 1998.



prevailed with the steep wooded banks to the east and Hinkley Wood along the south and west sides of the river.

- 7.40 The aesthetic experience of this part of the walk is greater if walking south, the exit from the pinch point opening into the full experience of Hinkley Wood, the meadow and the river: this is one of the highlights of Ilam Park.



*View of the meadows and woods to the south of the pinch point looking southwest*

- 7.41 The entrance to the park beside Wood Lodge was another set piece landscape composition. The lodge has a hexagonal plan which presents an east and west elevation to the drive. In 1839 this lodge was planted to the rear and, most importantly, the north, which effectively blocked views of the building from Wheel Orchard and the village, while not disturbing the delight of passing it on the drive (in either direction) or seeing it behind St. Bertram's Bridge when viewed from the formal gardens or sloping lawns.



*The Italian Garden looking towards St. Bertram's Bridge    Wood Lodge looking towards the house*

- 7.42 Views within north park are specifically associated with the natural high points in the ground; the raised platforms of lost buildings in the southwest corner, the rock outcrop centre-west and the high point of the north boundary where long, sweeping views can be enjoyed down across the park and woodlands.



*View east from the southwest park*



*View north from the rock outcrop in the park*

### Views looking out of the park and garden

- 7.43 When leaving the hall by the main drive, the arrangement of the serpentine drive, north park and north park extension, would have been quickly revealed around Dovecote Wood. The park extension would have raised the eye up to the linear woodlands north of the village and Home Farm, which effectively extended and concluded the designed landscape below the upland ridges. As one left the park, Thorpe Cloud was framed in the entrance gate.



*View northeast from the house front*



*View east from inside the entrance gate*

- 7.44 The path across the park from the stables to the river provided an appreciation of the variety of landform and planting with the park, set against the hills behind. However, while there are few recognisably 'designed' views here, either associated with the few landscape features, such as the rock outcrop or pond, paired trees do appear to frame views of Thorpe Cloud to the east and Garden House<sup>239</sup> Farm can be seen to function as an ornamental eye catcher on the mid-ground slopes to the north.

<sup>239</sup> Historically the vicarage, which was painted white, was a noted landmark when viewed from the Blore road, which suggests that the Port house may have been secluded behind planting to the west. 'A Topographical History of Staffordshire', Nightingale, J, c1871 pp 38-39, 238 - 39, WSL: S.1429/1





*View towards Thorpe Cloud from the park*

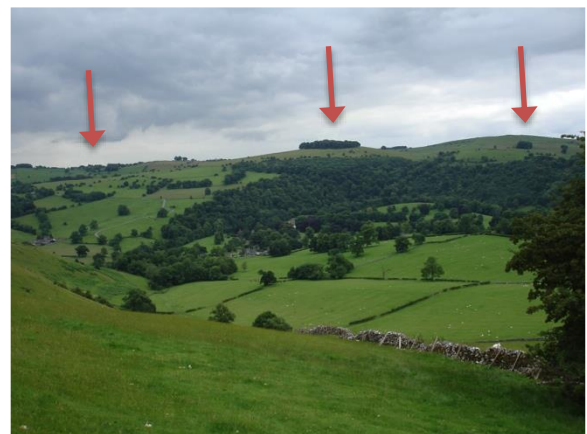


*View towards Garden House Farm from the park*

- 7.45 The views down across the landscape from the northeast park boundary also extend upwards and provide one of the clearest appreciations of the aesthetic contributions of three woodlands on the summits of nearby hills: young woodland south of Blore, Hazelton Clump and wood clump above Musden Grange. These clumps mark the transition of the northern edge of Hinkley and Musden woods to open pasture and woodland and balance the greater local landscape composition of wood and pasture seen from within the park.



*View from the rock outcrop in the park looking east*



*View from Bunster showing the effect of the upland plantations*

- 7.46 It is recognised that while Hinkley Wood has the clearest historic precedent, the contribution of the other upland woods only accentuates its contribution to the landscape setting of Ilam Park.

#### Views that have been lost or eroded

- 7.47 Designed views within the landscape at Ilam, which are considered to have become eroded include:
- The Smith/Mason view of Thorpe Cloud from the riverside;
  - The view east from the house on account of mature trees within the church yard;
  - Views from the Italian Garden towards St. Bertram's Bridge;
  - Views from Wood Lodge towards the house and return;
  - View from St. Bertram's Bridge towards the village.



*Thomas Smith view towards Thorpe Cloud today*



*View from the Italian Garden towards St. Bertram's Bridge today*

- 7.48 Views towards the village and park in the wider study area have also been compromised by development such as the 1954 council houses along Ilam Moor Lane and the affect of the caravan park seen from within the park.



*Council houses in Ilam village blocking views of the park*



*The caravan site seen from within the park*

### *Setting*

- 7.49 The valley setting of Ilam Park creates a naturally enclosed landscape. The remains of the house are tucked into the valley, the contrast in planting and form of the wooded park and Hinkley Wood only accentuating its contrast with the more open uplands around, evoking William Pitt's description of a 'Glen in the Alps'<sup>240</sup>.
- 7.50 However, Ilam Park does not stand apart from the surrounding uplands. The distinct woodland character extends out into the upland clumps and linear plantations to the south and northwest, effectively extending the boundary of the designed landscape. This sense of 'borrowed landscape' is also found in the distinct and delightful views of Ilam Park, which can be enjoyed from along the Thorpe Road to the east of the village, from the heights of Ilam Moor, Bunster and Thorpe Cloud and even from the road from Blore where, when descending the hill side behind Hinkley Wood, one is conscious of entering a different place on account of the change in woodland pattern and on first sight of the model village.

<sup>240</sup> General View of Agricultural, Staffordshire, Pitt W, 1796 WSL: EA/7 1-9 5978/2





Ilam from Bunster Hill



Ilam from the east

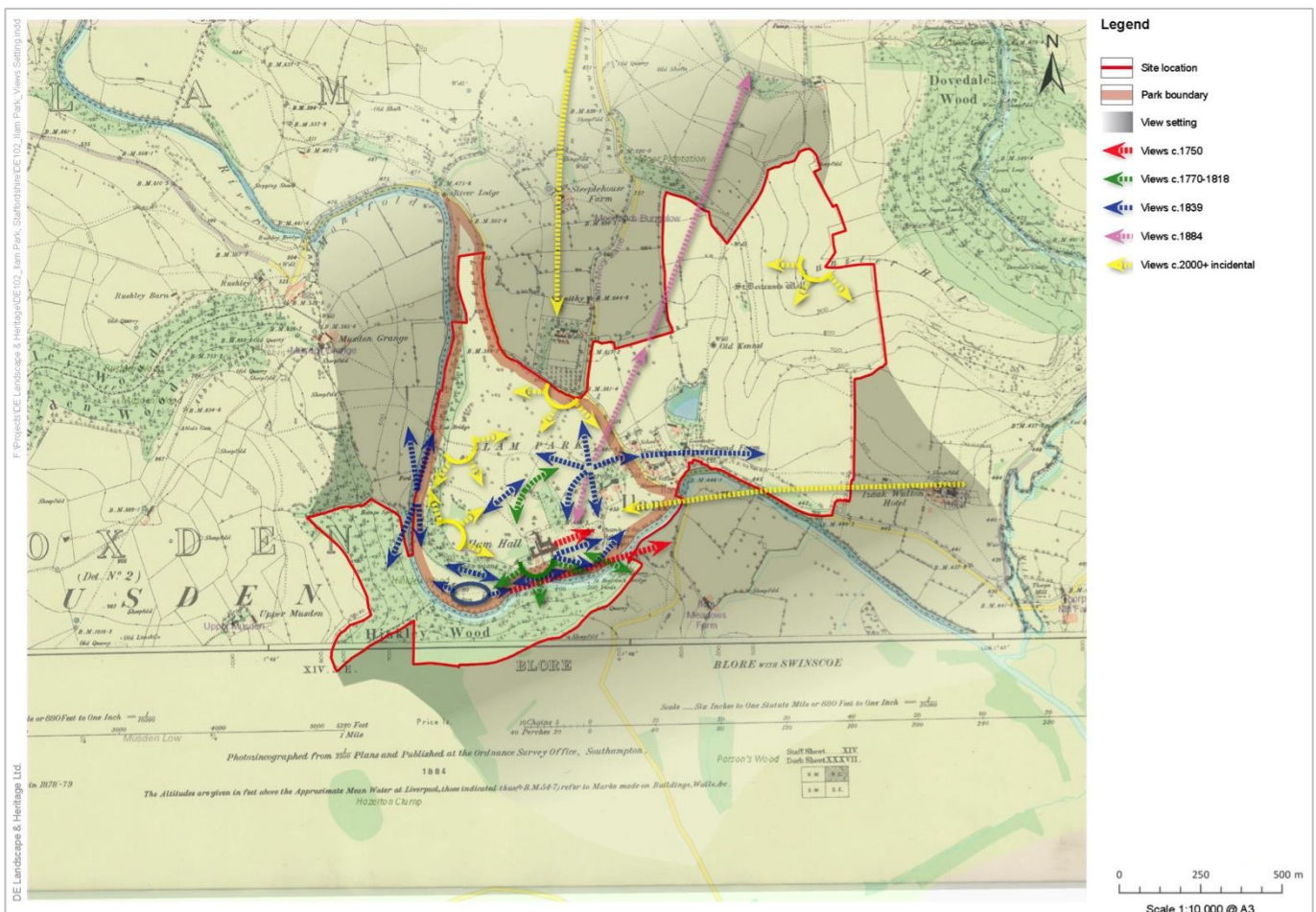


Fig. 73 The Evolution of Historic Views and Setting [NTS] (based on First Edition Ordnance Survey). Reproduced at A3 in Appendix 1.

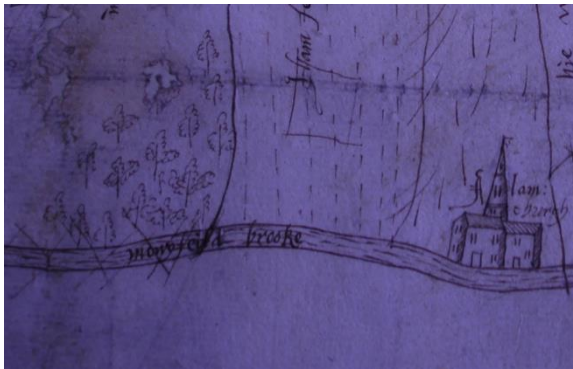
## Tree Planting

### Hinkley Wood

- 7.51 The woodland at Ilam Park originates in the ancient wildwood, which had gradually been cleared for agriculture from before the Roman period. By c1700 it appears that woodland was increasingly restricted to the steep-sided valleys and ravines, which were too steep to clear. Elements of these ancient woodlands still survive in the area of Hinkley Wood as pockets of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites.



- 7.52 Early maps and surveys of Ilam, such as the Mapp of Ilam (mid seventeenth century), Yates (1775) and Greenwood (1818) all record woodland at Ilam to the south or west of the river and generally contained to the south of Wheel Orchard. This arrangement reflects the findings of a survey of 2005 (Fig 74), which records clusters of lime trees within the wood. The lime trees, which are predominantly Small-leaved Lime *Tilia cordata*, are the key indicators of the ancient woodland.
- 7.53 However, the eighteenth and early nineteenth century accounts of Ilam by Samuel Johnson, William Gilpin, Richard Colt Hoare and others all appear to describe established woodland at Ilam enclosing the river on its south side. These observations may have focussed on the area south of Wheel Orchard or it may be that timber was felled c.1807 to help clear the Port's debts<sup>241</sup>.



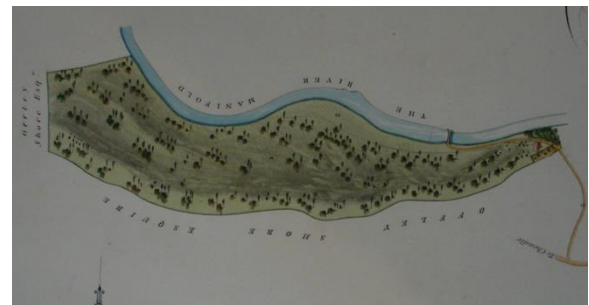
Woodland detail, The Mapp of Ilam mid C17



Detail of Yates map of Staffordshire, 1775



Greenwood's map of Staffordshire, 1818



Hinkley Wood, Cobb survey, 1839

<sup>241</sup> General View of Agricultural, Staffordshire, Pitt W, 1796 WSL: EA/7 1-9 5978/2Pitt noted 'stumps of very large ash' sawn down on Bunster.



*Hinkley Wood above Target Meadow*



*The western extent of Hinkley/Musden Wood opposite Paradise Woods*

- 7.54 Cobb's survey of 1839 certainly records a relatively sparse planting within the area of Hinkley Wood. This suggests that Watts-Russell was instrumental in extending or augmenting the woodland to the west of the house, possibly as a deliberate foil to the meadows on the garden side<sup>242</sup>. While limes can layer themselves across the ground, the existing clusters suggest more lime was planted by the mid nineteenth century, together with beech and some conifer, to create the impressive mixed woodland of today. This new woodland would have also screened the earlier evidence of industry; the quarries, charcoal burn platforms and tracks, that survive in the wood and which may have been considered unsightly by Watts-Russell.

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<sup>242</sup> This contrast is increased by the formalization of Paradise Walk, which creates a virtual 'frame' to this landscape 'picture'.

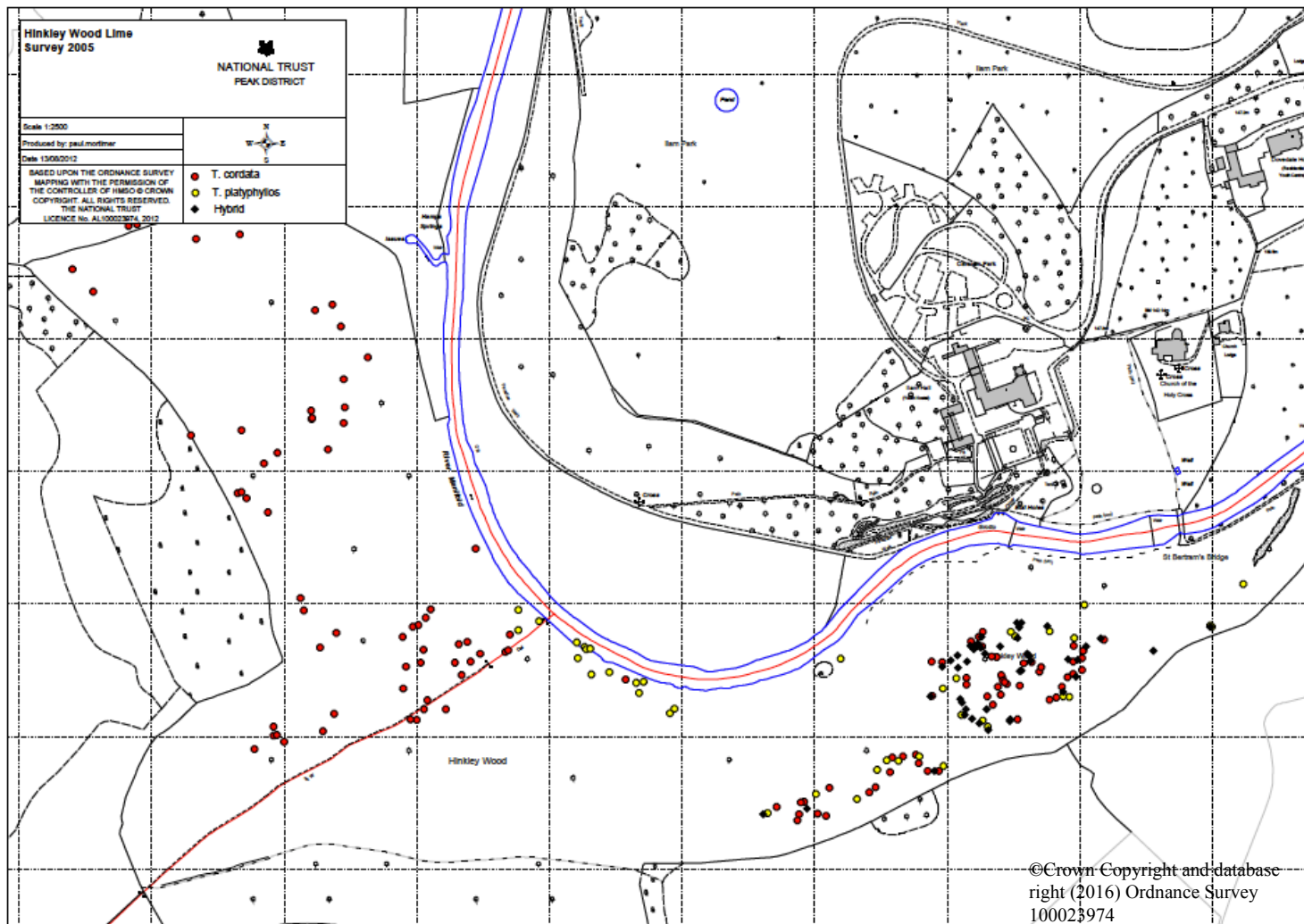


Fig. 74. Survey showing clusters of lime within Hinkley Wood, The National Trust [NTS]

- 7.55 The existing underplanting, which includes hazel, some hawthorn and holly, with alder occurring along the river, also evidences earlier land use as coppice for hurdles and charcoal, winter forage and game cover. Large surviving coppice stools show this use was at least retained in part by Watts-Russell and may have been actively extended towards the north end of the wood, near Musden Grange, where younger coppice survives.

#### *The Paradise and Dovecot woods*

- 7.56 These three areas of woodland date from at least 1839 when Cobb records them. The Paradise Woods are likely to be augmented natural woodland; the Common lime along Paradise Walk are a certain addition, and it is likely that the high percentage of yew found in these woodlands is also partly a design decision.





*Ornamentals on the southern edge of Dovecote Wood*



*Linear plantations extend the landscape northeast*

- 7.57 Dovecot Wood was most likely planted to screen the mass of the kitchen garden from the main drive. The woodland retains a highly ornamental character with cedars, yew (including later Irish yew), purple beech and beech.

#### *Other Woodland*

- 7.58 Beyond the park woodland is confined to the higher ground, with the mixed linear plantations of Sandbroom Wood and Moor Plantation marking a transition from farmland to upland and helping to conclude the design composition of the park. To the south, Watts-Russell may have also augmented the 'borrowed' woodlands, such as Hazelton Clump, to benefit his landscape composition, but this is unsubstantiated.
- 7.59 Woodland, which dates from at least 1839, surrounds the farm pond. Within the woodland there is evidence of a boathouse, bridges, rockwork and ornamental planting, such as Irish Yew and, possibly, Cappadocian maple also show that this woodland had taken on an amenity function by c1900 as an outlier to the park.
- 7.60 However, the woodland recorded in 1756 by Mrs Delany on the lower slopes of Bunster and Thorpe Cloud has significantly reduced. Delany's sketch clearly shows the planting on the 'feathered hills', which was gradually cleared for grazing. She observes the predominance of broadleaves in the planting 'all Beautiful hues of Various greens' and the lack of Scotch firs, which were evidently unfashionable<sup>243</sup>. Fashion, however, changes and conifers become an increasing part of the Ilam landscape from 1839 when Cobb depicts them, albeit more in the wider landscape outside the park. The use of any conifers was however, far subtler than modern forestry, a block of which to the west of Ilam Park is one of the few discordant elements of the landscape setting today.

#### *Parkland and Garden Trees*

- 7.61 Parkland trees at Ilam Park can be divided into five main groups, the first being the pre-park trees. These are the mature ash, some with evidence of pollarding, which stand on the enclosure field boundaries, or now isolated within the parkland. The park also contains some large and very old hawthorns, often gathered in loose groups along the south and northern margins of the park, which may also pre-date the park.

<sup>243</sup> The poet and gardener, William Mason, was clear that native broadleaf woodland was the correct form of tree planting for the English Landscape, a view Mrs Delany appeared to share. NRL: Mrs Delany's Letters Vol VI, 1779-86, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1780



*Ash marking old field boundaries in the park*



*Old hawthorn growing in the park*

- 7.62 Trees planted by the Ports within the park are probably restricted to yew on the rock bank and within what became Paradise Woods. There is little evidence for parkland trees of this period, such as oak or Sweet Chestnut, in the park to the north of the gardens, although some senescent sycamores survive in the area of the Watts-Russell kitchen garden.
- 7.63 The main phase of tree planting within the park came between c1809-1875 and formed part of the improvements of Jesse Watts-Russell. Cobb recorded the first phase of planting which saw relatively little tree planting taking place in the park, the majority being confined to its northern area. This period saw the introduction of oak, lime and some beech<sup>244</sup>. Planting also occurred in the area of 'pleasure ground' to the northeast of the house where exotic trees such as cedars were established. In 1851 William Adams<sup>245</sup> recorded a Weeping ash near the Boil Holes. These particular trees had become very fashionable and were a favourite of Joseph Paxton, Head Gardener at Chatsworth House.



*Senescent sycamore in the area of the first kitchen garden*



*C19 ornamentals in the park/pleasure grounds*

- 7.64 A second phase of planting appears contemporary with the village improvements c1840. This saw the introduction of more ornamental species, such as purple beech<sup>246</sup> and lime in Wheel Orchard and possibly some Horse chestnuts. Tree planting also took place around the Church, which included Monkey Puzzle and other conifers. An outstanding conundrum are the limes along Paradise Walk which, in age, appear to date to the mid nineteenth

<sup>244</sup> Beech and lime form the ornamental approach to Wood Lodge.

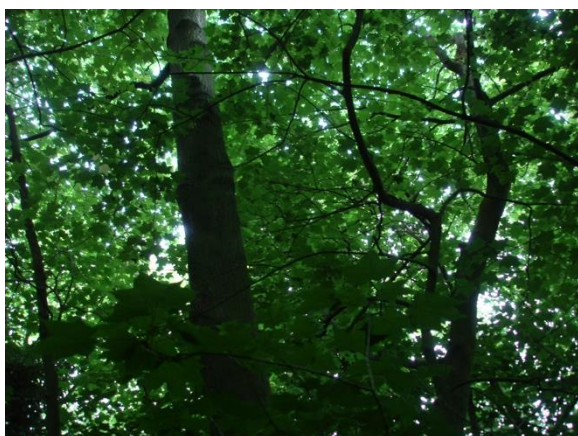
<sup>245</sup> The Gem of the Peak, Adam W, 1851 WSL: PN4246

<sup>246</sup> Fine examples of purple beech are found in the northern edge of the entrance shrubbery, on the lawn below the house and along the walk to River Lodge. The tree on the lawn is no. 119 on the 2016 tree map (not included here), the others are not recorded.



century, are described in Sales Particulars of 1910<sup>247</sup> but are not recorded on any map until well into the twentieth century<sup>248</sup>.

- 7.65 It is difficult to differentiate planting made by Watts-Russell in his later life from that of the Hanburys. However, it is suggested that the large Purple beech and variegated sycamore within the area of earlier 'pleasure ground' are late nineteenth century plantings, as is the Lucombe oak near the northwest footbridge, Irish yew in Dovecote Wood and the Pond woodland where they grow near mature Cappadocian maples.
- 7.66 Since c1930 tree planting has been generally confined to limited restoration and replication, with an increase in amenity planting to help soften the impact of areas such as the car park and caravan park. There are some incongruous trees such as the White Poplar opposite the Boil Holes, a small Weeping elm within the park to the west of Dovedale House and a fast maturing Silver-Leaved lime, known as the Bandstand, on the lawn by the river. A grove of oaks has also been planted within the area of the Hanbury's second kitchen garden, which shelters the area of the café and Italian Garden from weather from the northwest.



*Maple near the Farm Pond*



*Silver-Leaf Lime on the lawn*

### Shrubs and ornamentals

- 7.67 Unfortunately very little is known about ornamental planting that may have occurred in the gardens at Ilam Park despite the frequent description of its 'beautiful gardens'. The survival of mid eighteenth century records of flower parterres close to the house and gifts from Mrs Delany of various seeds, suggests that some form of hothouse may have existed during the latter stages of the Port ownership for propagation and display.
- 7.68 William Pitt offers a useful account in 1796 that recorded 'Nature with scarcely any assistance from Art, has furnished a profusion of flowers'<sup>249</sup>, such as the native Herb Robert and scabious (probably the common Devil's Bit Scabious), growing alongside the zig-zag paths and ransoms growing in the meadow near the river. This is significant as if the Ports were slavishly following the fashionable ideas of the floristic shrubbery, exhibited at sites such as Painshill, Hagley Park or Bulstrode Park, the use of flowering ornamentals such as lilac, jasmine, sweet broom, honeysuckle and even roses could have been expected.
- 7.69 By 1839, the emergence of both a large kitchen garden and the formal 'Italian Garden' suggest that the Watts-Russell's were ornamenting at least parts of the landscape in the fashion of the day. The provision of such heat and shelter would have supported the use of ornamental bedding of annual or half-hardy plants, such as salvias and pelargoniums; the

<sup>247</sup> Brief Particulars with Photographs of a Landed Estate for Disposal, c1911 WSL: S.C. 5/2/42. A copy is also held at the National Trust office, Ilam Park (c.1909/10)

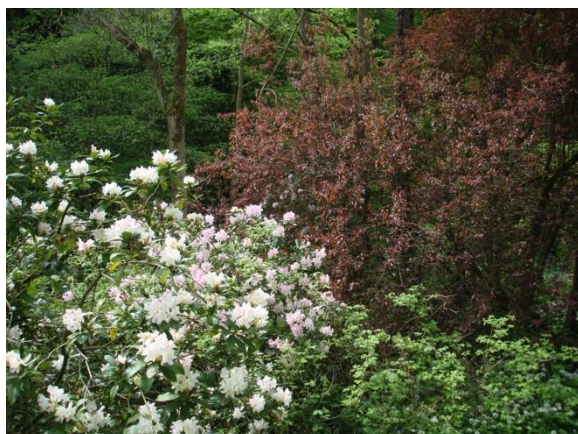
<sup>248</sup> The most accurate way of dating the limes is dendro dating but as this is invasive the potential risk to the trees would need to be considered ahead of survey. The ring count of any felled trees would, however, also provide an accurate record.

<sup>249</sup> A General View of Agriculture in the County of Staffordshire, Pitt. W, 1796 p.193. WSL: EA/7 1-9 5978/2



use of standard and exotic plants, such as roses, fuchsias and phormiums and houseplants such as orchids and ferns.

- 7.70 The one record of Watts-Russell receiving exotic seeds also testifies to the presence of rare and expensive plants at Ilam Park, at least under glass. Unfortunately, few notably exotic shrubs and ornamentals survive in the gardens, such as species rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias, which could be anticipated at a site such as Ilam Park.
- 7.71 A small area of ornamental planting does survive on the south side of the river to the east of the bridge. This includes bamboo, purple leaved plum and at least two varieties of rhododendron. However their age and form suggests they are no older than c.1950.



Relic ornamentals on the edge of Hinkley Wood



Emergent shooting cover in Paradise Woods

- 7.72 Shooting cover, such as Butcher's broom, snowberry, lilac and False nutmeg is present in the Paradise and Dovecote woods and, to a lesser degree, to the south of the river. While some of this planting may well date from the late nineteenth century it has naturalised in the landscape and now threatens to erode its ornamental character. Some plants, such as *Rhododendron ponticum* and Himalayan Balsam have become invasive and are now actively managed.

#### Built Landscape features

- 7.73 The buildings within the park at Ilam are generally functional and nearly always attractive. Two distinct periods of build are present i) c1830 the Gothic Revival of John Shaw and Edward Blore and ii) the more ornamental Decorated Gothic of George Gilbert Scott c1840. It is interesting that the Watts-Russell's kept the different architectural styles and did not replace the earlier gate screen and Rectory, for instance, with new interpretations.
- 7.74 Apart from the house, the greatest architectural loss in the landscape is the kitchen gardens. Virtually no sign of the mid century garden now survives apart from the Pepperpot Tower but the walls, footings and some detailing of the second garden do<sup>250</sup>. These evidence high quality stone and brick showing that the buildings were very much part of the family's enjoyment of Ilam and were not purely utilitarian.
- 7.75 The key built feature of Ilam Park was **Ilam Hall**. While what remains is impressive and conveys a sense of a country house, the loss of the mass and stature of Ilam Hall reduces the effect of the intended nineteenth century landscape composition. Likewise the loss of the first kitchen garden, except for the Pepperpot tower, and the later Hanbury garden, denies an appreciation of the level of horticultural professionalism, which was undoubtedly displayed at Ilam. The built features, which were closely associated with the house, such as the loggia, Italian Garden and pepper pot tower contribute a slightly surreal character to the landscape but one that continues the picturesque tradition.

<sup>250</sup> No survey was undertaken at the garden site at Garden House Farm for the purpose of this study, it being outside the study area and National Trust ownership.

- 7.76 Four **lodges** survive at Ilam: Gate, Wood, Church and River. These buildings represent the two periods of build, c1836 and c1840. Gate and Wood lodges served a more traditional purpose, as entrance lodges with associated gateways, screens and railings, whereas Church and River lodge appeared to be more ornamental and associated with internal drives or footpaths. The Gardener's Cottage of the first Kitchen Garden also survives and could be considered a secondary lodge.



*Reduced hall and Pepperpot Tower from the south*



*Dressed stone steps, a relic of a Hanbury glasshouse*



*Wood Lodge from the northwest*



*Gate Lodge from the south*

- 7.77 Two **Ha ha**'s are found at Ilam Park. The first lies between the Boil Holes and Target Meadow, and effectively concluded the west end of the gardens. This low rubble structure is recorded by Cobb in 1839 but believed to date to c1770 as part of the improvements made by John Port. The second Ha ha is contemporary to the improvements made by Watts-Russell c1809-1836. It is a similarly low rubble stone structure but extends from the east end of the main drive and around Dovecote Wood to the north. A wide earth bank was raised to the east of the northern section of the Ha ha to screen the feature from the drive.



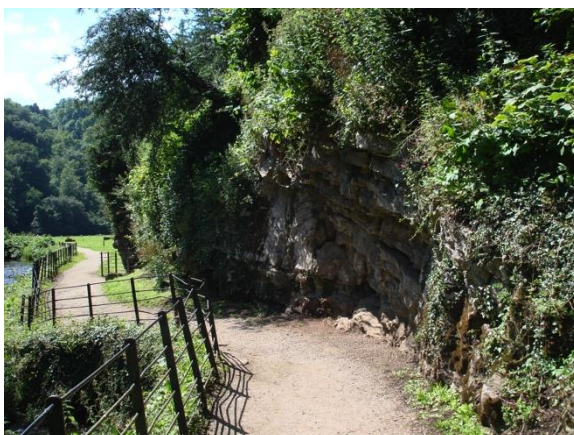


*Ha ha at the east end of Target Meadow*



*Ha ha and bank around Dovecote Wood*

- 7.78 **St Bertram's Bridge** and **Ilam Church** both function as features in the landscape. The bridge carried a road into the early park and towards the village from the late eighteenth century. Cobb records the removal of this road by 1839, the route south of the river being retained as a private drive. The church was retained in the view from both houses, Watts-Russell chose to emphasise its contribution to the landscape by commissioning George Gilbert Scott to improve it.
- 7.79 A low stone/render wall bounds **Paradise Walk** along its south side separating it from the meadow. The boldness of this landscape feature is accentuated by the perceived naturalism of the surrounding landscape; the wall (and walk) effectively separating the visitor from the landscape, inviting them to look at the landscape almost as a painting in a gallery. This feature postdates 1839, Cobb appearing to record railings in this area, with which the lower unrendered courses of the wall may be associated. The wall probably dates c1840 with the second phase of landscape improvements, which included the relocation of the Battle Stone and the creation of a new diagonal path nearby.
- 7.80 The key 'natural' feature of Ilam's garden is the rocky cliff between the house and river. This has been cut into at different periods with **zig-zag paths** dating from at least the mid eighteenth century. That no reference is made to a **Grotto** until after 1774 suggests that this feature, on the lower walk and adjacent to the Boil Holes, is contemporary with those particular improvements. In contrast, **a flight of dressed-stone steps** accesses the higher terraces from the west, which in quality and design suggests a later addition post 1800. However, as this is one of the main accesses to the Boil Holes, it is also likely that these steps replaced an earlier, and perhaps more 'rustic', example. Other steps and terraces are known to exist beneath overgrowth to the west of the main area, which may also evidence an expansion of this feature in the nineteenth century.



*The rock cliff from the east*



*The Boil Holes from the west*



- 7.81 The key improvements to **the river** occurred c1772-74. This work pushed the river north, its original south bank surviving along the edge of Hinkley Wood. The drama of the **Boil Holes**, both pre and post improvement, would have created audible as well as visual interest below the rocks. Any winter flood in the river channel would have accentuated this effect. In 1839 Cobb recorded one **weir** on the river to the west of St. Bertram's Bridge. This weir contributed to the character of the river by creating a body of slower moving and more reflective water in contrast to the riffles and small rapids alongside Wheel Orchard. The addition of a second weir by 1886, closer to the Boil Holes, would have accentuated this and the water between the two may be the area described as a swimming pool in the Sales Particulars of 1926. This area of slow moving water would have certainly reflected the hall when viewed from the south bank of the river. The weirs also contributed additional drama to the experience of the river.
- 7.82 The extension of a **retaining wall** c. 1772-74, along the north bank of the river to the east of St. Bertram's Bridge, is understood to be part of the improvements of Watts-Russell c1836 – 1884 which further formalised the river. Several groups of level stones lie within the riverbed, which suggest **fishing 'pegs'**. However, as no evidence has been found to support these interpretations, they must remain unsubstantiated.



*The eastern weir*



*Part of the retaining wall within Wheel Orchard*

- 7.83 **Other built features** within the landscape hold the potential for dual use ornamental and amenity use. The Boil Holes partly emerge in an enclosed rectangular tank, which may have served as a cold bath, a popular addition to Picturesque landscapes. The rectangular form of St. Bertram's Well suggests a similar use.



*St. Bertram's Well in the pleasure grounds*



*The Boil Holes, a potential cold bath*

- 7.84 Outside the park the landscape within the study area is generally without specific built landscape features. There are a few ruined or deteriorated structures, such as **a building near the farm pond** and **St. Bertram's Well** on Bunster Hill, but generally built features are confined to **dry-stone walls** and **grit-stone gate posts**.
- 7.85 A good selection of **wrought and cast iron fences and gates** survives at Ilam Park, within and without the park, which stylistically evidence at least two periods of installation dating from the early and mid nineteenth century.

## 8. Statement of Significance

- 8.1 The Ilam Park Conservation Plan, 2016 contains the following Statement of Significance:

*The landscape of Ilam Park with its layers of historic development, set in one of the most picturesque limestone landscapes in the Peak District is the principal driving force for this management plan. The views out of Ilam Park into the wider landscape are amongst the finest in the Peak and must be restored and preserved. The magnificence of the landscape has inspired people, given fulfilment and been a cultural influence for hundreds of years.*

*Within this landscape, many of the components are of distinction in their own right, in particular the woodland for its internationally designated habitat, and also the nationally important archaeology. The quality of the components contribute to the landscape framework.*

*The established recreational experience of Ilam, in particular the opportunity that so many thousands of people have to stay in this place as young people, has put Ilam Park close to people's hearts as a fond memory of happy times in a beautiful natural landscape. (Chapter 4, p. 13)*

- 8.2 The purpose of this present study is the history of the landscape and therefore Historic England's *Conservation Principles*<sup>251</sup> have been used to refine this statement to help establish its local and national context and importance. *Conservation Principles* considers historic, evidential, aesthetic and communal heritage values.

### *Historic Value*

- 8.3 Ilam Park illustrates the gradual evolution of a modest upland estate into an important example of a Picturesque landscape and may include an early example of the savage picturesque<sup>252</sup>. The opportunities afforded by the unusually attractive natural landscape were fine-tuned to create a subtle but highly effective landscape composition.
- 8.4 Evidence of pre- land use and occupation exists in the locality of Ilam. This has been revealed through the nineteenth century excavations of barrows and, more recently, by the Peak District National Park's archaeological surveys. These surveys have also identified Romano-British finds in the area of Ilam.
- 8.5 Evidence of Anglo Saxon occupation at Ilam is primarily concerned with the tomb of St Bertram in Ilam Church and its associated wells. Three fine examples of Anglo Saxon crosses are also found at Ilam Park, two within the churchyard and the Battle Stone within the garden.
- 8.6 The medieval village of Ilam, and its common fields, is evidenced by extensive surviving earthworks within the present park and by associated documents, such as the mid seventeenth century, 'Mapp of Ilam'.
- 8.7 From the mid sixteenth century the successive owners of Ilam, the Ports, Watts-Russells, Hanburys and the National Trust, have each made their own additions and alterations to the landscape. Two key periods of landscape design have been identified<sup>253</sup>, mid-late eighteenth century and the early-mid nineteenth century, when the form of the present park, garden and local landscape were established.

<sup>251</sup> Published as *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance*, English Heritage, 2008

<sup>252</sup> The savage picturesque is widely associated with sites such as Piercefield Park, Monmouthshire and Downton Abbey, Herefordshire where the natural landscape of the Wye and Teme valleys were embellished with walks and small landscape buildings as part of an overall experience. The improvements at Piercefield date from c1750 and at Downton from c1770 while the walks at Ilam Park are associated with William Congreve in the late C17 which, if substantiated, would make them a particularly early example of this form of landscape.

<sup>253</sup> Should further evidence of the 'savage picturesque' be found at Ilam it would markedly increase its historic value as an early example of this type of landscape design.



- 8.8 Ilam Park is associated with key cultural and historic figures, such as St. Bertram, William Congreve, Samuel Johnson, William Gilpin, Thomas Whately, Mrs Delany, possibly Jane Austen and many other landscape tourists. The agricultural improvers William Pitt and Arthur Young also visited and recorded Ilam, while architects John Shaw, Edward Blore and George Gilbert Scott designed its buildings and the artists John Buckler, Thomas Peploe Wood and Francis Chantrey recorded or embellished them.
- 8.9 Through Mrs Delany, Ilam is associated with many other key individuals of the eighteenth century including King George III and Queen Charlotte, the Duchess of Portland, Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, the Granville/Lyttleton families of Calwich and Hagley Hall, William Mason, Erasmus Darwin, Joseph Banks and James Bolton.
- 8.10 The purchase of Ilam Hall and parts of Ilam Park by Sir Robert McDougall is significant as it demonstrated both twentieth century philanthropy and a growing interest in the protection of, and public access to, land of outstanding natural beauty. This was personified by the emergence of the National Trust as the premier conservation charity of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

#### *Evidential Value*

- 8.11 Extensive earthworks within the park and early features such as the stone crosses, St. Bertram's wells and the Saint's stone covered coffin, evidence the early history of Ilam.
- 8.12 The first key phase of landscape improvement is evidenced by the remains of the original house terrace, the 'improved' rock cliff with its steps, viewing terrace and Grotto, the realigned river, the Boil Holes and the associated retaining riverside wall, St. Bertram's Bridge and possible emparkment to the north of the house.
- 8.13 The second key phase of landscape improvement is evidenced by the remains of the new house and its service buildings such as the stables and pepper pot tower, the general area of the kitchen garden, the realigned house terrace, new circulation in the park in the form of drives and realigned footpaths (including the new river bridge outside the park), estate buildings including lodges and gate screens, the consolidation of the parkland through the inclusion of Wheel Orchard, the extension of the river's retaining wall and tree planting in the pleasure grounds, park and, possibly, Hinkley Wood. Trees of this period survive within the landscape today. This period also saw the establishment of the surviving pattern of fields and woodland in the outer estate, and the creation or embellishment of features such as Garden House Farm. This work is recorded on the Cobb survey, 1839 and the tithe map, 1839.
- 8.14 A refinement of this layout occurred in the mid nineteenth century, which saw the development of a new village, the Watts-Russell memorial, additional lodges and work to the church, to maximise its picturesque effect within the landscape.
- 8.15 Changes in the late nineteenth century are evidenced by the loss of the kitchen garden and the emergence of a smaller facility close to the house, where walls and building bases survive. Further tree planting also took place at this time, which is evidenced by surviving trees in the landscape.
- 8.16 Changes of the twentieth century are similarly evidenced by the loss of the house and adaptation of the surviving buildings into a Youth Hostel and visitor services. The demolition saw a reconfiguration of the site of the conservatory and Italian Garden as part of a new garden, while the early Victorian kitchen garden was resurrected as a car park and caravan park.
- 8.17 The historic record evidences all of the key phases of improvement at Ilam Park. This includes archives held by the Staffordshire and Derbyshire archive services, the William Salt Library, Newport Reference Library and the Bodleian Library. While the archive is incomplete it does contain some unusually fine and interesting records such as the

correspondence of Mrs Delany and information on the transfer of Ilam Park to the National Trust.

### *Aesthetic Value*

- 8.18 The natural and augmented beauty of Ilam Park has inspired many works of art and literature. Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* is particularly associated with Ilam with the river valley posing as either Abissinia, or the Happy Valley of the 'master'. Similarly, it has been suggested that Ilam Park may have coloured Jane Austen's description of Mr Darcy's country estate, Pemberley, in *Pride and Prejudice*, while the local landscape inspired writers such as George Eliot and John Ruskin amongst others.
- 8.19 The peculiar juxtaposition of the woodland valley and the distinct form of Thorpe Cloud makes Ilam Park particularly significant in the evolution of art and design theory. The champion of the Picturesque, William Gilpin, used Ilam to discuss and refine his theories. The critic Thomas Whately did likewise and gives Ilam its own section in his highly influential work, *Observations on Modern Gardening*. The artists Thomas Smith and James Mason, who captured the proposed landscape improvements at Ilam in the two popular engravings, similarly promoted the correct 'form' of the picturesque composition.
- 8.20 The Smith/Mason view has additional significance in being one of the images chosen to decorate the Green Frog dinner service, made for Empress Catherine the Great of Russia by Josiah Wedgwood.
- 8.21 The picturesque quality of Ilam was also captured by amateur artists, such as Mrs Delany, and by nationally recognised figures such as John Buckler and, particularly, John Peploe Wood.
- 8.22 While little is known about the art collections of the respective owners, their wealth and social standing suggests that they may have commissioned or collected more representations of Ilam, or of its occupants. The John Opie portrait of Mary Port evidences this.

### *Communal Value*

- 8.23 Ilam Park has permitted limited public access since the mid eighteenth century when people of rank or association were able to visit the pleasure grounds. In the nineteenth century Jesse Watts-Russell even extended this welcome to the principal rooms of his house.
- 8.24 The retention and embellishment of the village at Ilam has sustained an unusually close communal association between the house, park and the village. While this is not unusual in itself that the village is so relatively unchanged from c1850 only increases its communal value as an attractive and functioning estate village.
- 8.25 The use of the Ilam Hall as one of the principal youth hostels in the Peak District attributes high communal value. Similarly, the development of visitor's facilities within the park extends the use and welcome of Ilam Park to those who may not regularly visit historic sites.
- 8.26 The ownership of Ilam Park by the National Trust places it within one of the most extensive and important property portfolios in the United Kingdom, to the benefit of the Trust's members and other paying visitors. The landscape enables the Trust to demonstrate new and relevant land management approaches, which inform wider agendas of sustainable land management, wildlife conservation and public engagement.
- 8.27 The communal significance of Ilam Park is recognised by statutory designations. It lies within the Peak District National Park, the oldest National Park in England, and contains Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings. The village and part of the park form the Ilam Conservation Area.

## Assessment of Significance and the Case for Registration

- 8.28 Ilam Park is arguably well protected by planning designations. It falls within a National Park, with part of the designed landscape also falling within a Conservation Area. In addition specific features within the landscape are recognised as Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings<sup>254</sup>. However, the historic designed landscape is not addressed in its entirety or as an asset in itself<sup>255</sup>. It is proposed therefore that Ilam Park may benefit from inclusion on the National Heritage List as a *Registered Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest*.
- 8.29 In order to make a case for registration, the significance of the landscape will be tested against the criteria set out by Historic England's *Parks and Gardens Selection Guide, Rural Landscapes*<sup>256</sup>. The following sub-headings are taken from the Guide.
- 8.30 The Guide sets out 'Overarching considerations', divided into date ranges, against which Ilam Park is considered in the following manner:

### *Date and rarity*

- Sites laid out between 1750 – 1840 where enough of the layout survives to reflect the original design
- 8.31 Chapters Three and Seven of this study demonstrate the evolution of the designed landscape at Ilam and show that key phases of the mid-late eighteenth century and early-mid nineteenth century survive with a high level of intactness, evidenced through site survey and archive research. The designed landscape of Ilam Park is legible as Georgian pleasure grounds overlain by a mid nineteenth century landscape park and formal garden.

### *Further considerations*

1. Sites which were influential in the development of taste, whether through reputation or reference in literature;
  2. Sites which are early or representative examples of a style of layout or a type of site, or the work of a designer (amateur or professional) of national importance;
  3. Sites having an association with significant person. [Given examples include Jane Austen (Chawton House, Faringdon, Hampshire) and Gilbert White (The Wakes, Selbourne, Hampshire)];
  4. Site with a strong group value with other heritage assets.
- 8.32 Taking these considerations in turn:

### *Point One*

- Ilam Park scores very highly in this regard through being singled out by William Gilpin as a site which helped refine his theories on the Picturesque. Gilpin's observations also help date the key landscape improvement, the realignment of the river. Ilam was similarly used by Thomas Whately to explore his ideas about landscape design;
- The Picturesque beauty of Ilam was promoted by visitors such as Mrs Delany, to whom it fulfilled the criteria of a polite naturalistic landscape of the mid eighteenth century. Mrs Delany's opinion was shaped and shared by other influential tastemaker's such as

<sup>254</sup> Ilam Park is also recognized as a site of high wildlife value through related designations such as SAC, SSSI, ASNW and PAWS but these are not generally considered when making a case for the registration of a historic designed landscape.

<sup>255</sup> Ilam Hall was apparently included on a non-statutory register compiled by the Staffordshire Gardens Trust in 1994 but this document has not been found (see footnote 9). The Peak District National Park keeps no register of undesignated parks and gardens within its boundaries.

<sup>256</sup> Published as English Heritage guidance in 2012 but available [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/selection-criteria/pag-selection](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/selection-criteria/pag-selection)



the Lyttletons at Hagley Hall, The Duchess of Portland at Bulstrode House and the gardener/poet William Mason;

- Ilam has a substantial association with popular literature from William Congreve to Samuel Johnson and, possibly, Jane Austen; the latter two appearing to take specific inspiration from the landscape for *Rasselas* and *Pride and Prejudice* respectively.
- Watts-Russell's improvements of c1830 and c1840 are significant in helping to shape the landscape park of the mid nineteenth century. He combined different architectural styles, a mix of formal and more naturalistic landscaping, scientific and technological improvement (in the form of improved land and water management), a new village and a large productive garden. These improvements are broadly contemporary with similar improvements undertaken at leading estates such as Chatsworth House, and interpreted in a more modest manner nationwide, which reflect the romantic but pragmatic approach of the Victorian age.

#### *Point Two*

- It is unproven but it is suggested<sup>257</sup> that Ilam Park may be one of the earliest examples of the 'savage picturesque' of the late seventeenth century. This claim has been made in association with William Congreve who may have informed subtle but influential changes to the river valley;
- The association of Ilam Park with the development of the Picturesque is substantiated by this present study. The Thomas Smith/James Mason engravings, Gilpin and Whately's observations and sketches, the accounts of numerous other travellers and the use of the Smith/Mason image on the Green Frog dinner service, all show the greater appreciation of Ilam Park as an influential and early example of a Picturesque landscape of national importance;
- Similarly, the improvements of the nineteenth century place Ilam Park among the notable upland Gentlemen's estates developed by both the aristocracy and new industrial wealth. These estates popularised 'alpine' or Revivalist architecture and the planting of newly introduced Asiatic or Pacific Northwest conifers. This fashion was promoted by Prince Albert and personified in the romantic Royal castle at Balmoral;
- Ilam Park is however unusual as it lacks evidence of the involvement of any known landscape designer. Nationally recognised architects such as John Shaw and George Gilbert Scott worked on the buildings but the landscape appears to be the work of the families themselves. However, it is apparent that the Ports, Watts-Russells and the Hanburys had access to the best nurseries and advice.

#### *Point Three*

- Research undertaken to inform this report has shown that Ilam has many associations with significant figures from at least the seventeenth century, be they writers, artists, architects, scientists and cultural commentators. The Port, Watts-Russell and Hanbury families all have local and national importance in their status as landowners, patrons and politicians. The association with Robert McDougall and the National Trust (and National Park) is also highly significant in recording the shift from a private to public landscape and the evolution of the Trust.

#### *Point Four*

- The landscape of Ilam Park has strong group value with the other heritage assets within it as it provides both the context and setting for them. The listed buildings and scheduled monuments would, arguably, have little purpose apart from the landscape

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<sup>257</sup> The Historic Gardens of Staffordshire, Mowl T, Barre, D 2009

while the village, which is the core of the conservation area, is a product of a specific design intent.

8.33 If compared with the registered sites included in Chapter Five, the significance of Ilam Park can also be summarised in the following ways:

- Like Chatsworth, Ilam Park evidences a long and very rich time depth where many different aspects of land management were retained as part of an evolving landscape design;
- However, unlike Chatsworth, Ilam Park has no record of association with any leading landscape designer. In this it is similar to Hafod and Doldowlod and can be considered a confident and very personal response to changing taste in landscape design;
- Whereas the landscape at Hafod can be considered an outstanding example of Picturesque taste, the experience of the landscape at Ilam actually contributed to the evolution of the ideas underpinning that aesthetic movement through its influence on its key promoters, Thomas Whately and William Gilpin. Ilam Park is a seminal landscape. The development of the landscapes at Chatsworth and Doldowlod were similarly shaped by these ideas;
- Like the other comparative landscapes, Ilam Park illustrates how a beautiful natural landscape, arranged around a river corridor, could be developed as a legible design composition. The improvements at Ilam may not be as ambitious, far reaching or, arguably, as well recorded as the works at Hafod or particularly Chatsworth but the physical achievement of the river improvements along the Manifold and in the area of the zig-zag paths are highly significant as examples of a partly engineered and primarily eighteenth century designed landscape;
- The refinement of the designed landscape at Ilam Park in the nineteenth century reflects a typical evolution of such sites to reflect new design ideas, to embrace new technology and plant introductions. Like Doldowlod, Ilam reflected industrial and mercantile wealth expressed by the Watts-Russell's and Hanbury's as a model landed estate of the utmost quality. The employment of established architects such as John Shaw, Edward Blore and particularly George Gilbert-Scott at Ilam enhanced the association of this new wealth with the established landed aristocracy such as the Devonshire's at Chatsworth, who used the same people to make similar improvements to their own estates;
- With regard to cultural associations, the calibre of artists, writers, surveyors, cultural commentators and tourists who visited Ilam Park are similar to those visiting the most celebrated destinations such as Chatsworth House. What is remarkable is how relatively unknown Ilam remained in the public imagination.

8.34 This exercise shows that Ilam Park does fulfil all of the relevant criteria to support its inclusion on the Register.

8.35 However, while registration is a statutory designation there are no specific statutory controls for registered parks and gardens unlike listed buildings or scheduled monuments. Despite this, the NPPF gives registered parks and gardens an equal status in the planning system with listed buildings and scheduled monuments (NPPF, paragraph 132)<sup>258</sup>.

8.36 In addition the NPPF recognises the contribution of undesignated heritage assets (paragraphs 135, 139 and 141) stating that the effect of development upon their significance is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

8.37 While the core and eastern section of the landscape at Ilam Park are arguably well protected by designation, it is suggested that the extension of Hinkley Wood to the west of the river and the park to the north of the house is potentially vulnerable, particularly to development within its setting. The registration of the area of the park as shown by Cobb in

<sup>258</sup> [www.communities.gov.uk/publication/planningandbuilding/nppf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publication/planningandbuilding/nppf)

1839, and ideally including the northeastern extension of c1900 together with the inclusion of the woodland extension, would better encapsulate the designed landscape at Ilam Park.

- 8.38 Alternatively, the existing conservation area boundary could be redrawn to extend to the west and northwest to capture the whole area of Target Meadow and its wooded surround. This approach would, however, still exclude the north park, which may lead to a perception of detachedness and lesser significance.

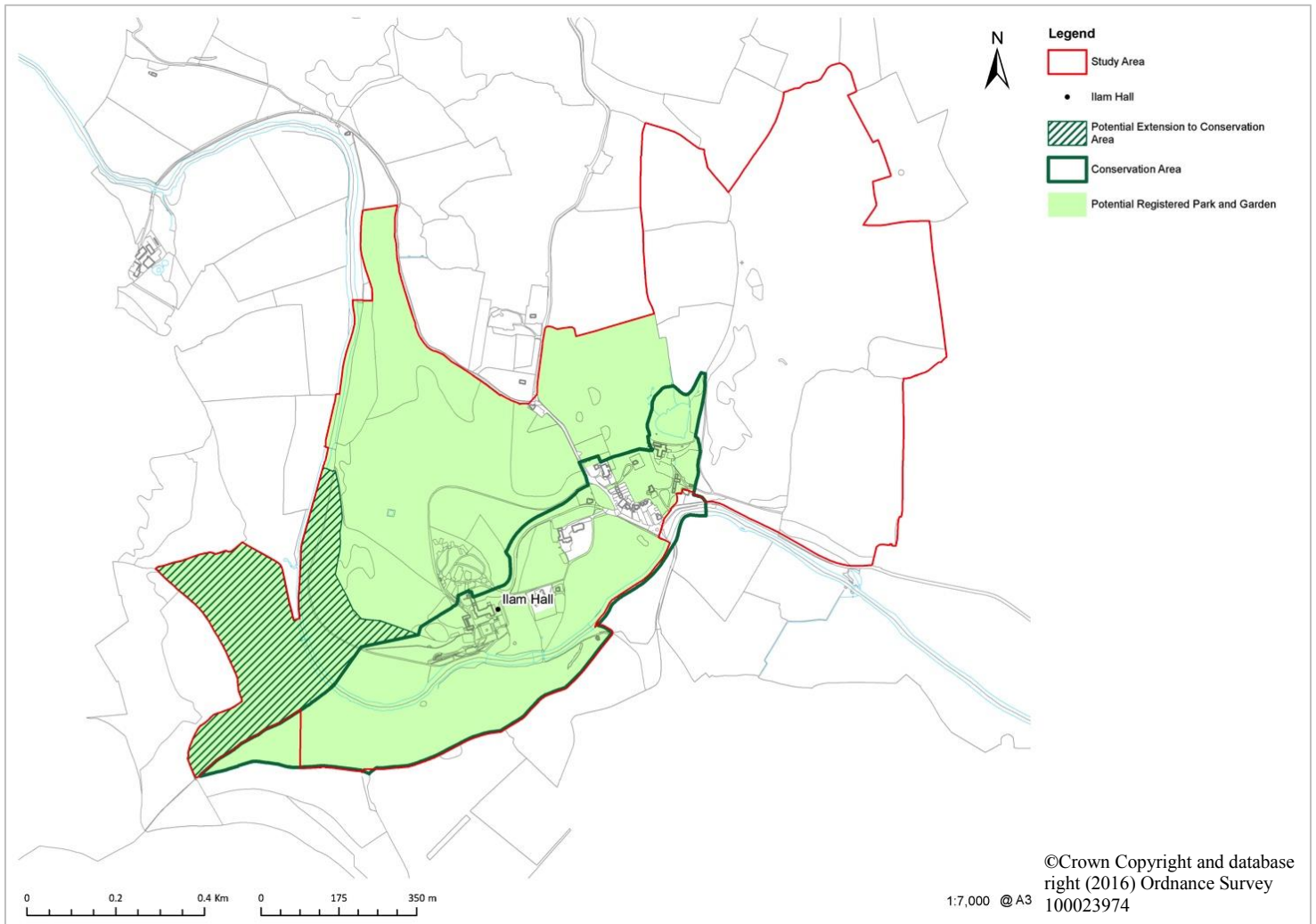


Fig. 75 Potential areas of registered park and garden and extension of conservation area [NTS]



## 9. Conservation Policies

9.1 The significance of Ilam Park, identified and described by the previous chapter, informs a new set of key conservation policies relating to the historic environment to help advise the National Trust's Conservation Plan for Ilam Park.

9.2 The policies are intended to secure the following ambition:

*To maintain and enhance the refined understanding of the landscape of Ilam Park by embedding this understanding in all future management and maintenance proposals and interpretation, to ensure the beauty of the historic designed landscape and Spirit of Place is preserved and enhanced.*

Key Policies	
1	To manage the historic designed landscape of Ilam Park as a holistic and influential picturesque composition, with particular reference to the landscape improvements of c1770-1900.
2	To repair, conserve and maintain any designated or undesignated features within the landscape, historical or ecological, in accordance with legislation and guidance, with the purpose of protecting their inherent significance and their contribution to the wider significance of Ilam Park as identified by this new research.
3	To protect the rural setting of Ilam Park by recognising the overarching significance of the wider borrowed landscape to the picturesque composition.
4	To enable visitors to have the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the historical, cultural, artistic and social significance of Ilam Park.
5	To seek opportunities for further research and investigation of the landscape to help the understanding of the development of the landscape.
6	To secure the long term future of the greater Ilam Park archive.

## 10. Outline Programme of Potential Management Actions

- 10.1 The key policies have informed the following management actions which are presented by character area (Fig. 8. and Appendix 2, Ilam Park Gazetteer). These actions will help conserve and enhance the significance of the historic designed landscape of Ilam Park. A set of site-wide overarching actions, presented by theme, introduces those identified by character area.
- 10.2 The actions are presented by priority: High, Medium, Low and on going. The overarching actions, by their nature, are all on going.
- 10.3 The actions, together with the inclusive and discrete projects (identified by **P**) which may be bundled up or treated individually, all offer opportunity to Ilam Park to better engage with the National Trust's strategy 'Playing Our Part' and the affiliated programme 'Land Outdoors and Nature'.

Overarching Actions	
<i>Research and Understanding</i>	
a)	To gather together existing archives to create one central depository, allowing for copying from national and local archives where necessary, ahead of removal off-site to an agreed location within the National Trust.
b)	To encourage staff members to allow their private archives to be copied, or acknowledged, within the collated archive to ensure the capture of information.
c)	To initiate a programme of oral recording of existing and past members of staff, long term volunteers and local residents as a contribution to the property archive.
<i>Conservation</i>	
d)	To conserve the surviving evidence of the pre park landscape in accordance with National Trust guidance and augment understanding with further targeted survey, analysis and recording.
e)	In advance of any proposed works, to clarify the below-ground archaeological potential of Ilam Park, using appropriate survey methods which may inform supporting documents such as a Heritage Impact Assessment.
f)	To update the National Trust HBSMR, PDNP HERA, Staffordshire HER as necessary following any new understanding.
g)	To undertake cyclical monitoring of the archaeological features.
h)	To appropriately manage the historic trees of Ilam Park.
i)	To maintain the species diversity and management regimes, such as pollarding or coppicing, found throughout the parkland and woodlands while accommodating the challenges of climate change, disease and vermin management.
j)	To adapt the planting palette with the aspiration of replanting ash at a future date on the emergence of a disease resistant clone.
k)	To monitor the condition of veteran trees, and to identify candidate veterans, by controlling land and visitor management to prevent stress from compaction, overcrowding or structural failure (e.g. through vehicular use, installation of utilities/site furniture, regular events).

l)	To manage deadwood within the park, in accordance with a zoning/deadwood management plan, by removing deadwood from the open park and, potentially, from beneath the tree canopies to less conspicuous areas of the landscape, unless there are strong ecological reasons for not doing so.
m)	Continue to monitor signs of known tree disease within the landscape (ash die-back, horse chestnut decline, phytophthora) and take action as appropriate, whilst also making sure site managers are aware of any new tree pests and diseases.
n)	To continue to monitor the designed landscape for any invasive or notifiable pest or weed, taking action as appropriate.
<b>Interpretation</b>	
o)	Highlight the cultural understanding of the Ports in their recognition of the contribution of the natural landscape, its maintenance and enhancement, to their landscape composition at Ilam Park.
p)	Recognise the social ambition of the Watts-Russell's in extending and consolidating the designed landscape around their new house.
q)	Provide better interpretation of lost features, such as the Port house and the kitchen gardens, as part of an enhanced interpretation of Ilam Park.
r)	Develop the interpretation and visitor offer of the landscape favouring non-intrusive methods to minimise the addition of site furniture across the property.
<b>Presentation and Access</b>	
s)	Recognise the contribution of the model village and wider farmland to the Victorian 'model' estate by leading by example in conservation-led management and by continuing to actively engage with the local community.
t)	Strengthen physical and visual links between the key landmarks of Ilam such as Target Meadow and the Boil Holes, Thorpe Cloud, Bunster, Hinkley and Musden woods, the village, the reduced hall, the church and St. Bertram's Bridge, to increase understanding of the intention of the historic circulation and to use that circulation to enhance an appreciation of the landscape through targeted restoration of lost paths/routes and removal/thinning/replanting of tree and scrub planting to restore or enhance views.
u)	Protect the immediate rural setting of Ilam Park by monitoring planning proposals and other developments and by actively engaging with neighbouring landowners to mutual benefit.
v)	Protect the immediate rural setting of Ilam Park by refraining from the erection of inappropriately designed agricultural buildings and similar infrastructure, choosing instead to set new standards of sympathetic development within the historic designed landscape (and National Park) based on a clear and justified need.

### Character Area 1: The Park

Management actions	Priority
a) Conserve the nineteenth century trees and planting based on the 1839 Cobb survey and 1884 Ordnance Survey, leading to an overall reduction and refinement of the existing planting, while allowing for targeted replication.	On going
b) Continue to manage the parkland trees, undertaking targeted thinning/removal in line with the established 50 year replanting programme, respecting the three main phases of planting identified by this new research.	On going/P



c)	Increase the percentage of hawthorn and an ash substitute in the replanting palette to replicate pre parkland trees.	On going
d)	Retain an allowance for exotics such as Purple beech and cedar within the replanting palette to sustain the ornamental character of the park, while introducing other conifers, such as Scots pine, to highlight natural features such as the Reef in a manner sympathetic to the Cobb survey 1839.	On going
e)	Undertake targeted tree works to reduce overcrowding of the tree clumps, while accommodating archaeology, and to help restore view lines across the park.	High
f)	Replant and gap-up existing hedges to restore historic boundaries and increase important nectar sources such as hawthorn within the designed landscape and its immediate setting.	On going/ <b>P</b>
g)	Continue to monitor the condition of archaeological remains within the park and particularly where there may be conflict between the earthworks and existing or proposed tree planting.	On going/ <b>P</b>
h)	Undertake further archaeological investigation of the potential village site in the southwest of the park to further understanding of the pre park landscape.	High/ <b>P</b>
i)	Enhance the interpretation of the archaeology in the character area as part of a site-wide approach.	High
j)	Continue to conserve and repair the Ha ha and its associated ditch and bank.	High/ <b>P</b>
k)	Conserve the historic route, dimensions and established character of the drive and enhance interpretation to convey its contribution to the designed landscape.	High
l)	Undertake further investigation of the diagonal drive to the riverside to better understand its purpose and to identify evidence of any additional drive/walk along the southern perimeter of the park.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
m)	Undertake further investigation of the historic path across the park to the Swing Bridge to enhance interpretation and to explore the possibility of restoring a constructed path depending upon site evidence.	High/ <b>P</b>
n)	Remove railings around the dewpond and restore its historic character as a circular pool within the parkland.	High/ <b>P</b>
o)	Continue to maintain the historic fabric of the gates piers, gates and walls within the character area.	On going
p)	Undertake further investigation of the stonework to the north of the park gate to determine any connection with the first kitchen garden.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
q)	Undertake further investigation of the gate piers to the southwest of the park gate to determine if they formed part of a structure recorded in c1922. Include an assessment of the ground around to identify the line of any boundary of associated footpath.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
r)	Increase access to and interpretation of the natural viewing stations within the park to increase an overall appreciation of the designed landscape and its setting.	Medium
s)	Explore opportunities for the temporary reinstatement of the cricket ground for specific events.	Low/ <b>P</b>
t)	Consider the future contribution of the caravan and car parks to the landscape composition as detracting features within the landscape, seeking to reduce their visual impact upon it.	On going

<b>Character Area 2: Paradise Woods North</b>	
<b>Management actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
a) Continue to maintain the existing footprint of the woodland cover and refine management to enhance the ornamental character and protect archaeological features.	On going
b) Maintain and replicate ornamentals, such as Purple beech, lime and box, within the woodland to convey the ornamental character.	On-going
c) Continue to monitor rhododendron and snowberry within the wood.	On going
d) Thin riverside trees to increase visual connection with the river and with the land to the west.	On going
e) Retain the route and dimensions of the historic path/carriageway, confirming the dimensions and original surfacing through archaeological investigation with a view to refine and restore.	High/ <b>P</b>
f) Replicate and reinstate railings extending to the west and east of the carriage gate to replace post and wire fencing and incorporate a more sympathetic 'Dog Stile' sign.	High/ <b>P</b>
g) Undertake further investigation of the stone footings to determine if it is possible/desirable to include them in a long-term proposal to reinstate the iron railings along the west side of the path (also character areas 3, 6).	High/ <b>P</b>
h) Undertake further investigation to establish the historic character of the east boundary of the woodland, such as drystone wall, as a long-term restoration proposal.	Medium
i) Increase interpretation of River Lodge within the NT boundary to encourage visitors to view it while respecting the privacy of the owners.	Low

<b>Character Area 3: Paradise Woods South</b>	
<b>Management actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
a) Maintain the present extent of the woodland and manage to sustain diversity in landscape character through areas of plantation, specimen trees and coppicing as evidenced historically.	On going
b) Conserve and sustain the historic character of the woodland with areas of enclosure and openness and filtered views towards Target Meadow and the river.	On going
c) Encourage a greater community of wild flowers woodland ground cover within the character area as evidenced historically.	On going/ <b>P</b>
d) Undertake a programme of replication of specimen trees, such as the limes, to conserve the ornamental landscape character.	On going
e) Work to limit the formation of informal paths through the woods by using dead hedges or equivalent to stop up gaps and prevent visitor access.	On going
f) Open up areas of rockwork near the path as 'perches' for seating instead of introducing additional site furniture.	High/ <b>P</b>

g)	Retain the route of the historic paths/carriageway, confirming the dimensions and original surfacing through archaeological investigation with a view to restore.	High/ <b>P</b>
h)	Undertake further investigation of the stone footings to determine if it is possible/desirable to include them in a long-term proposal to reinstate the iron railings along the west and south sides of the path (also character areas 2,6).	High/ <b>P</b>
i)	Undertake further investigation of the path side rockwork to determine any evidence of an ornamental edging to the main path and the extent of the retaining wall along the Diagonal Walk.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
j)	Work to replace existing post and wire fencing with drystone walls around the boundaries of the woodland in accordance with site evidence.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
k)	Establish a monitoring programme for the Battle Stone to identify a baseline for future conservation work.	High/ <b>P</b>
l)	Undertake further investigation of the area of the Battle Stone to determine if railings surrounded the feature with a view of removing the picket fence and replacing them.	High/ <b>P</b>
m)	Plan for the replication of Irish yew around the Battle Stone to conserve its immediate landscape setting.	High
n)	Record and possibly remove the architectural salvage along the Diagonal Walk to store.	High/ <b>P</b>

#### Character Area 4: Target Meadow

Management actions	Priority
a) Continue to manage as a meadow to sustain its pastoral contribution to the picturesque landscape composition. Historic evidence suggests the meadow was grazed (the historic circuit walk and it's associated fence) creating a subdivision within the area to accommodate different grassland management regimes.	On going
b) Restore the key view to the east, recorded by Thomas Smith/James Mason c1750, to better connect the meadow with the rock outcrop below the house, the area of The Terraces (Character Area 9) and distant views of Bunster and Thorpe Cloud, through targeted tree removal and vegetation management.	High/ <b>P</b>
c) Undertaken further investigations to determine if any of the circuit walk and/or rifle range survives and consider reinstatement and/or interpretation.	High/ <b>P</b>
d) Following further investigation, consider the reinstatement of railings alongside the north boundary of the meadow over the long term (also character areas 2, 3).	On going/ <b>P</b>
e) Repair Ha ha and install park rail as a more sympathetic boundary to the meadow.	High/ <b>P</b>
f) Reduce riverside vegetation and trees to better connect the meadow to the water and Hinkley Wood.	On going
g) Undertake further investigation of the stonework associated with the Hollow Way and consider reinstating the river ford as an additional crossing point.	Low/ <b>P</b>
h) Repair/replace the existing footbridge to create an additional visitor circuit through Hinkley Wood to the meadow.	High



i) Replace post and wire fence along the northern boundary of the character area with new park rail modelled on that surviving in the hawthorn tree.	Low
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### Character Area 5: Hinkley Wood

Management actions	Priority
a) Continue to manage the mixed wood using traditional woodland management such as coppicing, evidenced by site survey.	On going/ <b>P</b>
b) Undertake further investigation into the archaeological resource of Hinkley Wood to better inform its management and ensure greater interpretation.	On going/ <b>P</b>
c) To protect and undertake further study on the Hinkley limes to sustain their contribution to the designed landscape. This work can include investigation into their distribution to determine if it is wholly natural or partly planted.	On going/ <b>P</b>
d) Retain a percentage of exotics such as beech, Purple beech and conifers within the woodland to sustain its ornamental character.	On going
e) Undertake further investigation of the rhododendrons to identify their species/hybrids to inform future conservation and management options.	High/ <b>P</b>
f) Retain and manage ornamental planting within the woodland as part of its historic evolution so long as it does not conflict with the SSSI or SAC.	On going
g) Continue to manage vermin and monitor plant disease taking action as necessary.	On going
h) Undertake further investigation of the carriage drive to identify its original dimensions and surfacing to inform its future conservation and management (to include the drive from the Blore road by permission) and promote as a footpath.	High/ <b>P</b>
i) Continue to manage the gateways near Wood Lodge replacing the timber gate with an appropriate iron form and re-hanging a facsimile gate at the inner piers based on other on-site examples.	High
j) Continue to maintain Wood Lodge and return to use.	High
k) Replant screen to northeast of lodge to block views from park and village but refine open views to northwest towards hall and St. Bertram's Bridge to create a clearer visual link between the different features.	High
l) Repair drystone walls along the south and north boundaries of the character area.	On going/ <b>P</b>
m) Undertake further investigation of and conserve the remains of the Ram Pump with a view to its future restoration.	Low/ <b>P</b>
n) Continue to maintain elevated footpath and steps with the intention of re opening the bridge to Target Meadow.	Medium

### Character Area 6: Zig-zag Steps

Management actions	Priority
a) Continue to maintain and repair paths and associated retaining walls, steps and railings, including those to the west as they are revealed.	On going

b)	Undertake further investigation of the path surfaces to determine evidence of an historic treatment with a view to its restoration.	High/ <b>P</b>
c)	Continue to reduce and refine tree planting and vegetation cover, working to open up the area to the west of the Grotto, while conserving and encouraging existing ground cover.	On going
d)	Undertake further research on C18/C19 evergreen and floristic planting suitable for this area and wildflowers with a long-term aim of enhancing the ornamental character of the area as recorded in contemporary descriptions.	On going/ <b>P</b>
e)	Continue to manage the Lime trees along Paradise Walk and plan for their succession.	High
f)	Continue to maintain the walls alongside Paradise Walk but allow for the investigation of the unrendered base of the west wall as evidence of previous railings with a view to their future reinstatement.	On going/ High/ <b>P</b>
g)	Undertake targeted conservation of Congreve's Seat and consider relocating to the Grotto as recorded by Buckler c1847.	High
h)	Continue to maintain existing railings and paths alongside the Boil Holes for public safety.	On going
i)	Undertake further investigation of the rectangular chamber and its possible use as a Cold Bath.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
j)	Continue to repair, monitor and maintain the river retaining wall in the area of the Boil Holes and the river culverts, removing ivy to better reveal them. Investigate for evidence of any integral steps as indicated c1750.	On going/ High
k)	Continue to monitor and maintain the rockwork of and around the Grotto, removing any loose pieces of rock, tree saplings and controlling ivy to retain and enhance its ornamental character.	High
l)	Assess and repair the stone paving of the Grotto ahead of any possible relocation of Congreve's Seat and introduce a simple timber bench similar to that recorded by John Buckler in 1847.	Medium
m)	Undertake further recording and investigation of the glasshouse bases and of other evidence of kitchen garden technology to increase understanding of the Hanbury productive garden.	On going/ <b>P</b>
n)	Continue to develop the glasshouse bases as a horticultural display incorporating other associated structures as resources become available.	Medium/ <b>P</b>

### Character Area 7: The Oaks

Management actions	Priority
a) Continue to maintain the existing built structures of the late nineteenth century kitchen garden with a view to their future conservation.	On going
b) Undertake a survey of the surviving walls to inform their future repair and conservation, to include opening up the gateway in the southwest.	High/ <b>P</b>
c) Undertake further investigation to identify the site of the dipping pool, internal path system and steps, which are recorded close to the south boundary of the growing area on the 1922 Ordnance Survey.	High/ <b>P</b>
d) Continue to monitor the oak woodland with a view to removal to reinstate a more authentic interpretation of the growing area in the future.	On going

e) Conserve and undertake further investigation of the drystone walls on the south boundary to inform their future repair (together with Character Area 3).	On going/ <b>P</b>
f) Record surviving fruit trees and propagate if possible.	High/ <b>P</b>

### Character Area 8: The Stables & Italian Garden

Management actions	Priority
a) Continue to maintain the historic built fabric.	On going
b) Undertake a detailed historic building and archaeological survey of the stables to determine its date, phases of construction and relationship to the earlier Port house.	High/ <b>P</b>
c) Continue to interpret the building as an essential ancillary service to the hall(s) and to connect it to the wider ornamental and agricultural landscape of Ilam Park.	High
d) Promote the key view from the gardens of Thorpe Cloud and the church as part of a greater and enhanced understanding of the picturesque landscape of Ilam Hall (following the removal/reduction of tree planting within the churchyard by agreement).	High
e) Consider restoring the lattice design of the mid nineteenth century to enhance/reinstate other surviving features such as the lattice fence and fountain basin.	High/ <b>P</b>
f) Provide greater interpretation of the conservatory, its use and the associated changes to the landscape following the demolition of the hall. This may include the marking out of the southern elevation of the building within the garden area.	High

### Character Area 9: The Terraces

Management actions	Priority
a) Continue to maintain the historic built fabric and landscape design, monitoring and repairing erosion on the Terraces.	On going
b) Undertake an archaeological survey of the terraces to determine their date, phases of construction and relationship to the earlier Port house.	High/ <b>P</b>
c) Promote the key view from the hall and terraces of Thorpe Cloud and the church as part of a greater and enhanced understanding of the picturesque landscape of Ilam Hall (following the removal/reduction of tree planting within the churchyard by agreement).	High
d) Create a more open planting on the slopes beneath the house, undertaking targeted tree removal, thinning, tree works and replanting (including the eventual removal of the Bandstand and the replication of the Purple beech).	On going
e) Restore views between the Terraces and features such as St. Bertram's Well and St. Bertram's Bridge.	High
f) Reinstate as footpaths the historic routes to the northeast of St. Bertram's Bridge and along the north bank of the river to the west, to aid circulation and an understanding of the historic landscape.	High/ <b>P</b>



g)	Retain the south steps from the Terraces as a modern intervention to enable access to the Zig-zag steps but make no further additions.	On going
h)	Undertake further investigation of St. Bertram's Well in regard of its origins and possible use as a Cold Bath.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
i)	Undertake further investigation of this feature in regard of its connection with the surrounding water system.	High/ <b>P</b>
j)	Undertake regular monitoring of the service chambers associated with the historic water supply to ensure structural safety and to prevent unauthorised access.	High

### The Churchyard and Church Lodge (context only)

Management actions	Priority
a) Work with the respective owners to manage, with a view for removal, exotic and over mature trees within the churchyard, which have eroded important views from the west, and to refine planting within the lodge garden to enhance and complement the designed landscape.	High
b) Work with the respective owners/tenants to maintain the historic railings and associated gates and to replace post and rail fence with a more sympathetic boundary treatment.	High
c) Undertake regular tree inspections to monitor the health and stability of the Blue cedar.	High

### Character Area 10: Wheel Orchard & Fred's Field

Management actions	Priority
a) To conserve the nineteenth century trees and planting based on the 1839 Cobb survey and 1884 Ordnance Survey, leading to an overall reduction and refinement of the existing planting, while allowing for targeted replication.	High
b) Undertake further investigation of noted earthworks in the character area such as the site of the school near the northeast boundary and the west/east central footpath removed c1827.	High/ <b>P</b>
c) Enhance the interpretation of the archaeology in the character area as part of a site-wide approach.	High
d) Continue to manage the existing tree stock undertaking targeted removal, thinning and tree works in line with the established 50-year plan and the archaeological significance of the character area.	High
e) Accommodate earlier trees such as hawthorn, which evidence the pre-park land use, as part of a long-term replanting programme.	High
f) Reduce the lime trees in the west of the character area in order to open up views from the Terraces and Target Meadow.	On going
g) Maintain the historic dimensions and character of Church Drive together with associated structures such as the park gate.	On going
h) Undertake paint analysis on the gate to determine its original historic colour.	Low/ <b>P</b>

i)	Continue to maintain and repair all of the boundaries within the character area including the replacement of the post and wire fence along the southwest boundary with park rail.	On going
j)	Continue to engage with the present owners of Dovedale House to ensure a holistic response to any changes in landscape management within and without its grounds (context only).	On going
k)	Provide new interpretation for visitors to better understand the role of Dovedale House within the development of the designed landscape.	Low
l)	Undertake further investigation of the pump, of any surviving plant and of the (probable) brick lined chamber with reference to the improvements of c1770 and the late C19. Continue to secure the chamber from unauthorised access.	Medium/ <b>P</b>

### Character Area 11: Drive Entrance to Hall

Management actions	Priority
a) Continue to maintain present character and dimensions of the drive but do not add any further passing places.	On going
b) Undertake the repair and maintenance of built features as required.	On going
c) Undertake the comprehensive repair of the Ha ha, ditch and bank and if necessary replace post and wire fence with a tall form of park rail.	High/ <b>P</b>
d) Re site or screen service building to the south of the drive and control any modern additions such as wheelie bins or parking shelters.	High
e) Maintain a simple ornamental display in the front garden of Gate Lodge to identify its ancillary character but one that contributes to the overall character of the shrubbery.	High
f) Enhance the shrubbery by targeted removal of tree saplings and native shrubs restoring an evergreen composition with some specimen trees such as Purple beech.	High
g) Prepare a new strategy for the enhanced management of Dovecote Wood to include an increased use of ornamentals, based on historic evidence, the reintroduction of a path to increase public access and the restoration/reinstatement of a hedgerow boundary to the west.	On going/ <b>P</b>
h) Undertake further investigation of the waste dumps and terraced areas within Dovecote Wood to enhance understanding.	Low/ <b>P</b>
i) Enhance the interpretation of the Pepperpot Tower as a surviving structure from the first Victorian kitchen garden and bring into better use.	High

### Character Area 12: Drive Entrance

Management actions	Priority
a) Continue to maintain the drive entrance in a manner appropriate to the entrance of Ilam Park but with a view to restore the open landscape character c1839.	On going
b) Reduce and refine signage at the entrance of Ilam Park to enhance landscape character.	High

c) Continue to maintain the chains and undertake further investigation into their lichen communities.	Low/ <b>P</b>
d) Continue to conserve and maintain the built structures undertaking repair as required.	High
e) Undertake further investigation to inform the reinstating the south side of the gate screen and associated pedestrian gate and new gates to the main entrance.	High/ <b>P</b>
f) Continue to maintain the railings to the south of the drive, and drain covers to the west, undertaking repair as necessary.	On going
g) Undertake further investigation of the iron post to determine its origin and to inform its interpretation and conservation.	Low/ <b>P</b>

### Character Area 13: Car Park

Management actions	Priority
a) Allow for the long-term future removal of the car park from the park and the restoration of the area to parkland or to create an evocation of the nineteenth century productive gardens.	On going
b) Enhance the interpretation of the lost kitchen garden.	High
c) Remove the amenity planting and replace with more 'park' limes to create a better connection between the car park and the surrounding landscape.	High
d) Maintain existing hedgerow boundaries.	High
e) Undertake further research into the late nineteenth century productive garden at Garden House Farm to determine its role in the removal of the Watts-Russell kitchen garden and the creation of the Hanbury kitchen garden (Character Area 7).	Low/ <b>P</b>

### Character Area 14: Caravan Park

Management actions	Priority
a) Allow for the long-term future removal of the caravan park from the park and the restoration of the area to parkland or to create an evocation of the nineteenth century productive gardens.	On going
b) Enhance the interpretation of the lost kitchen garden by undertaking archaeological investigation and survey to determine to what extent below ground elements of the gardens may survive.	High/ <b>P</b>
c) Retain and manage veteran trees as standing dead wood but replicate to sustain landscape character, irrespective of future of facility, to help break up impact of caravans in the wider parkland in the medium-term.	High
d) Maintain existing hedgerow boundaries and enhance through different management regimes or use of hedgerow trees to break up impact of caravans in the wider parkland.	High



### Character Area 15: The Croft

Management actions	Priority
a) Repair and maintain the south boundary walls and gateway.	High
b) Continue to maintain the farm buildings and their historic fixtures and fittings (including Home Farm house and farmyard).	On going
c) Replace picket fence around the garden at Home Farm house with park rail as a more sympathetic boundary treatment.	Low
d) Encourage a more sympathetic boundary treatment and planting within the garden at Croft Cottage to help enhance the overall landscape composition (context only).	Low
e) Replant orchard.	High/P
f) Continue to manage the woodland belt accommodating a percentage of ornamental trees to maintain landscape character and amenity.	On going
g) Consider ground reinforcement where cars continue to park on grass.	High

### Character Area 16: Home Farm Pond

Management actions	Priority
a) Repair water supply and install silt trap.	High/P
b) De silt pond.	High/P
c) Undertake a programme of thinning to reduce scrub and naturally regenerated woodland around the pond including the halo thinning of specimen trees.	High
d) Undertake further survey of surviving structures and record with a possible view of restoration or enhanced interpretation (this to include the ice well which was not surveyed as part of this present research).	High/P
e) Manage Japanese knotweed.	On going

### Character Area 17: Home Farm

Management actions	Priority
a) Return Nether Field into the park 'proper' by refining its management and presentation, including the replication of parkland clumps and the enhancement of views towards the park and hall.	High
b) Undertake repairs to drystone walls, drains and hedgerow boundaries. Replant and gap-up existing hedges to restore historic boundaries and increase important nectar sources such as hawthorn.	High/P
c) Replicate historic farmland trees to sustain landscape character.	High
d) Continue traditional methods of tree management, such as pollarding and coppicing, to maintain historic land management practices and landscape character.	High/P

e) Undertake targeted thinning and tree works to trees to reduce overcrowding in Nether Field.	High
f) Replicate surviving park rail and restore as an internal park/field boundary.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
g) Undertake further investigation of the site of the kennels and interpret.	Medium/ <b>P</b>
h) Undertake greater interpretation of the archaeology to enhance the understanding and appreciation of the pre park landscape.	High

### Character Area 18: Bunster

Management actions	Priority
a) Repair and offer clearer interpretation of St. Bertram's Well and the hilltop cairns.	High/ <b>P</b>
b) Undertake repairs to drystone wall and hedgerow boundaries. Replant and gap-up existing hedges to restore historic boundaries and increase important nectar sources such as hawthorn.	High/ <b>P</b>
c) Replicate historic farmland trees to sustain landscape character and maintain using traditional methods such as pollarding.	High
d) Offer clearer interpretation of historic tracks and paths as part of the pre parkland landscape and to evidence later landscape improvements.	High
e) Enhance the interpretation of the archaeology to increase understanding and appreciation of the pre park landscape as part of a site-wide approach.	High
f) Continue to monitor and manage bracken.	On going

### Character Area 19: The Manifold

Management actions	Priority
a) Balance the needs of the European Water Framework Directive and the landscape along the river corridor within Ilam Park without the introduction of modern infrastructure, or the unreasonable adaptation or removal of historic features such as the weirs.	On going
b) Highlight the personal achievement of the Port family through their realignment of the River Manifold and associated works to the rock face by maintaining the existing river channel and banks and interpret as the key component of the designed landscape c1750 on.	On going
c) Undertake targeted repairs to the stone retaining walls and reveted banks between the Swing Bridge and the Boil Holes.	High/ <b>P</b>
d) Undertake further survey and investigation to inform a phased programme of repair of the higher status stone retaining walls along the north side of the river between the Boil Holes and Ilam Bridge.	High/ <b>P</b>
e) Undertake phased repair to the weirs.	High/ <b>P</b>
f) Undertake further investigation of the swimming pool and the possibility of fly-fishing pegs on notable rocks within the course of the river.	Medium/ <b>P</b>

g)	Work in partnership with Staffordshire County Council to retain and enhance the Swing Bridge as an important crossing point on the river.	On going
h)	Remove deadwood from the river between Target Meadow and Wheel Orchard to enhance its ornamental character, prevent local flooding and damage to features such as St. Bertram's Bridge and the weirs.	On going
i)	Instigate a programme of targeted clearance to better reveal the rock face of the south bank and undertake a programme of targeted thinning to visually connect the south bank to the Boil Holes.	On going
j)	Enhance the interpretation of the ambition and engineering achievements of the Port family as part of the appreciation of the designed (and natural) landscape of Ilam Park.	High



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*Illustrations*

- 'Bunker Hill & Thorpe Cloud', c.1750, The sketchbooks of Mrs Granville Delany: NGI: 2722.59
- 'A View of Thorpe Cloud', c.1751. Thomas Smith/James Mason: BMAG (also WSL: SV.IV.24 (54/8144))
- 'A View of Thorpe Cloud', variation, c.1751, Thomas Smith/James Masons: WSL: SV.IV.31b (45/8252)
- Sketch of the River Manifold, William Gilpin c1772 'Tour Through England': BOD: Ms. Eng. Misc. e 488/f.179(1)
- Portrait of Mary Port c. 1776, John Opie, private collection
- View of Ilam Hall, c1807, Fanny de Bunsen. National Trust, Ilam Park
- Possible view of Ilam Hall, undated, National Trust, Dunham Massey: NT 930045
- Views of Ilam Hall, John Bucker, c1839, WSL: SV.V.5a (45/8958)
- View of gateway and lodges, Ilam Park, Edward Blore, c1800, RIBA: 37938
- Images of Ilam Hall, c1926, WSL: pbox/ILAM/7
- Portrait of William Congreve, Godfrey Kneller, 1709, NPG

- The Bridge at Ilam, c1828, Thomas Peploe Wood: Staffordshire Past Track, STFMS G95.002.0001
- Ilam Hall, c1828, Thomas Peploe Wood: Staffordshire Past Track, STFMS G95.003.0001
- The Green Frog Dinner Service, View 239: The Wedgwood Museum
- Various views and photographs, The National Trust, Ilam Park
- Aerial photographs of Ilam, 1995, NT Curatorial black box