

Local list description and map for the Cedars

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 with a main phase of development post-1840 which are of special interest and relatively intact, the degree of required special interest rising as the site becomes closer in time
- (B) Further considerations** which may influence selection, and may exceptionally be sufficient by themselves to merit:
- i. Sites having an association with significant persons or historic events
 - ii. Sites with a strong group value with other heritage assets

Summary and introduction:

The Cedars is of special interest for being a part of the former gardens and parkland of a now demolished C19th house once owned by Thomas Blackwell of the well-known Crosse & Blackwell food processing company. It retains a large number of very fine trees, including notable lime, many Lebanon cedars and Sequoias, several large oaks and yews, interspersed with laurel shrubberies, flowering shrubs and trees. It has a strong group value with the grade II listed entrance gates, gate piers and curved flanking railings 50 yards east of Courtenay Avenue. This former entrance has remarkable stone gate piers, wrought iron gates and curved flanking railings and remains on the Uxbridge Road. The Cedars is also associated with the locally listed All Saints Church, Harrow Weald and the grade II listed church of St Anslem at Hatch End.

Details:

In 1834, Thomas Blackwell, who came from a prominent local family and with his friend Edmund Crosse is famous for the food processing company that bears their names, married Jane Ann Bernasconi, the heiress to The Cedars, then known as Clock House. The house had large surrounding gardens and parkland. The house used to stand in the north- west corner of what is now a public park until at least 1956.

The house was later enlarged by his eldest surviving son Thomas, later Sir Thomas, Francis Blackwell, who owned and farmed much land in the area around Watford

and Harrow. At his father's death in 1879 he assumed control of the Crosse and Blackwell business, and he was a prominent local benefactor. His many charitable works included the presentation of Harrow Weald Recreation Ground to the parish, the restoration of Harrow Weald's parish church of All Saints (which is locally listed), and the donation of a site for the church of St Anselm at Hatch End which is grade II listed. Like his father, when he died in 1907 he was buried in Harrow Weald churchyard.

Thomas Blackwell held parties for local children in the grounds of The Cedars, which contained a small rabbit warren that provided food for residents. An area of mature woodland in the north-west was planted with numerous exotic trees and shrubs including maples, pines, Portugal and cherry laurels, rhododendron, Chinese privet and bamboo.

At one time there was a sundial that commemorated a visit by Sir Walter Scott in 1806, when he was staying at Bentley Priory (q.v.), an occasion recorded in Walter Druett's 'The Stanmores and Harrow Weald Through the Ages' (1938).

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=HRW008>

Walter W Druett, 'The Stanmores and Harrow Weald Through the Ages' (Hillingdon Press, 1938) p234;

Joanne Verden 'Ten Walks Around Pinner', (The Pinner Association) 1999 ed.;

Teresa Farino, Charlotte Pagendam, Sue Swales & Mathew Frith, 'Nature Conservation in Harrow', Ecology Handbook 13 (London Ecology Unit) 1989

National list descriptions:

Church of St Anselm: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1245432>

Gates, gate piers and curved flanking railings 50 yds east of Courtney Avenue: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1194336>

