

Local list description and map for Grovfields, Grove Hill

Adopted 23rd September 2021

This area meets the following criteria for local listing:

- (A) Date and rarity.** The older a designed landscape is, and the fewer the surviving examples of its kind, the more likely it is to have special interest. Likely to be designated are:
 - i. sites formed before 1750 where at least a proportion of the original layout is still in evidence
- (B) Further considerations** which may influence selection, and may exceptionally be sufficient by themselves to merit:
 - i. Sites with a strong group value with other heritage assets

Summary and introduction:

Grovfields is of special interest for having evidence of early medieval, or possibly earlier, agricultural use, a post-medieval earth mound and sites of medieval ponds and sluice. The land comprises a steep grassy slope on one side of Harrow Hill, rising up towards the parish church of St Mary's. The land here was part of the estate of Harrow Manor in the C11th and later part of Rectory Manor estate. Now public open space, it is traversed by tarmac paths with perimeter trees, and has fine views over Harrow. There is strong group value with the grade II listed war memorial and the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area in which the land is sited.

Details:

The Grove Open Space, or Grovfields, is a steep grassy slope on one side of Harrow Hill rising up towards St Mary's parish church (q.v.) at the top of the hill. There is evidence of early medieval, or possibly earlier, agricultural use on Harrow Hill in the form of 8 wide terraces or strip lynchets. Other archaeological discoveries here include a post-medieval earth mound at the top near the path that leads to the church and churchyard, as well as the sites of medieval ponds and sluice at the bottom of the hill, and the possible location of a medieval carriageway near the hedged War Memorial. This was erected after WWI in the corner of the site at the junction of Grove Hill and Lowlands Road, which until c.1920 was the site of the village pound.

The land here was once part of the estate of Harrow Manor, recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086 when it was owned by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1094 the manor was subdivided and it became part of Rectory Manor estate. The Rectory Manor House may have been located on The Grove, land that is now owned

by Harrow School. In 1537 Rectory Manor was leased to Thomas Wriothsley, who became the Earl of Southampton, and who built fishponds in order to breed carp and to supply the house with water. The estate went through a succession of owners including Lord North, the Pitt family, and the Rushout family. The latter family became the Barons of Northwick who also owned the Manor of Flambards (q.v.). In 1805 the estate reputedly had pleasure grounds, woodland, ponds, lower gardens and kitchen gardens, and by 1865 most of the land was part of the Roxborough Estate.

The public open space today is traversed by tarmac paths, with perimeter trees, and fine views over Harrow from the top. A steel sculpture of a leaf has been erected in the north-west corner and symbolises the greenness of Harrow.

Sources:

London Parks and Gardens Trust, The London Inventory Historic Green Spaces, Harrow 2003

London Gardens Online: <http://www.londongardensonline.org.uk/gardens-online-record.php?ID=HRW015>

National list description:

Harrow on the Hill War Memorial: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1376638>

