

SITE NAME:	Brereton Hall				
Address	Brereton Park, Brereton, Sandbach CW11 1RZ				
Unitary Authority:	Cheshire East (former Congleton B.C.)				
Parish:	Brereton				
Location:	c. 5 kms NNE of Sandbach				
Grid Ref:	SJ 782 650				
Owner:	Mr. M. Jones				
Recorder:	IBW	Date of Site Visit	04/12/13 (PRO)	Date of Report:	12/02/2014

Illustrations

Historic maps and images (Sources: see Additional Information)

←North		A) 1577 Saxton, Map of Cheshire ← Brereton Hall on the river Croco Fenced enclosure (deer park?) on both sides of the river. The E enclosure may represent the ringfence noted in 1817 and still extant.
←North		B) 1610 J. Speed, Map of Cheshire The ringfenced enclosure is of the same size as in 1577. A red line indicates the Hall's situation within the ringfence.



C) 1819 Greenwood's County Map surveyed probably **before Howard** bought the site:

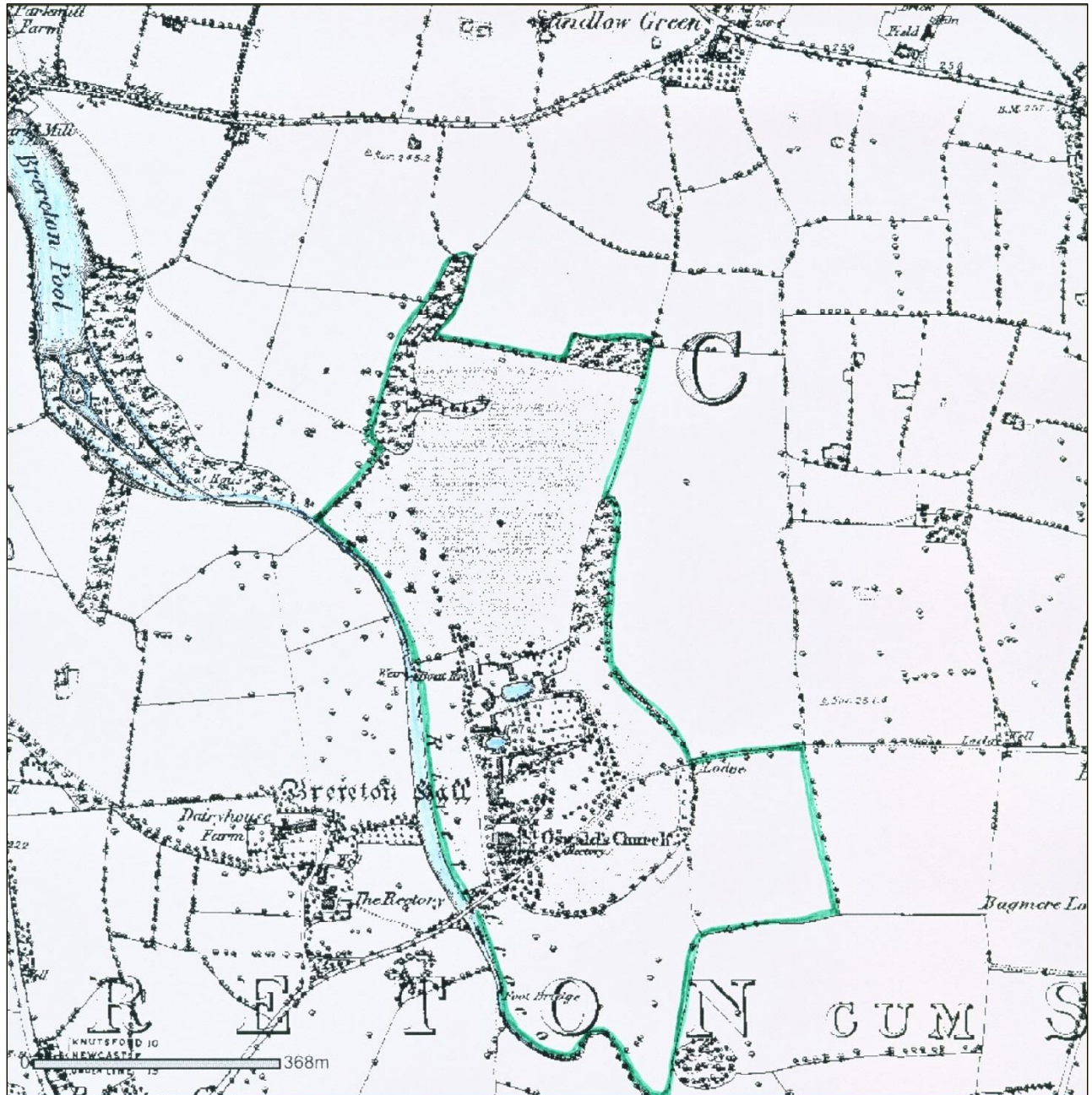
- **Park** designation extends to Mill Lane (N) and Dog Lane (W).
- River Croco shown widened to a **lake** extending SE beyond the bridge.
- **Approach** to hall branches from the public road to W elevation and N stables, then forms a semi-circle towards E elevation.
- **Public road** from Brereton village crosses the park to lead eastwards.



D) 1831 Bryant's County Map surveyed at the time of **Howard's alterations**:

- Fields along Dog Lane (W) no longer designated as **parkland**.
- **Lake** and mill pond less extensive than in 1819.
- **Approach** leads from the public road to W elevation and N stables, but no longer to hall's E side.
- The straight line of the **avenue** (E of the Hall) terminates at the **ringfence**.
- **Walled garden** shown (near B).
- **Public road** leading eastwards runs S of the ringfence.

E) 1875 Ordnance Survey map with Howard's park of 1848 (green)



•↑ site of South Lodge built 1830

1848 parkland (green outline):

The tithe apportionment shows that John Howard set aside c. 95 acres for his use; the remainder of his lands shown here was let to tenant farmers.

1875:

- **Drive:** From the **South Lodge** in Brereton village, Howard used part of the public road to create a new drive through the park to **North Lodge** and the former **avenue** leading E.
The **main approach** to the hall branches off near the bridge and leads to the W elevation and the N stables. An **access road** to the stables and farm branches N near North Lodge.
The continuation of the **public road** S of the ringfence is no longer shown.
- Grounds E of the hall are now a **garden** and **small park**, with the **walled kitchen garden** and **orchard** to the North.
- **Lake** extends from the bridge to the **weir** with a **boathouse**.
- **Ringfence** is planted with lines of trees.

F) 1848 Tithe map (detail) shows Howard's layout the grounds c. 1830:

Stables 1829 →

Row of cottages built onto N elevation, → screened by **shrubs**

W grounds named 'pleasure grounds' →

Shrubs screen graveyard →

Inset and gated **W approach** →



Access road to
← farm /stables

← **Walled gardens:** with small building in E part ('arbour' in 1873)

← **North Lodge**

← Hall: plan of 1744 **central bar** still extant

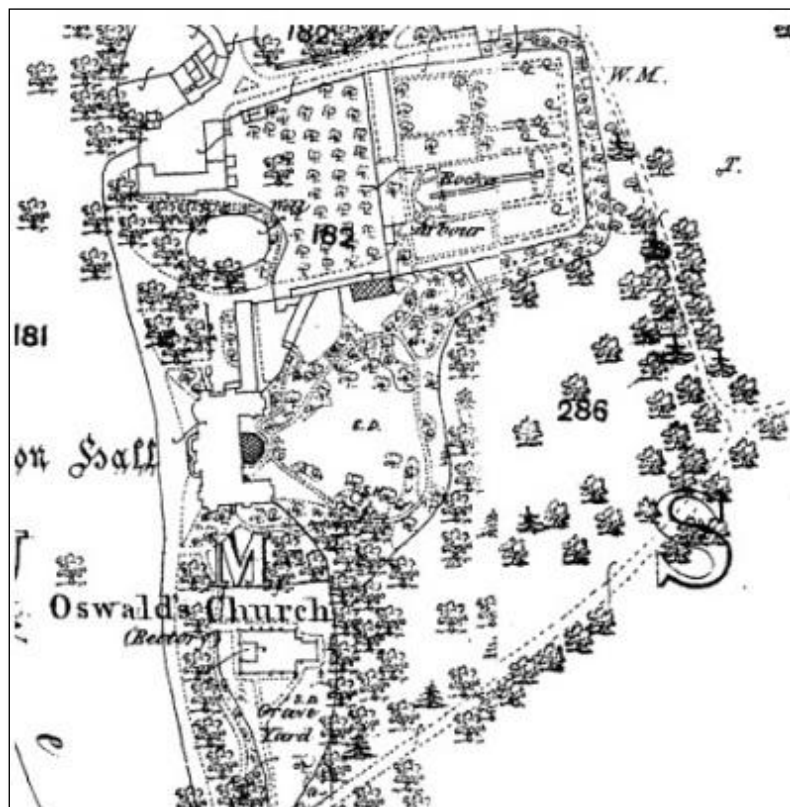
← Triangle seems to contain shrubs

← **Drive** lined with trees

← **Ringfence**

G) 1873 Ordnance Survey 1st edition (detail):

→ Central bar of E-plan now replaced with **conservatory**



Walled gardens: orchard (W), kitchen garden (E) with **C18** ← remains of **canal, arbour** and 'rockeries'

← Glasshouse

← Shrubbery beds N of lawn

← **Lawn** with sun dial

← Estate rails separate **garden** from the **small park** (then extending to the ringfence)

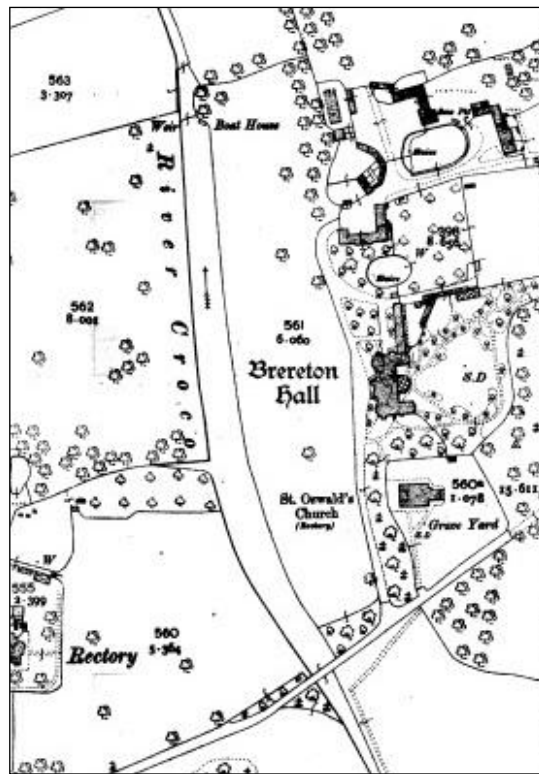
↑ Church/graveyard are screened by trees

H) 1910 OS map (detail): no change in the design of the W and E grounds

Weir and boathouse →

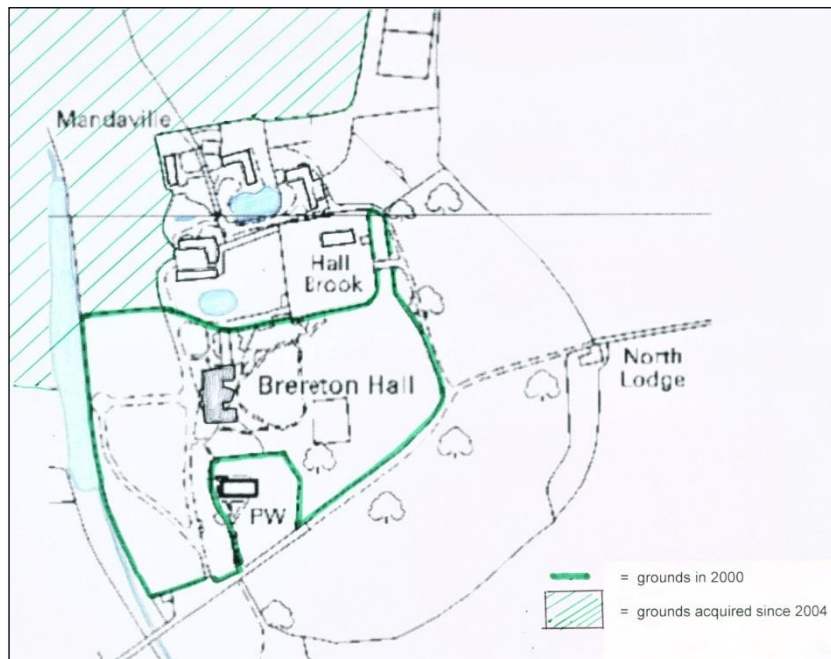
Lake: no obvious sign of silting up →

→
Main W **viewlines** range across the lake and a field with the character of **open parkland**.
Tree belt screens the Rectory .



← Barn, shippon, house for fixed engine and cottages (1850)

J) Modern map (c. 2008)



- In **2000** the grounds comprised 10 acres (=green outline).
Part of the additional 100 acres of land acquired by the present owners **since 2004** (= hatched)
- The **weir** and **lake** have been restored, but not up to the bridge (planning consent of 2006).
- Re-alignment of the access drive and formation of an **avenue approach** have been executed (planning consent of 2007).

Historic images

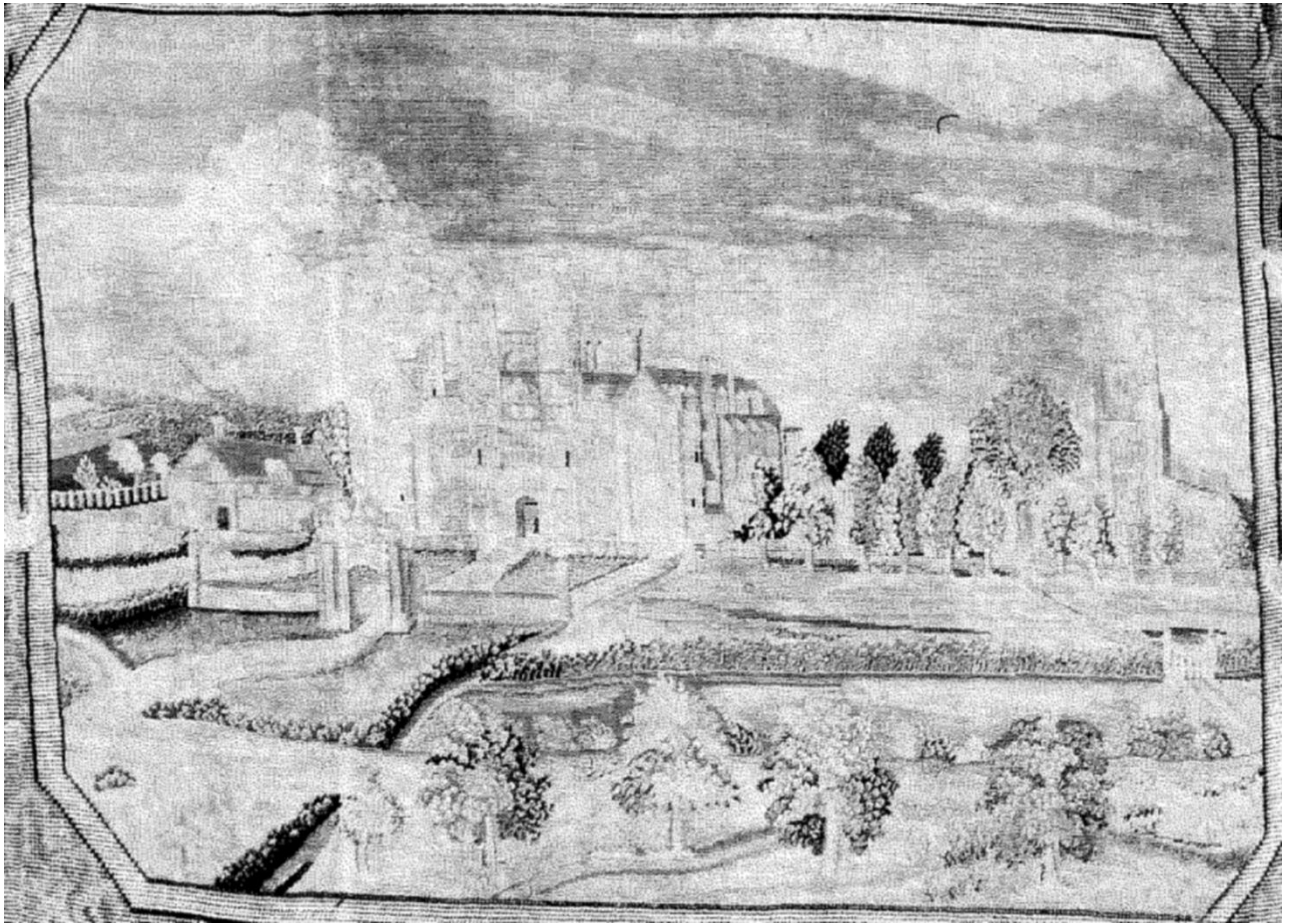
1) 1744 Wall hangings by Mary Holte with views of Brereton Hall as previously hung in Aston Hall



(Old colour postcard in the curatorial files, © Birmingham Museums Trust)

- The hangings are 9' high and over 20' long and worked in cross and tent stitch.
- One hangings is signed:
God be the Guide / And the Work / Mary Holte / Spinster / Aged LX / Anno Dom MDCCXLIV.
- **Mary Holte** (1684 – 1759) was the sister of Sir Charles Holte, who succeeded to the Aston and Brereton estates in 1770 at the death of his brother, Sir Lister Holte.
- The wall hangings were worked for the best bedroom at Aston Hall, and are mentioned in an inventory of 1771. Their removal from Aston Hall in 1794 is documented on the death of the last Lady Holte. They were moved to Atherstone Hall, the home of Mary Elizabeth Holte (Mrs. Abraham Bracebridge). Her son lent the hangings when Aston Hall was first opened to the public in 1858 and bequeathed them to the town of Birmingham in 1872. They were cleaned and restored in about 1930.

2) **1744 West elevation**, detail of wall hanging of Brereton Hall by Mary Holte
(Scan from a black and white print, © Birmingham Museums Trust)



A **walled forecourt** extends along the whole of the hall's W elevation.
An arched **gateway** with pilasters and ball finials lies on the same axis as the hall's entrance.
Grass plats bordered by low hedges on either side of the central path.

From the gateway, the **path** continues to meet another path which crosses the river and then continues on the river's W side. Another gated footbridge and path leads to the boundary between the hall and churchyard. (This gate may be represented in the hanging of the East elevation (see image 3, left).

Trees planted at regular intervals screen the hall's S garden and the churchyard

The **river Croco** is shown fringed with reeds. It is difficult to judge the river's course and whether it had already been widened into a lake.

3) **1744 East elevation**, detail of wall hanging of Brereton Hall by Mary Holte
(Scan of colour photograph, © Birmingham Museums Trust)



Central panel, original colours.

Below: colour adjustment for clarity.



- **Central bar of E-plan** is shown as a third wing of 2 storeys with windows and an elaborate **central doorway** with columns. Topped by a 2-storey **tower** with pointed roof and weather vane. The building's shaped gables are of the same style as those on the side wings and pavilions - the original 1585 house?
- Steps from central doorway into a **grass forecourt** between the side wings, closed with a lattice fence.
- The **formal garden**, a central path through grass plats, is **enclosed** by walls, pavilions and a wrought-iron **screen**.
- Matching pair of square 2-storey **pavilions** with 4 gables and chimneys on E side.
- Ornate **wrought-iron gate** and overthrow on same axis as central doorway, painted white. Wall below screen may be part of a former walled enclosure.
- **Walled Garden** indicated (right, above pavilion).
- The white fence and gate (left) may represent the path and gate shown in image 2, right.



4) 1809: West elevation (engraving from a drawing by George Ormerod)

- Ormerod shows the towers with their original **ogee caps** - before Howard's alterations of 1830.
- The hilly landforms are a romantic exaggeration.
- A wide gravel **approach** curves to the hall's central entrance.
- Mature **trees** dominate the area between hall and St Oswald's church; some trees appear to grow close to the hall's E elevation. • The cottages adjoining the hall's N wing have not yet been built.



5) 1844: West elevation after Howard's alterations:

- The **towers** are lower and their ogee caps have been replaced with heavy **battlements** which continue along the parapets of the house.
- The **entry gate** has also been 'medievalised'.
The (original) carved stone panels in the centrepiece show the Brereton and Royal arms and the date 1585.



- 6) **1899: W elevation** and St Oswald's Church seen across **Brereton Lake**.
The **lake** appears to be well maintained. Its straight course suggests an origin as a C18 canal.



- 7) **1984** Aerial photo of Brereton Hall School, showing not only the W elevation but part of the **E garden** and **small park**:
- **Shrubs** shown in 1873 appear to be evergreens; they screen glasshouse and utility buildings.
 - Could the level **lawn** of the E garden be the footprint of the 1744 garden?
 - The **dividing line** between E garden and small park shown in 1873 (E) is still extant as hedging.
 - The **small parkland** contains the school's tennis courts and playing field.
 - (left): Trees around the oval pond, and **walls** of the **orchard** and **kitchen garden**.



8) 1990s aerial photograph

(Courtesy of Cheshire Historic Environment Record)

←Walled gardens:

E: Hall Brook property with modern house and line of C18 **canal** with **grotto** (right); **arbour** against wall to former orchard.

←North Lodge (modern re-build).

←**Triangular lawn** surrounded by trees.

←**Lake** silted up / marsh

←**Ringfence / embankment**



9) 2013 East elevation

- The **central bar** of the original e-plan was removed in the C19 but its footprint is still obvious, including the base of the former tower.
- The apex of the E garden's **triangular lawn** points at the C19 **conservatory**/C18 main entrance.
- **Beds** near the hall are already shown in 1873 (E).
- (right): part of the **evergreens** screening the area with **glasshouse** and outbuildings (shown in 5).



10. A glimpse of Brereton Hall from the lane approaching the hall



11. The Lane crossing the River Croco



12. The River Croco/Brereton Lake, now silted up



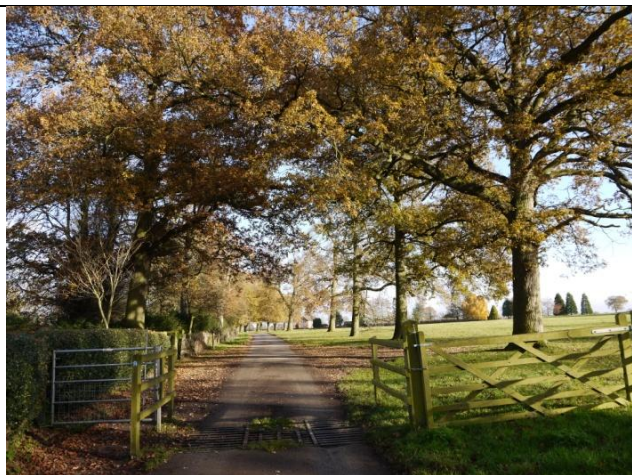
13. Looking through the gates of Brereton Hall



14. Parkland south of the hall clearly defined by a bank



15. Looking east through the parkland to 'the Cloud' near Congleton



16. The drive past the church to the North Lodge



17. The drive from the North Lodge looking west towards Brereton Hall



18. Location of Photographs

Please note that this report contains the research and recording information available to Cheshire Gardens Trust at the time. It does not purport to be the finite sum of knowledge about the site as new information is always being discovered and sites change.

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