



Designation of Historic Designed Landscapes



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Before we start, be aware that Designation is a messy business. Many designations within the historic environment overlap – whether they are national designations or local.

Thus a single site might be covered by several national designations – it may contain several listed structures and some scheduled archaeology all within a registered designed landscape; and at the same time it may form part of a Conservation Area, contain protected trees and fall within an AONB.

All these factors are important and need to be considered when framing a response to development proposals.

[Hidcote - Grade I RPG within Cotswold AONB]

Heritage asset designation

National designation ('Heritage List')



Locally listed ('Local List')



Historic Environment Record



In a nutshell, in order to register within the planning system, and be referenced in the National Planning Policy Framework, it needs to qualify as a 'heritage asset'.

In order to qualify as a heritage asset it must be included on the Historic Environment Record (local records kept by each county authority). If a site is on the HER, it will then get at least a small amount of recognition and consideration.

Next tier of protection is if the local authority has also decided to include it on a Local List of sites – it has recognition as being important at a local level, and some protection as a result.

Highest tier is if it is recognised as being on national importance and is therefore on the national Heritage List.

| Status | Heritage asset? | Consultation requirement | Weight in decisions |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Registered I or II* | Yes, designated | Historic England | Great weight |
| Registered II | Yes, designated | Gardens Trust | Great weight |
| Locally Listed / on HER | Yes, undesignated | None | Some weight |
| Not on HER | No | None | No weight |

Historic Environment Records



So, let's work our way through the Designation tiers.

What are **Historic Environment Records**? A county-based collection of information, textual and mapped, covering thousands of archaeological sites, fieldwork and other elements of the historic environment of the county.

They will attempt to gather all the different designations and features of the heritage asset.

Get material from lots of different sources, including specialist academic groups such as CGTs. So take Statements of Significance, Reports, illustrations, site notes and put them into a database.

2 main uses – as material for academics, researchers etc, but also to inform planners and planning decisions.

When a planner receives a planning application, you will remember that NPPF requires them to assess it against the heritage asset's Significance.

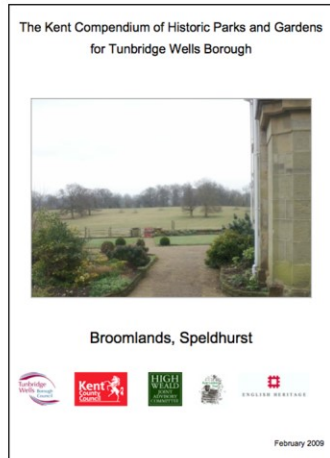
They will need to know more about the heritage asset, in a hurry, and will go to the HER as their main port of call.

If we have ensured that the very best information is in the HER, then we will have armed our planners with the tools they need to assess and perhaps reject that application.

This is particularly where Statements of Significance come in, because planners and developers won't have the time or skills to digest a researcher's huge dissertation, so it's important that material goes onto the HER with an easily pick-up-able Statement of Significance which immediately explains to them what is important to conserve about a heritage asset. (By the way, it's worth remembering that by adding something to an HER you qualify it as a heritage asset, which gives it a degree of protection or at least acknowledgment

in the NPPF.)

Local Listing



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Plenty of sites valuable but not eligible for national Registration, so wherever possible these are added to **Local Lists** held by local authorities. Many County Gardens Trusts contribute to the composition of these.

No additional planning controls are provided, but the inclusion of a site on a local list means its conservation as a heritage asset is an objective of the National Planning Policy Framework, and therefore a 'material consideration' in planning.

Kent GT's Compendium is always a good example, because their reports are fully compliant with the HE Local Listing guidance!

In the early 1990s, Kent Gardens Trust in association with Kent County Council produced a register of significant parks and gardens within the county (The Kent Gardens Compendium). This compendium has been of considerable benefit to the various planning departments in Kent in enabling them to identify sites which will need to be protected. This is common to many CGTs.

But KGT since felt that this register needed to be updated and formalised in greater detail, so embarked on the Kent Compendium Review Project. Since 2009, a group of volunteers have been trained to systematically research and record gardens identified as being of significant historical or social interest. Major gardens in the care of bodies such as the National Trust and English Heritage were excluded as they are already well documented, but all the reports are written up in an HE approved format. I've got an example entry on display here.

Volunteers have now looked at parks and gardens in the areas covered by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council and the reports have been presented to the two councils and should provide valuable source material to the respective planning departments. They have also done some reports for Thanet District Council and are now engaged in a major project for Medway Council. They are very grateful to all the councils we have worked with for their support.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB]



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Tangentially, AONBs are another type of local designation, and these also relate to historic parks and gardens.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are areas which are locally designated for their scenic and aesthetic value. As local designations they do not function as planning authorities in their own right, but the local planning authority/authorities within whose jurisdiction the AONB lies will have specific policies to safeguard the special interest of the area in their local plan.

AONBs are managed by Boards which include representatives from the relevant local authority/authorities and the community. There is an important opportunity for CGTs to become involved in the management of AONBs.

Many AONBs will include within them historic designed landscapes. The very extensive Cotswold AONB, for instance, includes a large number of designed landscapes, including such internationally important sites as Hidcote.

The debate over the impact of HS2 on the Chilterns AONB and several nationally and locally designated designed landscapes within that AONB illustrates the importance of this designation in responding to planning proposals which may have a significantly adverse impact on the designed and vernacular landscape. These will be concerns shared by many beyond the CGTs, and there is fruitful ground here for building bridges and alliances.

[Cotswold AONB]

Tree Preservation Orders



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Whilst we're on tangents, let's also just remember TPOs.

Tree Preservation Orders relate specifically to safeguarding trees, and are useful in certain circumstances. However, where they are mis-applied or unimaginatively enforced, they can be a bar to the proper conservation management of a designed landscape.

TPOs can be applied to either specimen trees, or to a wider group of trees (a 'blanket' TPO). A tree or group of trees covered by an Order cannot be felled or have work carried out on them without the prior consent of the local authority. Where work is carried out without permission, fines may be levied and new trees may be required to be planted.

[Durlston Castle, Swanage, Dorset - key circulation route within Grade II RPG overgrown and key designed views obscured due to inhibition on appropriate tree management due to blanket TPO]

National Designations

- Scheduled Monuments
- Listed Buildings
- Registered Battlefields
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- All on the Heritage List at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>



So having looked at the opportunities to offer some planning protection through local designations in HERs and Local Lists, let's turn to national designation.

National designations comprise:

Scheduling for archaeology and monuments (SAMs)

Listing for buildings (LBs)

Registering for historic battlefields

Registering for historic designed landscapes/parks and gardens (RPGs)

Scheduled Monuments



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Scheduled Ancient Monuments can take many forms, ranging from 'pure' archaeological remains, to ruins of more recent structures such as abbeys and castles. These remains might seem rather removed from historic designed landscapes, but in fact many Scheduled Monuments are closely related to designed landscapes.

Scheduling for archaeology was the earliest form of national designation; Scheduled Monuments enjoy the highest level of legal protection.

["Pure" archaeology - Trethevy Quoit, Cornwall (on edge of Bodmin Moor) - SAM - "one of Britain's best preserved Neolithic portal dolmens" (Pevsner, Cornwall - 2014 edition)]



Some SAMs include archaeological remains of important historic gardens, such as Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire.

[Kenilworth Castle - SAM and Grade II* RPG]



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In other cases the Scheduled Monument has been incorporated into the design of the landscape as an aesthetic feature – such as the Iron Age fort at Pencarrow, Cornwall which forms a picturesque incident on the 19th century approach to the house.

[Pencarrow, Bodmin, Cornwall - remains of an Iron Age hill fort (SAM) incorporated into the Grade II* landscape in the early C19 by Sir William Molesworth as a picturesque feature on his new entrance drive (the drive goes through the fort which is on the edge of the park)]

Listed Buildings



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Listed buildings can take many forms and are the most frequently encountered form of nationally designated heritage asset.

Relating to historic parks and gardens, a listed building might be a country house;

[Bourton Hall, Warwickshire - Grade II listed house as the focal point of an unregistered early C20 garden by Harold Peto]



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Or it might be a structure specifically designed to fulfil an aesthetic or practical function within a landscape design, such as a prospect tower or folly;

[Thomas Archer's Pavilion at Wrest Park - Grade I Listed landscape structure in a Grade I registered landscape]



or it might be a structure related to the physical layout of a much smaller garden scheme, such as a terrace wall, fountain or flight of steps.

Each listed structure enjoys statutory protection, and the setting of the structure is similarly protected.

[Dunchurch Lodge, Warwickshire - two (of several) Grade II Listed landscape structures in a Grade II garden by Thomas Mawson - lattice gate to walled garden and fruit room in walled garden]

Registered Battlefields

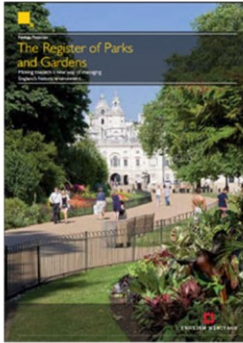


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Historic Battlefields might seem at first sight remote from historic designed landscapes; but some designed landscapes, such as Radway Grange in Warwickshire, are specifically related to an adjacent historic battlefield, in this case the Civil War Battle of Edge Hill, and form an important element in the setting of the designated battlefield.

Registered Battlefields do not enjoy statutory protection, but are a material consideration in the planning process. The impact of development on the setting of a Registered Battlefield is also a material consideration.

[Battlefields - Radway Grange, Warwickshire (II* RPG) overlooks the site of the Civil War Battle of Edgehill. Laid out by Sanderson Miller in the C18, the landscape design includes the prospect tower said to stand on the site where the Royal Standard was raised at the Battle]



Registered Parks and Gardens

- Grade I: exceptional interest
- Grade II*: more than special interest
- Grade II: of special interest



The **Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest** is established under the provisions of the National Heritage Act 1983-4; It is maintained by Historic England, and presented through the National Heritage List on the HE website;

Registered parks and gardens do not enjoy statutory protection. They are, however, a material consideration in the planning process, and change affecting their settings (which might include designed views out from the landscape or in to it from a specific point) are also a material consideration.

If a site is on the Register, lpas must consult the GT on any planning applications that may affect it. They must consult HE on applications relating to I and II* sites.

It comprises approximately c1,650 sites. Sites included on the Register are broken down into grades (I, II* and II).

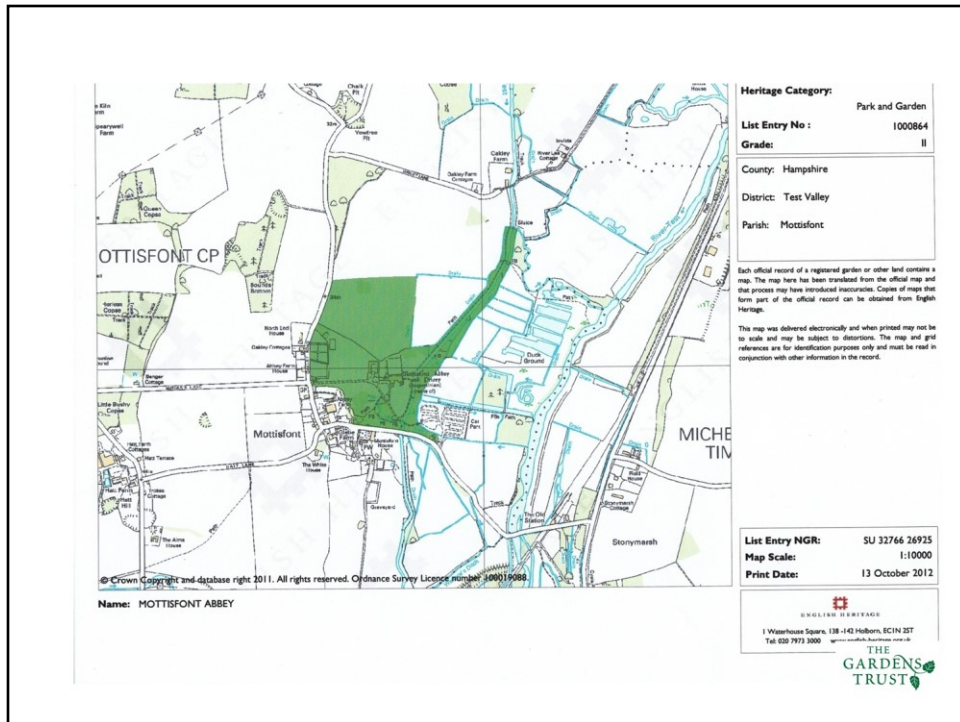
Wales and Scotland have their own Register and Inventory of designed landscapes.

Registered Parks and Gardens come in many shapes and sizes, and cover pretty much every designed landscape type.

Criteria:

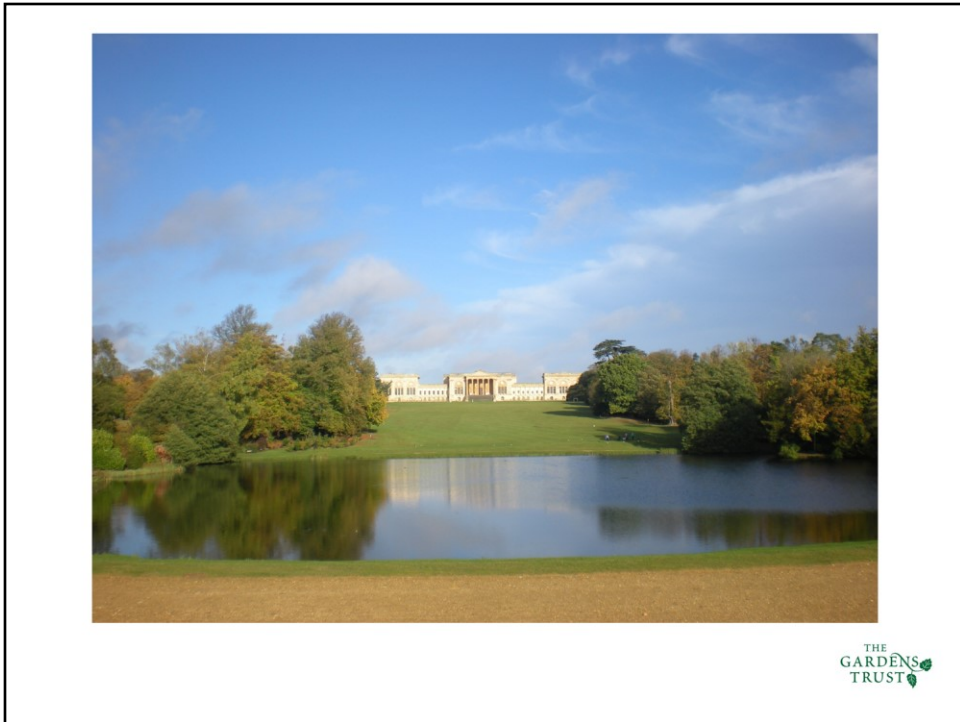
- Sites formed pre-1750 where at least a proportion of the original layout is still in evidence
- Sites laid out between 1750-1840 where enough of the layout survives to reflect the original design

- Sites with a main phase post-1840 which are of special interest and relatively intact, the degree of required interest rising as the site becomes closer in time
- Particularly tricky after 1945. Sites less than 30 years old are normally only registered if they are outstanding and under threat.



The written Register description (available via the National Heritage List, HE website) sets out quite clearly the essential elements of historic significance relating to the site, as well as its historic development and condition at the time of assessment for designation.

The area covered by the designation is defined on a map base.



They range from vast and complex 18th century landscapes, such as Stowe in Buckinghamshire,

[Stowe, Bucks (Grade I RPG)]



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to much smaller sites which might be better described as 'gardens', such as the 19th century detached town gardens at Hill Close in Warwick.

[Hill Close Gardens, Warwick (Grade II* RPG - group of early C19 detached town gardens)]



Cemeteries, public parks and institutional landscapes created for hospitals, asylums and even 20th century university campuses (such as The Vale at Edgbaston) are all included on the Register.

[London Road Cemetery, Coventry (Grade I RPG - Joseph Paxton, 1847; v early example of a municipal cemetery)]

World Heritage Sites



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Let's just look at a couple of other designations which are not on the national Heritage List but do nonetheless operate as national designations.

World Heritage Sites are designed by UNESCO on the advice of ICOMOS UK. Although the name suggest that these sites should enjoy a very high level of protection, in fact until recently the designation had no real status in English planning law. However, the National Planning Policy Framework does refer to World Heritage Sites, and makes clear that they should be accorded a similar level of protection through the planning process as nationally designated heritage assets – which is to say there should be a presumption against harmful change to the site itself and to its setting.

World Heritage Sites tend to cover relatively large areas, often in towns, and often include elements of historic designed landscape within them. The Bath World Heritage Site, for example, contains several public parks which are themselves Registered Parks and Gardens – and which contribute in a very important way to the character and interest of the WHS.

[World Heritage Site - Bath. Includes Grade II RPG (Sydney Gardens), many Listed buildings, all within Bath Conservation Area]

National Parks



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National Parks are designated at national level by central Government.

Covering large geographical areas such as the South Downs, Dartmoor or Exmoor, the National Parks function as their own planning authority, and will have their own policies for safeguarding the historic environment. The historic and cultural interest of an area may be a major factor in the designation of the National Park, so proposed development affecting these factors should be highlighted as a serious concern.

Most National Parks will contain within them major and less well-known designed landscapes: Castle Drogo in Dartmoor National Park; Petworth in the South Downs National Park; Chatsworth in the Peak District National Park. The National Park will often act as the setting for the historic designed landscape, with important designed views extending out from the park or garden into the surrounding landscape. There is often, therefore, a symbiotic relationship between the designed landscape, and the wider vernacular landscape surrounding it and lying within the National Park.

[National Parks - Castle Drogo, Grade II* RPG surrounding Grade I Listed Castle in Dartmoor National Park]

Conservation Areas

- First Conservation Areas designated in 1967, now over 8000 in England
- Local designation for areas with special architectural or historic interest
- No demolition of buildings
- No tree works
- No development adversely affecting the “special” character



Conservation Areas are perhaps the most important and most useful form of national designation for helping to protect historic designed landscapes.

Conservation areas are designated at local level by the local planning authority, and are intended to highlight and protect areas of special historic and architectural significance from adverse change. Conservation area designation carries with it various controls:

No demolition of buildings (or other structures) without prior consent;

No work to trees within the area without prior consent

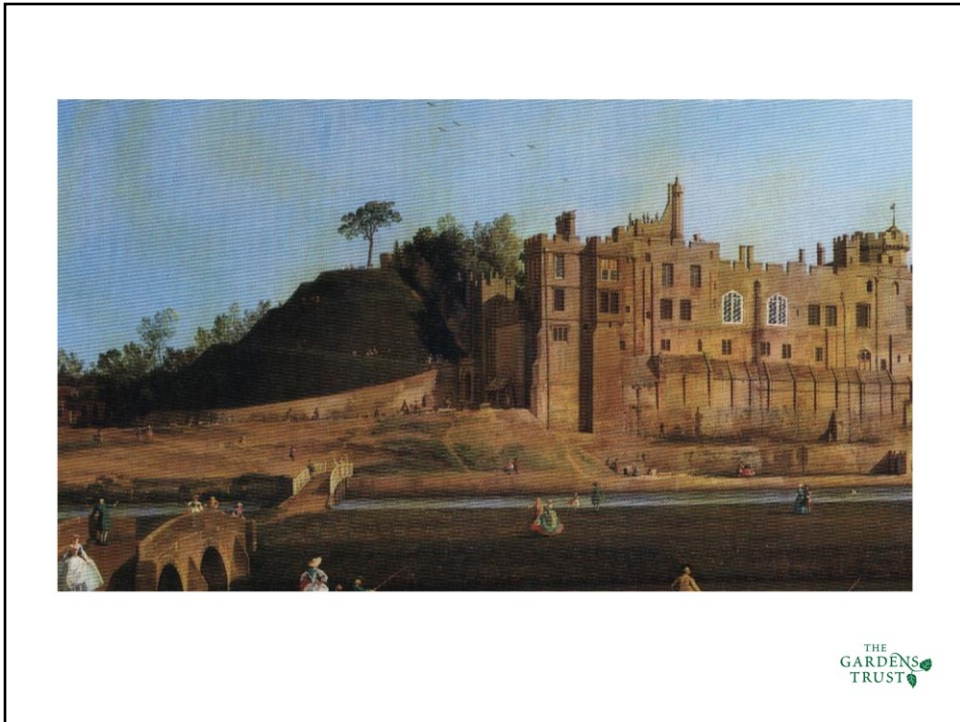
No development which would adversely affect the special historic or aesthetic interest of the area without justification and consent



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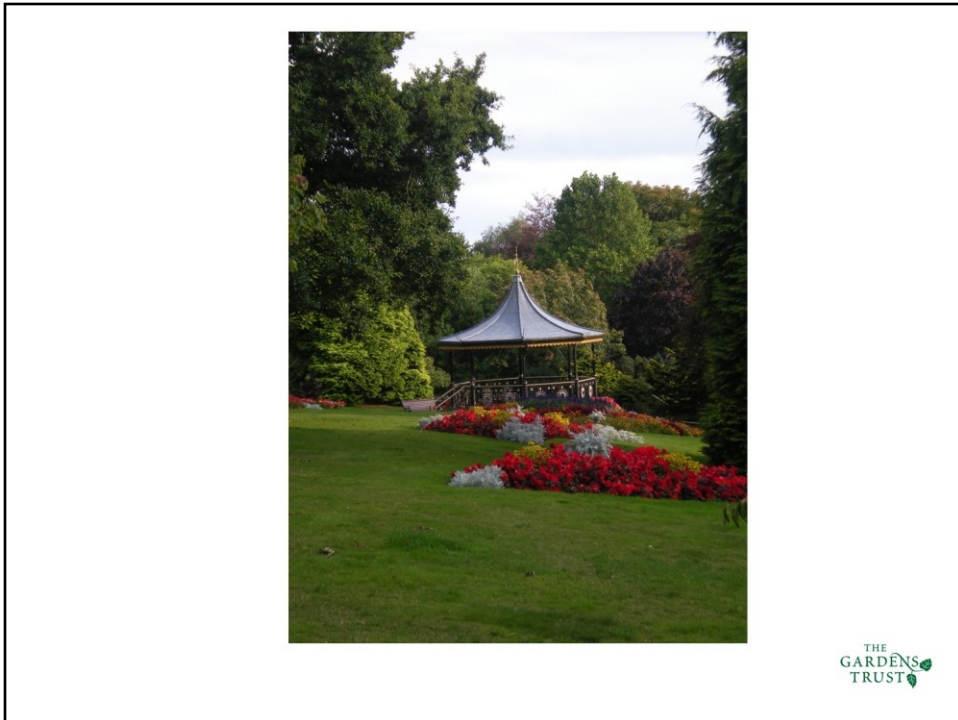
Many Conservation Areas will have an historic designed landscape within them – often, indeed, acting as the focal point of a piece of urban design. Such a landscape might be a town walk, a public park, cemetery or area of historic communal gardens (such as a London Square garden). [left: Church Hill Memorial Gardens, Walsall, West Mids - Post-War design by Jellicoe at the heart of the Walsall Conservation Area]

In other cases, the area covered by the conservation area designation forms part of a much larger historic landscape design. An example of this might be the late 18th century model estate village of Milton Abbas in Dorset, which was conceived as a highly picturesque element of the designed landscape. [right: Milton Abbas, Dorset - late C18 model village, probably by Brown, functions as part of Milton Abbey designed landscape but adjoins II* RPG. Designated as conservation area]



So, to summarise, there are lots of national designations, and some sites, such as Warwick Castle, greedily manage to be Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens all at once. When you're writing comment letters on planning applications, do look at pulling in more designations than just a site's position on the Register.

[Warwick Castle - SAM, Grade I Listed building surrounded by a Grade I RPG]



However, national designation, let alone the Register of Parks and Gardens, is not the be all and end all.

The Register should not be seen as a complete or exhaustive national designation: not every historic designed landscape which merits inclusion on the Register has yet been assessed or even identified. You may find that you are dealing with development proposals affecting a site which you or your CGT feels to merit national designation, but which has not yet been assessed. You can always make the case to Historic England for such an assessment to take place, even if proposals for the site are already under consideration, but do also look seriously at whether there are other designations that you can use in its favour, be they national or local.

[Victoria Park, Truro, Cornwall - an example of an almost certainly registerable site which remains unregistered - proof that the Register is not a complete designation]

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