

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL
INGATESTONE

INGATESTONE HALL

Grid Ref: TQ654 985

Grounds of a Grade I listed sixteenth century manor house still enclosed by brick wall as shown on a survey plan of 1566. Structural layout modified in the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly in the Courtyard area. Original formal layout partially replaced by twentieth century informal planting.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Ingatestone Hall and its land came into the Petre family as a result of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The land at Yenge-atte-Stone was surrendered to the Crown having originally belonged to the Abbey of Our Lady and Saint Ethelburga at Barking. Dr William Petre, in his capacity of assistant to Thomas Cromwell, the Chief Secretary to Henry VIII and who was responsible for overseeing the Dissolution process, had visited the monastic houses of Southern England including the manor of Yenge-atte-Stone. He purchased the property in 1539, possibly, it is said, being attracted by the Latinised name of the property *Ginge ad Petram*. The old house standing on the property was demolished and the current house was built, although it was to be altered over the centuries. An engraving of 1884, copied from an earlier drawing, shows the front of the Hall with an outer (Base) court leading to gates with piers on either side. A broad approach crosses the walled forecourt (Middle court) to the imposing house entrance; the inner court can just be seen beyond. There were many visitors to the house at this time including the composer William Byrd, Queen Mary on her way to London to claim the throne, and Queen Elizabeth I who stayed for several nights in 1561.

Ingatestone Hall did not remain the principal family seat; this was to be at Thorndon Hall, Brentwood, developed by William's son, John. Ingatestone Hall however continued to be used by the family as a holiday retreat or lived in by various family members. The 9th Lord Petre lived at the Hall from 1764 to 1770, whilst major work was being undertaken at Thorndon, and it is likely that he was responsible for the alterations to Ingatestone Hall at this time. These included the rebuilding of the old buildings situated around the outer court and the addition of the Clock Tower with the one-handed clock. The buildings on the southern side of the outer court were probably demolished at this time.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the west range of the house was demolished so creating the present day U-shaped house around the inner courtyard. The house was divided into four separate apartments. An illustration of the Hall in the nineteenth century shows that the courtyard area is divided into two by a semi-circular low hedge and five-bar gate rather than the earlier straight front wall of the forecourt. Nineteenth century plantings adorn the lawn areas in both the inner and immediate outer court area.

In 1919 following the death of the sixteenth Lord Petre, the family moved back to Ingatestone Hall and his widow, Lady Rasch, began to restore the Hall back to its original Tudor appearance. New

garden features, such as the area now known as the Grass Walk, and a clinker rock garden, were created at this time. A yew hedge was planted in 1923 to delineate the southern boundary of the outer court.

The house was used as a school for girls during the Second World War. Following this, part of the house was let to the Essex Record Office until the late 1970's. Part of the house continues to be let. The present Lord Petre's son and his family live in one wing, and the remainder is open to public view in the summer months. Alterations have been made to the garden in recent years including the addition of a water maze, and informal plantings of ornamental trees.

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING

Ingatestone Hall lies approximately half a mile to the south-east of the village of Ingatestone and the old London Road, now the B1002. The ten hectare site comprised farm buildings, outhouses and associated land, semi-natural woodland (3 hectares), and the ornamental gardens (7 hectares). The site is reasonably level with a gentle slope to the south. The majority of the site is enclosed by a brick wall much of which dates back to the sixteenth century, although there have been later repairs and alterations, mainly to raise the height. The garden wall is a listed feature of the site with a group value of Grade II. The wall is incomplete on the eastern boundary; unstable ground conditions, probably due to the presence of springs, caused the original wall to collapse. A replacement wall also failed and was removed in 1919. A Red Cedar Walk has been established along this section of the boundary. At this point there are views to the surrounding agricultural land, shown as orchard on early plans. The Grass Walk and Nut Walk are located beyond the wall on the southern side and are bounded by a wire fence and the Hey stream.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

Ingatestone Hall is approached from Hall Lane, at a corner in the Lane that has been enlarged to form a walled semi-circular turning area from which three entrances lead into the site. The northern entrance leads to farm buildings and the rented wing of the Hall. The southern entrance leads to private residences and estate workshops. Two tall brick piers with decorative wrought iron gates mark the main central entrance. A red brick gatehouse (now the Estate Office), with rose beds in the foreground, is situated just inside the gates, on the north side of the drive. These modern day entrances are as shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874.

A bound gravel driveway runs to the south-east from the gates to the Clock Tower. A lawned single mature lime avenue flanks the driveway; this avenue is shown on the 1874 Ordnance Survey map, although the trees are younger and therefore is a replacement feature. A wooded area lies to the south-west and nineteenth century farm buildings flank the avenue to the north-east.

At the Clock Tower, the drive turns sharply to an easterly direction of approximately 45° so that the principal building is seen framed by the arch of the Clock Tower. The oblique approach to the Clock Tower building is implied in the John Walker survey plan of 1605.

PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS

A Grade I listed building built in the sixteenth century for Dr William Petre, built of red Tudor brick in English bond, with stepped roof gables, and windows with brick mullions and transoms. Originally the Hall consisted of four ranges of buildings built around an inner courtyard, but the west range was demolished in the late eighteenth century. A mature cedar (*Cedrus libani*) frames the end of the southern wing.

COURTYARD

The Courtyard area covers the space originally occupied by the base court and middle court, known together as the outer court, and inner court. It is entered via the archway under the Clock Tower. The gravel driveway continues directly to the inner court, which itself is a bound gravelled area. The outer court area is laid to lawn with three mature black mulberries (*Morus nigra*) in the south-east corner, and a weeping ash (*Fraxinus excelsior* 'Pendula') halfway along the northern side. The remaining planting is restricted to the foundations of the buildings and is mainly twentieth century in style, with the exception of a few mature wall shrubs notably *Magnolia grandiflora*. A gravel path leads from the outer court to the private family garden to the north.

ORNAMENTAL GARDENS (open to the public on specific days)

A gateway leads from the private garden into the Orchard. The whole area slopes down to the south. The northern half of this area consists of rough grass with some mature trees. Of note are a large horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), London plane (*Platanus x hybrid*), sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and two extremely old hazel (*Corylus avellana*) bushes. In front of the northern boundary wall there is a six metres wide strip of levelled land that may possibly be the remains of a terrace walk. It leads to the north-east corner of the garden where, during the twentieth century, a small shrine was inserted into the wall. The wall shows signs of alteration and repair throughout but particularly in the section; it is possible that an earlier structure was sited in this corner of the garden. The wall continues along the eastern boundary and shows signs of having been raised in height in the past. A cistern building, listed Grade II, is located in the centre of the area and is said to be a rare example of its type. Water from springs was collected and stored in this building, the water having supplied the house until 1968. A newly planted beech hedge (*Fagus sylvatica*) runs east-west forming the southern boundary of this area.

The area to the south of the hedge is laid to lawn and features recent additions of a water maze around the base of a weeping willow (*Salix x chrysocoma*), shrub planting and a collection of ornamental trees. The Red Cedar Walk forms the eastern boundary. An old large rectangular Stew pond, orientated east-west, is located at the southern end of the area; a causeway to an island in the pond is evident. The sides of the Stew Pond are made of wood except at the western end where brickwork is evident. The Lime Walk is found to the south between the pond and the garden wall; mature pollarded limes (*Tilia platyphyllos* 'Rubra') flank either side of the old stone/pebble path. This feature is older than the entrance Lime Avenue and is said to pre-date 1733.

The Grass Walk is located on the other side of the wall running parallel to the Lime Walk. This area is planted up in an informal manner with shrubs and trees either side of a small stream feature. Several

mature yew trees (*Taxus baccata*) dominate. At the western end there is a small clinker rock garden feature. A flight of stone steps leads up to a gateway with wooden gate so returning back to the Lime Walk, or alternatively a grass path may be followed along the Nut Walk and back to the entrance drive.

At the western end of the Lime Walk, the brick wall turns through 90° to the north so forming the eastern boundary of the area known as the Walled Garden. The garden is entered from the Lime Walk via gateway with decorative wrought iron gate added into the wall. A wall encloses the garden on three sides, being open to the south, but is not one contiguous wall. The wall on the eastern side has a low centre section that may be more recent than the rest of the wall and possibly replaces the gateway shown on the 1884 engraving. The remaining wall on the north and west sides show little sign of alteration. Climbing roses are trained along the walls. A rectangular lily pool in the centre of the garden is on the site of another stew pond, the outline of which is visible in the grass. This was formerly a swimming pool; the blue pool tiles are still evident. A low brick building with red roof tiles and covered in honeysuckle (*Lonicera sp.*) and *Clematis sp.*, is situated at the western end of the pool. This may have housed equipment associated with the swimming pool. Four rectangular flower beds are located to the north and south of the lily pool. A sundial with numerous gnomones (indicators) is situated at the western end of the garden; it is sometimes referred to as the moon-dial.

To the north of the Walled Garden is a levelled lawn area, the size of a tennis court, although there is no evidence for this use on site. An opening in the yew hedge to the north leads back in to the Courtyard or along the southern driveway. There is a brick terrace in front of the southern end of the Hall.

REFERENCES

Books and Articles

Department of National Heritage *Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic interest, Borough of Brentwood, Essex (Part 2 – Parishes of Doddinghurst, Ingatestone and Fryerning, Kelvedon Hatch, Mountnessing, Navestock, Stondon Massey)*

Emmison, F.G. 1964 *Tudor Food and Pastimes: Life at Ingatestone Hall* Ernest Benn Ltd.

Essex Education Committee 1954 *Ingatestone Hall in 1600: An Inventory* Essex Record Office Publication no.22

Essex Education Committee 1953 *Introduction of Ingatestone Hall* Essex Record Office Publication no.20

Petre, Lord 1999 *Ingatestone Hall – A Guide*

Yearsley, Ian 1997 *Ingatestone and Fryerning: A History* Ian Henry Publications

Maps

1566 Thomas Larke Survey of Ingatestone Hall for Sir William Petre – plan to accompany survey of 1566, no scale given (Essex Record Office D/DP/P1)

1605 Walker, John senior and Walker, John junior *A trewe Platt of the Mannors of Inge Petre Hall and Bacones with the Farmes called Westlandes Lawneys and Cuttells with two other Tenements called Brownes and Bellmans* 13.3 inches to the mile (private collection)

1777 Chapman and André Map of Essex Sheet XVII

1873 (surveyed) 1874 (published) ordnance survey map 6 inches to the mile first edition
1873 (surveyed) 1874 (published) 1891 (reprinted) ordnance survey map 25 inches to the mile first edition
1895 (surveyed) 1896 (published) ordnance survey map 25 inches to the mile second edition
1921 (revised edition) ordnance survey map 25 inches to the mile

Images

1829 Engraving of Ingatestone Hall by R.Acon from a sketch by T.Barber for *Excursions through Essex* (Essex Record Office)

1884 Photocopy of an engraving of Ingatestone Hall inscribed 'Copied from an old drawing in the Herrnhut Archives', possibly printed or published in Sawbridgeworth, Essex. Border to picture reads '...ravian Buildings In or Near London & C. 1888. Ingatestone Hall, Essex. 24 miles from London; leased by Count Linzendorf as a Country Seat in 1749 (near Chelmsford). A Synod of the Moravian Church was held here in 1752'. Source of photocopy not known. Held in the Local Studies Section, Chelmsford Public Library, FQj 728 8 2-3

Undated postcards of the Hall and surroundings in early 20th century from *Sixteen Views of Ingatestone and District* compiled by G P Smith Printed by The Bazaar, Ingatestone

1992 Postcard of the Hall and Courtyard in 1905 from *Ingatestone and District in Old Picture Postcards* compiled by Kenneth Langford European Library, Zaltbommel, Netherlands (4th edition)

Archival Items

1566 Thomas Larke Survey of Ingatestone Hall for Sir William Petre (Essex Record Office D/DP M186) Petre family archives – held at the Essex Record Office, Chelmsford. Some items retained in family private collection.

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