

Local list description and map for Headstone Manor Recreation Ground

Adopted at Cabinet 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 which are early or representative examples of layout or a type of site, or the work of a designer (amateur or professional) of national importance
- ii. Sites having an association with significant persons or historic events
- iii. Sites with a strong group value with other heritage assets

Summary and introduction:

The area is of special local interest as Headstone Manor Recreation Ground is a remnant of a medieval estate once owned by the Archbishops of Canterbury, and the moated manor house remains in the park. The land was worked as a farm until the 1920s, and in 1925 it was sold to Hendon Rural District Council and opened as Headstone Park in 1928. Headstone Manor became a Museum and Heritage Centre in 1968 and since 1986 has been Harrow Museum and Heritage Centre. There is a strong association with significant figures of the past and strong group value with other heritage assets (such as the nationally listed Headstone Manor house, barns and granary and the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the moat and manor house).

Details:

Headstone Manor is the earliest timber-framed house in Middlesex, dating from 1344, encapsulated within a later house and sited on the only complete moat in the county, also 14th century, fed by the Yeading Brook, and probably ornamental. There is strong associations with significant figures of the past. The Manor was owned by the Archbishops of Canterbury from 9th century and was an estate of some 250 acres. The manor house rebuilt in 1344 by John Strafford then Lord of the Manor.

After 1546 ownership of the manor went to Sir Edward North. During the Civil War in 1631 it was owned by Simon Rewse and his family, Francis Rewse a cavalier knighted by Charles I. Debts forced him to sell the manor in 1649 and the house was added to it in the 1770s. The manor garden, north-east of the house, has a simple lawn. The recreation ground is a remnant of the medieval estate and was worked as a farm until the 1920s when it was sold to Hendon Rural District Council in 1925 although by then land was increasingly sold for housing development. It was opened as Headstone Park in 1928. Towards the end of the 19th century Headstone Races had been held in a couple of fields but were suppressed in 1899 due to rioting.

Headstone Manor became a museum in 1968 and since 1986 has been Harrow Museum and Heritage Centre. In 2017 a restoration of the site was completed which included converting part of the site to a wedding venue. The site includes a tithe barn, small barn and granary and Lottery funding was received for restoration. The barn is 150 feet long and 25 feet wide and dates from 1506; it was used for stabling and crop storage by the Archbishops and tenants. The barn was dilapidated by the 1920s and in 1943 some repairs were undertaken and it became the Barn Theatre, used as part of the wartime 'Holiday-at-Home' Scheme. In 2016 its restoration was again completed and it was converted to a wedding venue. The small barn is probably late 18th / early 19th century and was damaged by fire in the mid-1970s and remained a skeleton until 1995 when reconstruction began, reopening in 1996 and used for displays. In 1991 a late 18th century granary was brought from Pinner Park Farm, where it had stood near the site of the moat.

Within the area of the recreation ground is Headstone Copse, enclosed by fencing to the south-east of the moated manor which has probably existed as woodland for centuries, with mature oak and ash and old hedgerow along the east; the Yeading Brook runs through it.

Headstone Manor may have been the inspiration of Antony Trollope's Monkton Grange in his novel Orley Farm written in 1862. He lived in Harrow 'in utter misery' from 1816 -1834.

There is strong group value with other heritage assets as Headstone Manor house is grade I listed and the house and moat form a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The barn south-west of the manor is grade II* listed. The C17th outbuilding parallel to barn to south of Manor is grade II listed. The granary is also grade II listed.

Sources:

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

'Harrow Museum and Heritage Centre at Headstone Manor: A Friendly Guide', 1996

London Gardens Online:

<http://www.londongardensonline.org.uk/gardens-online-record.php?ID=HRW023>

National List descriptions:

Former granary:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1420464>

Outbuilding parallel to barn to south of Headstone Manor (formerly listed as outbuildings under Headstone Lane):

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1079684>

Headstone Manor: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1285855>

Barn south-west of Headstone Manor (formerly listed as tithe barn under Headstone Lane): <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1358623>

Headstone Manor moated site

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1005558>

