



Docking: Docking Hall

The Docking estate was acquired in 1597 by John Hare and the hall built in 1612, although extensively rebuilt in 1858. An estate map of 1756 shows that it was then approached from the north via a narrow entrance courtyard and was surrounded by enclosed gardens and orchards. A small, c.18 hectare (45 acre) park lay to the south of the hall, which itself lay close to the public road leading through Docking village. An impressive double avenue extended south from the house, through the park and out across the adjacent fields, terminating at a small temple in a wood c.450 metres to the south. This appears to have survived into the nineteenth century but has since disappeared (although the wood is still called Temple Wood).

The park was expanded in size in the early years of the nineteenth century, a development signalled in a letter of 1802, written by the agent for William Ffolkes at Hillington Hall (q.v.), which describes how the owner '*has a plan for taking land from Barker and his other tenants, to make his own occupation more Parkish if I may be allowed the term, about his house west, south and east*'. A road order of 1832 closed roads to the south and west of the park, but the park was only expanded after 1840, reaching c.48 hectares (120 acres) by 1864. Perimeter belts were established along the south, west and much of the eastern boundary.

Although some parts of the park have been returned to arable, much of it survives today in good condition. Fragments of the south avenue remain, and suggest that it was planted in the early eighteenth century with a mixture of species, including beech, lime and sycamore. There are a number of fine specimen trees, many planted more than two centuries ago, including examples of sweet chestnut, London plane (*Platanus hispanica*), oak and a single *Prunus* species over two hundred years old. The 'London Pond' remains, first recorded in 1756, as do earthworks of many relic field boundaries.

The arrangement of courtyards and gardens recorded around the hall in 1756 had been replaced by pleasure grounds by the 1860s and, by 1885, terraces and formal gardens had been laid out here. Those to the south of the hall remain extant, edged by gravelled paths and with conical yews at each corner and round central beds. Extensive lawns lie to the west and north, edged by woodland and bisected by the gravelled approach. The gardens and park at Docking retain much of their nineteenth-century character, but with some evidence of earlier landscaping.

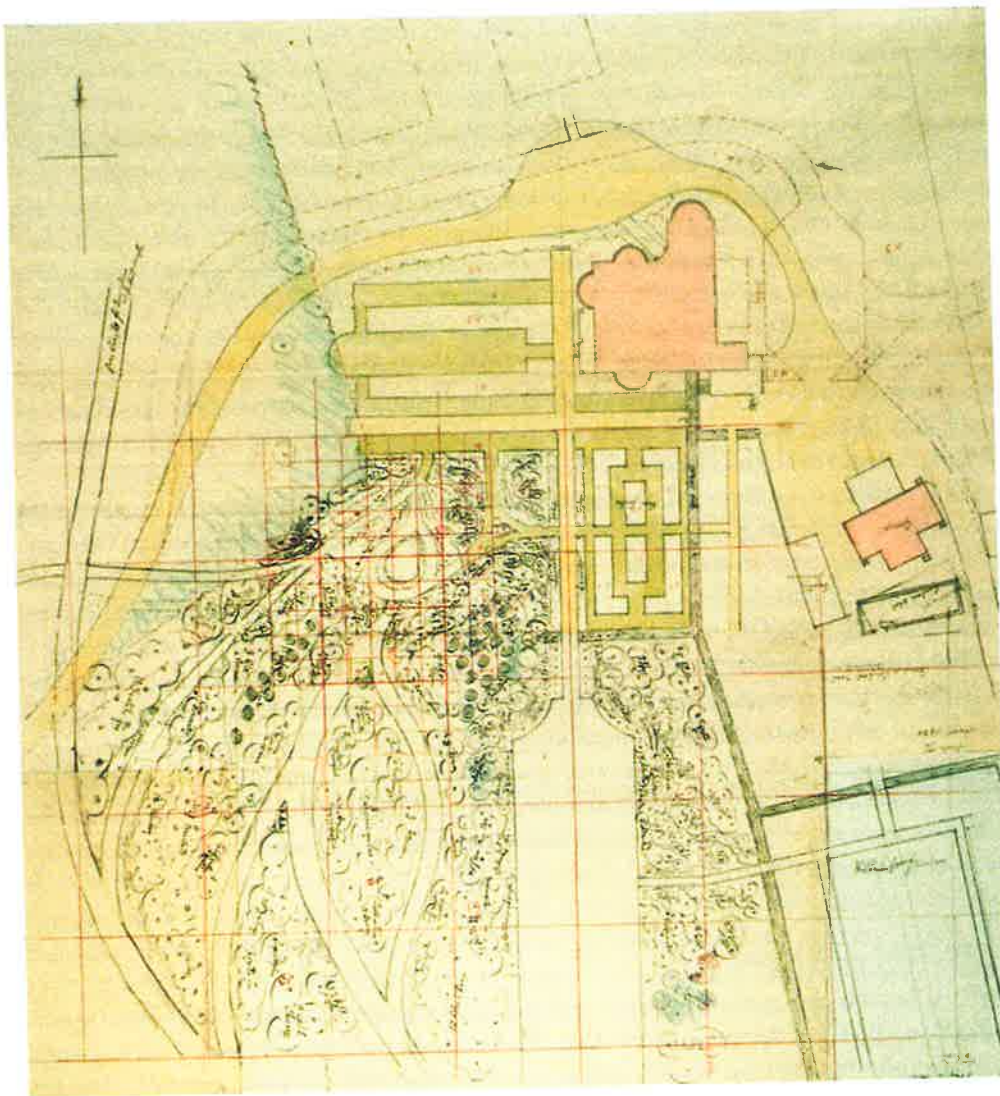
Drayton: Drayton Wood

Drayton Wood is important as one of the few Norfolk gardens designed by Gertrude Jekyll (1843–1932); the others being East Runton Old Hall and West Barsham Hall. During the nineteenth century the Drayton property had been developed as a small estate lying on the fringes of Norwich. In the early 1920s, the owner, Lieutenant Colonel O'Meara, commissioned the local firm of W. and J. Dunham to rebuild the house and asked Jekyll to design new gardens to accompany it. As was the case with most of the places she worked on during the later stages of her career, Jekyll did not actually visit the site but relied instead on detailed notes, plans and photographs supplied by the architect. The result is a testament to her skill. Since the grounds were laid out, the house has changed ownership several times and, in more recent years, has had a number of

commercial uses: as a hotel, a restaurant and a residential home. For part of this time, at least, the knowledge that the grounds had been designed by Jekyll were lost to the owners but, more recently, some work has been done to clear away undergrowth and restore elements of the design.

The areas around the house have a formal air, with small square lawns edged with low walls. To the north-west is a late twentieth-century rose garden. The most important features of the site are the outgrown remains of Jekyll's wild and woodland garden, which lies between the house and the main road to the south. A long, wide green ride extends the architectural 'feel' of the formal gardens around the house out into the woodland, where native species merge into densely planted groups of *Azaleas* and *Rhododendrons*. Much of the detail of the Jekyll planting has been lost over the years, leaving only the most robust species to dominate the woodland.

The five Jekyll planting plans, dated September 1921, are in the Reef Point Collection



Sites: Drayton 131

of Gertrude
all's five planting
as for gardens
Drayton Wood,
1. To the south-
of the circles
locate trees, with
species named.
closer to the house
symbols are used. All
more formal
as shown have
their own detailed
planting plans as
well as the drive
and the borders
and the house.

at the University of California, Berkeley. They reveal the thoroughness and detail of her approach. She broke up the woodland with a series of sweeping and winding paths, and with open spaces, planted with native species such as oak, ash, Scots pine, birch, blackthorn, holly and cobnut, with *Azaleas* and *Rhododendrons* nearer the house. Hugging the north of the house, with its curving entrance drive, shrubs were planted which gave protection to the three herbaceous borders she devised stretching to the west of the house, set in lawn. Her plantings, whether trees, shrubs or herbaceous plants are always in multiple groups; sometimes eight of the same plant to give a bold effect. There was further planting in the angular borders of the rectangular garden immediately to the south of the house.

Dunham: Dunham Lodge

Dunham Lodge (Grade II* listed) is a tall, rather plain, brick house built for Edward Perry in the mid 1780s. It is of two full storeys above a substantial basement, with the main entrance reached by an outer staircase, with two curving arms, placed on the east front. William Faden's county map of 1797 shows the house, then newly erected, and suggests some decorative planting in its vicinity but no park. The Tithe Award Map of 1838 shows a diminutive park, with fairly thin belts around most of its periphery and containing a number of small clumps, lying to the east of the hall. To the west, a drive ran from Little Dunham village through what appear to be enclosed fields, although mainly under grass, and with a belt of plantations to the north; although less obviously decorative in character, this was presumably also parkland of some kind. The pleasure grounds and gardens lay immediately to the west of the house. The First Edition Ordnance Survey 6" map of 1887 shows a similar arrangement of features, and both maps show the detached kitchen garden with curving north wall (Grade II listed) on the southern boundary of the park, c.300 metres to the south-south-west of the house, with a gardener's cottage (Grade II listed) immediately to the west.

The park survives largely under grass, although a substantial area to the north-east of the house is currently ploughed. It contains a number of fine trees, mainly oaks, many of which are veterans inherited from the earlier landscape. Buried away in the woodland lies the kitchen garden, the walls of which have been splendidly restored and the central conservatory rebuilt. The garden is, as yet, not planted. The gardener's cottage, likewise probably late eighteenth century in date and with Gothic details, is derelict. Behind the hall to the north-west are fine stables with Diocletian windows. The gardens around the house itself are maintained in good condition, with lawns and a fine herbaceous border.

This is an interesting and attractive landscape, with beautiful old trees, which has the additional benefit of a public footpath from Little Dunham running through its centre from east to west.

Dunston: Dunston Hall

Little is known about the landscape which existed around Dunston Hall before it was rebuilt in 1859 for Robert Kellat Long. There was a park here by the 1790s, shown schematically by William Faden, whose map suggests that it still contained avenues,

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