

**BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL
INGATESTONE**

LONGHOLT

Grid Ref: TQ649 990

Longholt retains the basic layout of the pre 1932 garden designed by landscape designer Percy Cane (1881-1976).

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Longholt is thought to have been designed by the late Victorian architect George Sherrin (1843-1909) who, in 1882, took a number of leases on plots close to the railway station in Ingatestone. Sherrin designed more than ten buildings in Ingatestone: seven houses in close proximity to the station including his own home, The Gate House, where the gardens included a tennis lawn and 'green alleys', and a lake where the public skated. Sherrin's houses were designed in the Arts and Crafts style.

Chapman & André's 1777 map of Ingatestone shows open land to the south-west and Hall Lane, the road to Ingatestone Hall, remained undeveloped. The 1839 tithe map for the parish shows little change; the open fields forming part of Lord Petre's lands. The introduction of the railway line in 1842 cut across Hall Lane with a level crossing: the first part of the lane being renamed Station Lane, while beyond the level crossing it remained Hall Lane. By the time the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map was issued in 1875 the first of the new Victorian houses had been built in the Station Lane area: most of Sherrin's houses were built in the 1880's.

The Rose Garden at Longholt was designed for R. Neville, Esq by Percy Cane prior to 1932. Percy Cane (1881-1976) began a career in journalism in 1915 by writing for *My Garden Illustrated*. Cane then studied at the Chelmsford County School of Horticulture in 1918 and by 1919 was established in London as a garden architect. Percy Cane's clients were mostly wealthy aristocrats with large private gardens, and he became one of the most prominent designers from the 1930's to the 1950's. His commissions provided material for his books on garden design as well as providing material for other authors, such as the 1932 *Gardens and Gardening* edited by F.A. Mercer, in which the garden at Longholt is featured with a black and white photograph of the garden as well as a description.

The description beneath the photograph in *Gardens and Gardening* describes the Longholt garden as 'A brick walk leading to the Rose Garden, at Longholt, Ingatestone, Essex, designed for R. Neville, Esq., by Percy S. Cane. This is planted chiefly with blue, mauve and grey flowers to give the nicest setting for the roses in the sunk rose garden, which is plainly seen from this walk'. In this photograph there is a wooden fence across the garden behind the rose garden but a further lawned area stretched beyond this. In the twentieth century Longholt Cottage was built within the rear of this plot abutting the stream. In Percy Cane's 1934 *Garden Design of Today* he writes 'The design of the rose garden should, in general, be based on some geometrical plan, such as a circle, an octagon or a square. the beds should not be too large in proportion, and yet each should give an effective mass of colour. The centre of the garden may be emphasized by a figure in lead or stone, an old well-head or a sundial.'

The hard landscaping of Percy Cane's design has survived into the twenty-first century although roses have been replaced with herbaceous planting and shrubs. The house is in private ownership.

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM & SETTING

Longholt is situated in Hall Lane immediately beyond the railway level crossing and not far from Ingatestone Hall. The grounds of the house are separated from Hall Lane by a hedge and ditch. The village of Ingatestone is surrounded by open countryside and there is arable land beyond Longholt. Chelmsford is approximately six miles from Longholt and approximately five miles from Brentwood with the A12 carriageway running alongside the village. Longholt forms part of the Station Lane Conservation Area designated in 1981 and is part of the Greenbelt.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

Longholt is approached from Hall Lane through wooden gates by a long gravel drive which extends to the side of the house. Wrought iron gates lead to the rear garden which runs parallel with the drive giving views of the lawned area adjacent to the drive.

PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS

The house is constructed of red brick with part clay tile hung elevations relieved by symmetrically placed small pane windows. The house is believed to have been constructed in the late 19th century and designed by George Sherrin, a noted Essex architect. Longholt has not been listed by Historic England although the 2008 *Ingatestone Station Lane Conservation Area Character Appraisal* recommended it for listing.

REFERENCES

Books and Articles

Cane, Percy S. 1934 *Garden Design of To-day* Methuen & Co. Ltd., London p59

Langford, Kenneth A *neglected Essex architect* in *Essex Countryside* 1984 pp22-23

Mercer, F.A. (editor) 1932 *Gardens and Gardening* London: The Studio Limited p69

Webber, Ronald 1976 *Percy Cane: Essex's garden designer supreme* in *Essex Countryside* September pp38-39

Maps and Images

1777 Chapman & André's map of Essex plate XVII

1839 Tithe map of Ingatestone (Essex Record Office)

1893/96 second edition 25" to the mile ordnance survey map sheet LX5

Archival Items

2008 *Ingatestone Station Lane Conservation Area Character Appraisal*

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