Essex HER

Name: West Horndon - Old Thorndon Hall, 'Pigeon Mound'
SMR Number: 1854
Type of record: Monument
Grid Reference: TQ 622 897
Map Sheet: TQ68NW
Parish: HERONGATE AND INGRAVE, BRENTWOOD, ESSEX

Summary

Pigeon Mound, mound, 200yds west of Old Hall site, c100ft in diameter, 12ft high.

Full description

'Pigeon Mound', mound, 200yds west of Old Hall site, c100ft in diameter, 12ft high. <1> In good condition in 1953, purpose unknown. <2> 'On the basis of the Walker map, Pigeon Mount would seem to be a post-1598 feature of landscape gardening'. <4> A contour survey undertaken by ECC; FAG in April 1995 in a defined area of Thorndon Country Park included the site of the earthen mound known as Pigeon Mount. <7>

Following the survey a programme of trial trenching was undertaken. A sub-surface structure had been identified on the summit of Pigeon Mount by a resistivity survey, carried out in 1994 by Peter Cott. Three trenches were investigated; all three contained the structural remains of an octagonal brick building, 6.5m from wall to wall. This is interpreted as being either an ornate dovecote or a garden feature, constructed in the early 17th century and subsequently renovated in the early 18th century and demolished sometime after 1763. <8> A resistivity survey undertaken in 1994 showed that there was probably a square structure in the centre on top of the mound, with no significant other features. <9> The Pigeon Mount is associated with the landscaping scheme of the 8th Lord Petre carried out between 1733 and his premature death in 1742. It is an isolated element of the abandoned formal pleasure gardens surrounding Old Thorndon Hall. The Mount appears to have been situated on the central axis of the geometrically arranged Elizabethan orchard. <10> However, an illustration of 1669 shows the existence of the Pigeon Mount with dovecote so it was not constructed from the rubble of West Horndon Church. <11>

The site lies to the south of the present limit of Thorndon south county park and was until recently in an area of arable cultivation. Now that the extent of the site has been clearly defined by field walking it is important that the nature and archaeological potential of the site should be evaluated. In the mean time it should be taken out of arable cultivation and the area allowed to form permanent grassland. This will create ideal conditions for the preservation of any surviving archaeological remains. <12>


<2> Ordnance Survey, unknown, OS cards, TQ68NW01, 1953 (RECORD SHEET/FORM). SEX52658.


<5> Walker, J, 1598, Old Thorndon Hall (Map). SEX6708.


<12> Austin, Louise, 1994, County Parks Archaeological Survey - Thorndon Park (DESC TEXT). SEX61273.

<13> Austin, Louise, 1994, County Parks Archaeological Survey - Thorndon Park (DESC TEXT). SEX61273.


<15> Saunders, Helen, 2004, CP/04/01/01-01/05, 5 overall (AP). SEX65426.

### Monument Types

- LANDSCAPE PARK (Post Medieval - 1540 AD to 1900 AD)

### Associated Events

- Cott, P J (Ref: ?)
- FIELD SURVEY by Buckley, DG, 1975 (Ref: ?)

### Protected Status

- Conservation Area: Thorndon Park
- Historic Environment Character Area: Thames Gateway 113

### Sources and further reading


<2> RECORD SHEET/FORM: Ordnance Survey. unknown. OS cards. TQ68NW01, 1953.

<3> DESC TEXT: unknown. 1960 onwards. SMR form unknown.


<5> Map: Walker, J. 1598. Old Thorndon Hall.

<6> MENTION: Buckley, DG. 1975. Old Thorndon Hall.


<15> AP: Saunders, Helen. 2004. CP/04/01/01-01/05. 5 overall.
Related records

- **1853**: Part of: East of site of St Nicholas's Church, West Horndon (Find Spot)
- **1850**: Part of: Old Thorndon Hall, West Horndon (Monument)
- **1851**: Part of: Site of St Nicholas's Church, West Horndon (Monument)
- **1852**: Part of: Site of St Nicholas's Church, West Horndon (Monument)

Images

West Horndon - Old Thorndon Hall © Essex County Council

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