



# WESTBURY HOUSE, EAST MEON, HAMPSHIRE

HERITAGE APPRAISAL

An assessment of the heritage significance of  
Westbury House, East Meon, Hampshire

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# Contents

- 1.0 Background
- 2.0 Introduction
- 3.0 Historic context
- 4.0 Description and analysis
- 5.0 Significance of Westbury House

## Appendices

- A. Location Plan
- B. Historic maps
- C. Historic images
- D. Figures
- E. Heritage assets and relevant list descriptions

## WESTBURY HOUSE, EAST MEON, HAMPSHIRE

### Heritage Appraisal

#### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 This report develops upon the work undertaken previously to establish the significance of Westbury House and place it within its historic context.
- 1.2 A report was undertaken by RPS Group Westbury House, East Meon Heritage Statement October 2019. This heritage appraisal develops upon the findings of this report.

#### 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Westbury Park (see Location Plan at **Appendix A**) is 9km west of Petersfield and 1 km east of West Meon, Hampshire. The parish boundary between East and West Meon runs north-south through the site. The house and park lie in the parish of West Meon.
- 2.2 Westbury House is a large multi-phased country house in a parkland setting. The house, whose site has its origins in the medieval period, dates to a fire of a1904 that destroyed much of a previous Georgian mansion on the site.
- 2.3 The parkland includes (to the north of the house) a Scheduled deserted medieval village (List Entry Number 1001942) , which includes the ruinous chapel of St Nicolas ( also Grade II Listed) and a Grade II Listed 18<sup>th</sup> century stables and coach houses also to the north of the house and on the west side of the northern approach to the house.
- 2.4 The house itself does not lie within a scheduled monument and is not on the National Heritage List for England. It is not within a designated conservation area, or a Registered Park and Garden. It is listed on the Hampshire Gardens Trust register of parks and gardens.
- 2.5 The building is presently unoccupied and in a very poor condition.
- 2.6 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by James Webb BSc (Hons) MSc (Hist Con) PG Dip UD IHBC, Director of Forum Heritage Services. The Statement will provide a summary of the history and development of the building and identify the principal elements of historical and architectural significance in terms of both the building as its setting.

### 3.0 Historic Context

- 3.1 Westbury House lies immediately to the south of the ruined remains of the c13th century Chapel of St Nicholas and the earthwork remains of a deserted medieval village.
- 3.2 There is evidence for a middle Bronze Age settlement site and dispersed Iron Age, Roman and medieval finds (found in the garden of Westbury Cottage) c300m north of the site. Works to construct a swimming pool immediately east of Westbury House found Roman and medieval pottery, whilst finds from the roots of trees immediately south of the scheduled monument included 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century pottery. Excavations of the roots of two felled trees to the immediate south of Westbury House revealed a pit containing a Neolithic flint axe, Iron Age pottery, early medieval pottery and 11<sup>th</sup> century Portchester ware, medieval pottery of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries, 16<sup>th</sup> Century pottery and post medieval pottery.
- 3.3 Documentary records extend back to the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, when Westbury was known as Wesberie, Westburia and Westbyrie, meaning 'the manor to the west', as it was situated near the western boundary of the Hundred of East Meon. It was recorded as comprising three hides, belonging to the Ulnod of Edward the Confessor. It is subsequently recorded in the Domesday survey as three hides, as a Tithing of East Meon.
- 3.4 In 1322 Robert le Ewer ('Lewer'), the Lord of the manor and yeoman of King Edward II, was granted permission to fortify the house and also the right of free warren. Le Ewer also held Odiham Castle.
- 3.5 During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries Westbury was owned by the Fawconer family. It is currently uncertain when the village was abandoned, but it is known that the Chapel of St Nicholas remained intact until at least 1703.
- 3.6 In 1722 Westbury was purchased by, Sir Peter Warren, who in 1745 captured Louisburg on behalf of the New England colonies and was promoted to Rear Admiral of the Blue. He married a rich American heiress, Susanna, daughter of Stephen de Lancey. They built a fine Palladian house at Westbury and commissioned the celebrated royal landscape gardener Charles Bridgeman to design landscaped grounds, thought to have been laid out in the 1720s.
- 3.7 The approach to the house was south along a tree-lined drive off the road between the villages of East Meon and West Meon. The drive looped into an oval on the north side of the house, and on the south side were pleasure grounds. Surrounding the house and gardens was a working estate with a farmyard, barns and stables, fields and timber plantations.
- 3.8 In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Westbury passed to Warren's grand-daughter, Suzannah Maria, who had married her first cousin, Viscount Gage. (The first Baron Gage of Castlebar and Viscount Gage of Castle Island, had been ennobled in 1720) The Gage family was based in Firle, West Sussex, and the couple divided their time between there and Westbury.
- 3.9 The 1851 census lists Westbury as occupied by the fourth Viscount, Thomas William Gage, and the Tithe Apportionments show that most of the parish land to the west of the main village was owned, and much of it farmed, by him. This included Riplington, Drayton, Peake, Coombe and parts of Hyden.

- 3.10 The walled garden and orchards may have utilised in the mid-nineteenth century to produce greengages, when Thomas Gage introduced and cultivated the 'Green Gage' plum in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. It is believed that the second of two ice houses in the grounds was built to preserve the fruit.
- 3.11 The 1861 census records the Satoris family as tenants in the house. They were distant relatives of the Gages. May's mother was Adelaide Kemble, a famous opera singer of the period, and a member of a prominent theatrical family. She was a renowned hostess and friend of great literary and artistic figures, including Robert Browning and Sir Frederic Leighton.
- 3.12 In 1891 The Hampshire Field Club noted that "Some remains of the medieval house which Rober Lewer was allowed to krenelate (sic.) may still be seen in the cellars of this mansion."<sup>1</sup>
- 3.13 Westbury was bought in 1866 by the Anglo-American Baltic trader John Delaware Lewis. In 1904, the Times of London reported the heroism of his son, Colonel Le Roy Lewis, in saving the lives of some of his family and domestic staff from a devastating fire which destroyed the 18<sup>th</sup> century house (See **Figures 1 and 2 Appendix C**). The Times noted that 'The mansion itself is an old one, standing in a well-wooded park of 500 acres, and is in the Queen Anne style. It contained many fine pictures and some rich carving by Gibbons. Most of the rooms were wainscotted in oak, and there was a fine library. All these have been destroyed, only a few articles of furniture being saved. The family lost all their personal belongings.'
- 3.14 Colonel Le Roy Lewis (later CB CMG DSO) set about immediately rebuilding the mansion (rebuilt 1904-6). A contemporary description notes ground-floor rooms included a 'saloon or lounge' (45ft by 27ft), with oak-panelled walls and housing a 'three-manual organ, electrically blown', an elegant drawing room (72ft by 21ft), fitted with mahogany glazed bookcases of Chippendale design, a dining room (32ft by 21ft), with painted panel walls; plus a study, boudoir and billiards room, a passenger lift, electrical and gas plant and central heating.
- 3.15 In 1924 the estate was broken up and the house was sold to Thomas Whitehead at auction, he converted it into a boys' preparatory school. The school ran until 1977.
- 3.16 In the 1980s the house was converted for use as a care home specialising in the treatment of patients with brain injuries. The care home closed in June 2016.

### **Cartographic and documentary evidence**

- 3.17 A survey plan c1720 prepared by Charles Bridgeman (**Figure 1 Appendix B**) appears to be the earliest cartographic record of the house and its grounds. It shows the extent of planned landscaping around the 18<sup>th</sup> century mansion. Of particular note is the stable block and kitchen garden appear to be in place by this time. The access is via a straight approach from the north which passes adjacent to the chapel of St Nicholas. One of the two bodies of water present on the site can be seen.
- 3.18 The West Meon tithe map of 1839 (**Figure 2 Appendix B**) shows the serpentine lake of Bridgeman's plan to the north but not the grand approach from the north. Rather a long circuitous route from the west at the junction of West Meon Road and Coombe Lane runs up to the house, no doubt to enjoy the full setting of the house on approach within its landscaped

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<sup>1</sup> Hampshire Gardens Trust – Westbury House register entry - <http://research.hgt.org.uk/item/page/31/>

- grounds leading down to the lake and the (potentially) semi-ruinous (and highly picturesque) Chapel of St Nicholas. The map appears at this time to show a series of extensions to the east of the house and various outbuildings to the east although these are not defined in detail on the map. The 'main' house is shown as relatively compact with projecting bays to the north and west and a small extension to its south-east corner.
- 3.19 The Ordnance Survey six inch mapping 1869-70 (**Figure 3 Appendix B**) provides a sense of the extent of the parkland associated with the house. The kitchen garden to the north-east is seen as well-established by this time. It is notable that the chapel of St Nicholas at this time is recorded as 'in ruins' by this date (see **Figure 4 Appendix B**).
- 3.20 There are some valuable immediate post-fire photographs (c1904) of Westbury House (**Figures 1 and 2 Appendix C**). These show the extent of damage with only part of the northern façade of the Georgian house surviving, none of the west elevation but all of the south façade. As can be subsequently seen in **Figure 3 Appendix C**, the decision was taken to completely demolish the existing principal Georgian building centred around the pediment and rebuild completely in the style and form seen presently. It is notable however that the Georgian wing to the east survived the fire and remains (in facades only) to this day.
- 3.21 The six inch and 25 inch Ordnance Survey mapping of 1909 (**Figures 5 and 6 Appendix B**) show the post-fire layout of the house and grounds. The double bays of the south (garden) side are clearly shown as is the extent of building which was retained post-fire running to the east from the main section of rebuilt house. There is an informal grouping of outbuildings to the east and south-east of the house, some of which survive today and were probably wood and fuel stores and buildings for the storage of equipment to maintain the gardens and grounds.
- 3.22 The 25 inch Ordnance Survey mapping of 1972 (**Figure 7 Appendix B**) shows the school extensions to the building particularly to the east and south-east. And there is now a tennis court to the north-west. Of particular note is the loss of the serpentine lake.

#### 4.0 **Heritage Assets** (please see **Appendix E** for relevant schedule and list descriptions)

- 4.1 There are number of designated heritage assets within and to the edge of the site boundary. A number of these would consider Westbury House to fall within their setting. The following are relevant to the consideration of the historic context of the house, and its grounds.
- 4.2 There is a scheduled monument comprising the archaeological remains of a deserted medieval village to the northern boundary of the site (approximately 70 metres to the north of the house), which is now semi-mature and mature woodland. Within the woodland (approximately 100 metres to the north of the house) is the Grade II listed remains of St. Nicholas Chapel, (added to the NHLE on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 1954). This building is also on the Historic England 'buildings at risk' register. There is only partial survival of walls of flint with stone dressings to this building.
- 4.3 Approximately 75 metres to the north-east of the house lies the 18<sup>th</sup> century former stables and coach houses (built around the time of the previous mansion construction). These are listed at Grade II, added to the NHLE on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1954. The stables and coach houses were converted into two dwellings in the 1990s.
- 4.4 In woodland to the south east of the house lie two Grade II Listed early 19<sup>th</sup> century ice houses (added to the NHLE on 12<sup>th</sup> march 1986).

- 4.5 Between 130m and 210m south of the house is a zig-zag bastioned moat or 'ha-ha', which separates the house and immediate pleasure grounds from the wider park. The ha-ha is constructed of knapped flint.
- 4.6 To the immediately east of the stable block lies a c.4ha of brick walled kitchen gardens and orchards. Within the kitchen gardens there are semi-derelict glasshouses to the north wall.
- 4.7 The park and garden recorded on the Hampshire Gardens Trust inventory includes the lawns to the south of the house, the deserted medieval village, the ruins of the Chapel of St Nicholas and a further c70ha of parkland and woodland. The Hampshire Garden Trust summarise the significance of the parkland as follows:

*A site of historic landscape and archaeological interest, set among the woods and fields of characteristic chalkland river valley. Westbury has traces of an early C18 formal garden designed by Charles Bridgeman overlaid by late C18, and early C19 parkland.<sup>2</sup>*

- 4.8 The surrounding parkland landscape includes the following historic features: an 'impression' of a Charles Bridgeman landscape which is now visible in outline form through what remains of its landform design including the remnants of a bastioned moat or 'ha-ha' and the outer limits of Bridgeman's formal garden. To the front of the house a formal 'canal' feature ran to the south of what is now West Meon Road. A serpentine lake, forming part of the former 'Brownian' landscape, as well as an oval shaped pond; the former is now silted up and no standing water is present (August 2023). The River Meon flows through the northern part of the site.
- 4.9 There are a large number of mature specimen trees within the site as well as smaller specimens within developing woodlands. Locally, around Westbury House itself, there are four Yew trees of some 15m height, two of which are near to the north facing elevation of the building and two which are near to its south facing elevation. In addition, there is also a notable group of mature trees on a contained, raised area to the north-east of the building which 'hide' overhead electricity and telecommunications cables and poles.

## 5.0 Description and analysis

- 5.1 Westbury House was considered for Listing in mid 2019. The decision by the Secretary of State (on the recommendations by Historic England) was not to add Westbury House to the National Heritage List for England. The decision included a written report which includes a summary description of the building and initial assessment of its architectural and historic merit. The report includes the following description (figure references relate to this report and Figures in Appendix D):

"The present Westbury House replaces one understood to have been built in the early C18., in red brick with stone dressings. The two-storey main range is rectangular on plan, with a hipped roof above a block cornice. The north, entrance elevation (**Figure 1 Appendix D**), is dominated by two full-height projecting bays crowned by segmental pediments and framed by Ionic pilasters. A portico extends awkwardly from the eastern projecting bay; the

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<sup>2</sup> Hampshire Garden Trust (ref. <http://research.hgt.org.uk/item/page/31/>)

top of the portico forms a balustraded balcony, which continues across the easternmost bay of the main range.

Abutting the east end of the elevation is a narrow three-storey block with mullioned windows to the ground floor, a window of Serlian form to the first floor and a tripartite window above; the block, which bears little stylistic relationship to the main range, is topped by a balustraded parapet. On the northern (sic) elevation there are projecting bays (**Figure 2 Appendix D**), here with triangular pediments, and a central entrance with a segmental-headed doorcase. To the east is a bow window; there is another bow window placed asymmetrically in the west elevation (**Figure 3 Appendix D**).

The Buildings of England (Hampshire: Winchester and the North, 2010) describes the historicist design of the building as 'clumsily handled'. Certainly it is not architecturally distinguished for its date, being neither a historically consistent example of the 'Wrenaissance' revival, nor displaying the exuberant eclecticism associated with the so-called 'Queen Anne' movement. The intended visual effect of the building is reduced by the long later-C20 addition to the east, linking the house with the former service area to the south-east. It is understood that the Edwardian interior has undergone considerable alteration as a result of its changes of use, but that the large ground-floor library, with its plasterwork ceiling and integral pedimented bookcases, survives well.

#### Assessment

Based on the information provided and with reference to the Principles of Selection (DCMS 2018) and our Selection Guides, Westbury House is not recommended for listing for the following principal reasons:

#### Degree of architectural interest:

- \* as a house of about 1904 the building would be expected to show a higher degree of architectural or historic interest, as well as intactness, to justify listing;
- \* the design of the building, by an unknown architect, is not architecturally distinguished;
- \* a number of significant alterations, both external and internal, detract from the overall effect of the building.

#### Degree of group value:

- \* though the wider site contains a number of features of interest, both designated and undesignated, the re-built house is later than these, and does not therefore form a key part of a strong group from a historic or design point of view."

- 5.2 The description above does not include the additional wings to the 'main' house which extend east and comprise principally two storey with semi-basement in red brick (**Figure 4 Appendix D**). Repeated bays of sash windows in flat gauged brick arches. This section has a low 'M' roof in natural slate with central valley gutter and red brick chimney (**Figure 5 Appendix D**). There are two build-phases to this part of the house. The first five bays appear to date to the mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century (**Figure 6 Appendix D**) with a remaining section comprising a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century extension in red brick. From historic photographs of the previous mansion immediately

post-fire and the present fixtures and finishes to these rooms (**Figure 7 Appendix D**) it would appear that the only elements to survive the fire were the walls to this part of the house. The remaining internal finishes are entirely contemporary with the reconstruction of the main house.

- 5.3 To the east of this, there is a mid-20th-century School Dormitory Block with tiled roof, half-hipped at its east end (**Figure 8 Appendix D**). This links to a late-20th-century Care Home Linking Extension and Covered Courtyard, which joins the 'Power House' added in 1904-6 and subsequently converted to three bedrooms and a lounge during the period of care-home use.
- 5.4 Attached and to the north of the care house extension is a single-store brick and flint building under a tile roof, potentially of early-to-mid 19th-century date. This is referred historically as 'Former Boiler House'. Its last use appears to have been as a garden store (**Figure 9 Appendix D**). The structure semi-derelict with part of the roof collapsed into the building (**Figure 10 Appendix D**).

### Interior

- 5.5 The internal fixtures and finishes to the house are surprisingly intact in much of the 'main' house with principal rooms generally retaining a high degree of decorative finishes which include; fireplaces (**Figure 11 Appendix D**) plasterwork and panelling (**Figure 12 Appendix D**). The survival of the principal stair is particularly notable (**Figure 13 Appendix D**).
- 5.6 The lower ground floor is of a single c1904-6 build to the main house (**Figure 14 Appendix D**) and linked through to the semi-basement (**Figure 15 Appendix D**) of the remaining wings. There is no evidence of an earlier building to either the 1904-6 basement area or the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing semi-basement area. It is very difficult to see how any of the fabric of an earlier building would have been incorporated successfully into the present plan and there is no physical or visual evidence for this. We suspect this fabric was lost in the fire or post-fire clearance of the site.

## 6.0 Significance of Westbury House

- 6.1 Pevsner describes Westbury House as 'clumsily handled'<sup>3</sup>. Historic England in their assessment for addition to the National Heritage List for England in 2016 conclude that Westbury House is 'not architecturally distinguished for its date'. Westbury House is however striking and dominant within its landscape setting built set up from the valley floor and accentuated by its flamboyant use of segmental pediments, grand porte-cochere and heavy modillion stone cornice. The materials also are very high quality with local (probably Bursledon) brick, possibly Bath stone dressings and Delabole slate for the roof.
- 6.2 Internally, there are some very well-considered and highly detailed principal rooms and spaces to the 'main' house to include the grand staircase from ground to first floor. These rooms were recorded soon after inception (see **Appendix C**) and fixtures and finishes are clearly recognisable as 'original' to the reconstructed early 20<sup>th</sup> century mansion. The decorative schemes (although in very poor condition) are of moderate to high aesthetic and architectural value and are, despite some changes and their poor condition variously intact to principal rooms.

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<sup>3</sup> p245 Bullen M, Crook J, Hubbock R and Pevsner N 2010 *The Buildings of England Hampshire: Winchester and the North*

- 6.3 The quality of the interior spaces does not extend to the variously dated wings to the east, where the fixtures and finishes are far more restrained or have been removed in subsequent refurbishment exercises relating to both the school and care home uses which followed the period of private residency.
- 6.4 Despite its relative remote location, there is some anecdotal evidence that Westbury House has some moderate communal value given its previous use pattern of care-home and school with the relatives and friends of former patients and former pupils and staff of Westbury House School having positive memories associated with the building and its grounds.
- 6.5 It should be noted that a report by RPS Group in 2019 provided the following by way of comment on the condition of the building at this time:

‘..... the care home closed in June 2016 and the house and grounds have lain unused and deteriorating since. Whilst the interior of Westbury house retains extensive historic joinery and plasterwork, much of it of high quality, wholesale theft of lead from the roofs of the Westbury House and the Georgian East Range means that much of the interior is now saturated and succumbing to failing ceilings, sodden walls, floors and ceilings, algal growth and, probably, wet and dry rot. Unless attended to rapidly, it seems most probable that much of the interior, both decorative and structural, will be beyond recovery within the next 12 months.’<sup>4</sup>

### Setting

- 6.6 The setting of Westbury House could be considered to fall into two areas. The immediate setting of the house comprises its historic and previous (now extant) approaches to the house and includes a scheduled monument, a number of statutory listed buildings (all Grade II) as well as buildings and structures which would be considered to be non-designated heritage assets (walled garden), archaeological remains of garden features; canal and lake. The wider setting of Westbury House would comprise its planned (originating in the 18<sup>th</sup> century) parkland which includes paths, tree groups, the remains of a ha-ha and wider landscape setting to this part of the Meon valley.
- 6.7 Heritage assets with the potential to be affected by proposed development comprise both designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets. The following is a summary with brief description of the heritage assets and their contribution to the significance of Westbury House.

### St Nicholas Chapel and Deserted Medieval Village, Westbury (Scheduled Monument)

- 6.8 The Scheduled Monument (**Figure 16 Appendix D**) comprises an oblong area of land between the re-directed (canalised) River Meon and its original course. It includes the partially collapsed walls of a small church of possible 13<sup>th</sup> Century origin. The chapel is also Grade II listed. Now

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<sup>4</sup> Para 1.6 2019 Westbury House, East Meon Heritage Statement RPS group

a ruin, the chapel remained intact until at least 1703. The chapel is recorded in Historic England's national 'At Risk' Register, classed as "Priority A - Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed", with the note "A project to see the ruins conserved, explained and maintained needs to be agreed and put in action". Late Saxon and early Medieval pottery found during excavations which may indicate an earlier origin of the chapel.

- 6.9 The actual northern and southern extents of the deserted medieval village are unclear at present, but it seems most probable that the village extended beyond the scheduled area, probably onto the fields to the north of the valley road and potentially as far south as Westbury House (believed to be the site of the former manor house). Archaeological evidence of settlement will most likely have been impacted by the cutting of Bridgeman's West Canal in the 18th Century and by the excavation of the Serpentine Lane also in the late 18th or early 19th Century. No surface traces of the deserted medieval village are visible and most of the scheduled area is now overgrown with semi mature woodland to some sections.
- 6.10 The scheduled monument and the ruined chapel have very high historical and evidential value in terms of their archaeological potential. The chapel has high aesthetic value in terms of its obvious intention to play a highly picturesque role in terms of the setting of the (previous) house and its 18<sup>th</sup> century planned parkland. The potential for archaeological finds is thought to extend beyond the scheduled area, potentially as far south as the Westbury House.

#### **Stables to Westbury House (Grade II)**

- 6.11 The stables to Westbury House (**Figure 17 Appendix D**) lie to the north-east of the house, adjacent to the entrance drive. They were added to the National Heritage List for England in 1954. The list description and Pevsner place the stables and coach houses in the 18<sup>th</sup> century built to service the previous mansion destroyed by fire and replaced in 1904-6. The stables and coach houses are consistent in plan with that shown on the Bridgeman plan. Since their addition to the list, the buildings have been converted to two dwellings, Richmond House and Cavendish House.
- 6.12 The stable block has clear aesthetic value, due to its high quality but clearly functional design and use of local materials. Whilst still recognisable as a stable block, its historical and evidential value has been somewhat diminished through its conversion to two homes.
- 6.13 The stables are clearly seen within the context of the house (**Figure 18 Appendix D**) and form an important part of the present processional route to and from the house.

#### **Ice Houses 60 metres South of The Stables (Grade II)**

- 6.14 Presently concealed in woodland to the south-east of the house lie two icehouses (**Figure 19 Appendix D**). They were added to the National Heritage List for England 1986. The ice houses are believed to be early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and are large spaces (some ten metres deep) with domed brick-lined ceilings.
- 6.15 The ice houses are presently concealed by mature trees whose roots have impacted upon the entrance one of the ice houses (**Figure 20 Appendix D**). The ice houses have high historic value as they record an important period in the preservation of food stuffs for use in the Georgian house. Their practical value fell away to negligible with the advent of the use of electricity to power houses and provide more energy efficient ways to preserve food. The ice

houses nonetheless have high associative value in terms of the evidence of former wealth and status often associated with the construction of ice houses in large house estates.

### Parkland

- 6.16 The parkland of Westbury House is recorded on the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The inventory record reads as follows:

“Westbury House is set in a landscaped park on the lower slopes of Henbury Down, beside the River Meon. The site is of historic interest for its association with owners of note and the influential eighteenth century landscape gardener, Charles Bridgeman, Royal Gardener from 1728-38. Bridgeman is held to be responsible for the introduction of the now familiar sunken ditch or ‘ha-ha’ as a garden boundary that does not interrupt the view. Fortunately, a survey plan of Bridgeman’s garden at Westbury, laid out in the 1720s for Admiral Phillip Cavendish, was kept with the estate papers. The deep ditch that formed the boundary to Bridgeman’s garden survived the ‘improvements’ fashionable in the later C18 and is still a strong feature in the park. Succeeding owners created and maintained a model of the classic English landscaped park, a composition of ‘lawns’ and trees, with a small lake in front of the house, to reflect the ruined medieval chapel of St Nicholas, standing beside the River Meon. The walled garden and orchards may have utilised in the mid-nineteenth century to produce greengages, when a member of the Gage family, who introduced and cultivated the ‘Green Gage’ plum in the mid-eighteenth century, was living at Westbury. It is thought that the second of two ice houses was built to preserve the fruit. In 1904, the three-storey eighteenth century house was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in the neo ‘Queen Anne’ style the following year. The grounds remain little changed, other than by nature, as some scattered trees have grown into woods and some dwindled away. Current description The house is now in use as a Nursing Home (sic) and the eighteenth century stables have been converted into two dwellings. A substantial wheelchair entrance has been constructed on the formal garden to facilitate easy access to the garden. A planning application for an additional building for dementia care, to the north of the house, has recently been placed with the local authority (September 2015). The walled garden remains (Aerial map 2015). Summary and Significance A site of historic landscape and archaeological interest, set among the woods and fields of characteristic chalkland river valley. Westbury has traces of an early C18 formal garden designed by Charles Bridgeman overlaid by late C18, and early C19 parkland.”

- 6.17 The parkland retains a number of features which would be considered non-designated heritage assets and form part of the wider setting of Westbury House.

### Walled Kitchen Garden

- 6.18 To the east of the Grade II listed stables, separated by the driveway, is a large Walled Garden (**Figure 21 Appendix D**) measuring approximately 100 metres by 60 metres, with an orchard to the east. Both features are visible on the early 18th-century Bridgeman plan and subsequent tithe and Ordnance Survey maps (see **Appendix B**). The brickwork on three sides (S., N. and

E.) is reflective of that used on the stables and coach houses, suggesting a similar construction date (early 18th-century).

- 6.19 The west wall is on a different alignment to that shown on the Bridgeman plan (see **Figure 1 Appendix B**) and constructed of red brick in a rat trap bond (see **Figure 21 Appendix D**). This change probably dates to the realignment of the driveway between 1840 and 1869-70. Set against the north wall is a late-Victorian glasshouse, now clad in corrugated steel sheet (**Figure 22 Appendix D**). To the rear of this is a roofless lean-to outside of the walled garden. This retains a small boiler and is probably a 19th-century furnace house for a heated wall.

### East Canal

- 6.20 Running alongside the north wall of the Walled Garden is an artificial leat with wooded banks that carries the River Meon several metres above the valley floor. The Bridgeman plan shows that the western part of this was broadened out into a formal canal, with a semi-circular eastern end. This broadened section coincides with the cranked north wall of the Walled Garden.

### Water feature - pond

- 6.21 The east canal is culverted under the present drive before entering a pond (**Figure 23 Appendix D**) with historic stone retaining walls immediately north of the Stable Block. This pond appears as shown on the Bridgeman plan and forms a picturesque ensemble with the former Stables and Grade II listed chapel.

### West Canal

- 6.22 The Bridgeman plan shows the pond feeding into a further formal canal at lower level, running along the natural valley floor alongside the East Meon – West Meon road. It appears that the canal was infilled or allowed to silt up and largely disappear from view following the building of the parallel Serpentine Lake in the late 18th- or early 19th Century. It seems likely that the cutting of the canal will have impacted the northern extent of the deserted medieval village.

### Ha-ha

- 6.23 To the south of a much altered former parterre to the house (now largely taken up by a wheelchair access to the southern entrance) there is a ha-ha comprising a flint wall to its north side (**Figure 24 Appendix D**). Whilst a ha-ha is not shown on the Bridgeman plan, its alignment does closely coincide with the south side of a terrace or parterre shown on the Bridgeman plan. This may be one of the more significant individual garden features, given that Charles Bridgman is attributed as the originator of the ha-ha in the U.K.

### Bastioned Moat

- 6.24 Taking the form of a zig-zag course across the southern park between 130m and 210m to the south of the house, is a deep V-shaped ditch that is consistent with the course of a bastioned moat or ha-ha shown on the Bridgman plan separating the formal gardens from the pastures beyond. All evidence of any stone bastions or a revetted north face have been removed or buried, but the excavation forms a strong and dominant feature of this part of the park.

- 6.25 This has the potential to be a significant individual garden feature, given Charles Bridgman's development of the ha-ha in English country house parklands. Careful consideration should be given to the selective excavation of this feature to ascertain whether any masonry structure survives. However as observed by others it is possible that the structure was never built, or that it was destroyed by the removal of masonry in later iterations of the parkland design.

### **Bridgeman's (formal) Gardens**

- 6.26 Whilst quite heavily treed in the 19th Century, the parkland between the Ha-ha and the Bastioned Moat is today almost devoid of trees. The surface to this part of the immediate garden area is undulating, with the undulations potentially reflecting paths, rides and parterres of the formal gardens laid out by Charles Bridgeman in the early 18th Century.
- 6.27 Survival of early 18th-century garden plans is not unique, however the Westbury House landscape appears to be particularly well preserved and is unusual in that it has the potential to be made readily visible. In this respect, its relatively good condition, early date and known authorship make it a significant survival.

### **The Serpentine Lake**

- 6.28 To the immediate south of the former Grade II listed Chapel of St Nicholas and defining the southern boundary of the scheduled monument (deserted medieval village) is an area of grassland cut through by a modern ditch. The extent of the grassland appears to describe the outline of the naturalistic serpentine lake created when the formal Bridgeman landscape was replaced by an informal parkland landscape based on the principles of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the late 18th or early 19th Century. It seems likely that the cutting of the lake will have impacted some below-ground archaeological evidence of the existence of the deserted medieval village.
- 6.29 Whilst considered not as significant as the Bridgeman landscape, historic photographs (see **Figure 5 Appendix C**) show that the loss of the serpentine pond has been to the detriment of the setting of the former Chapel of St Nicholas, and Westbury House.

### **Tennis Court**

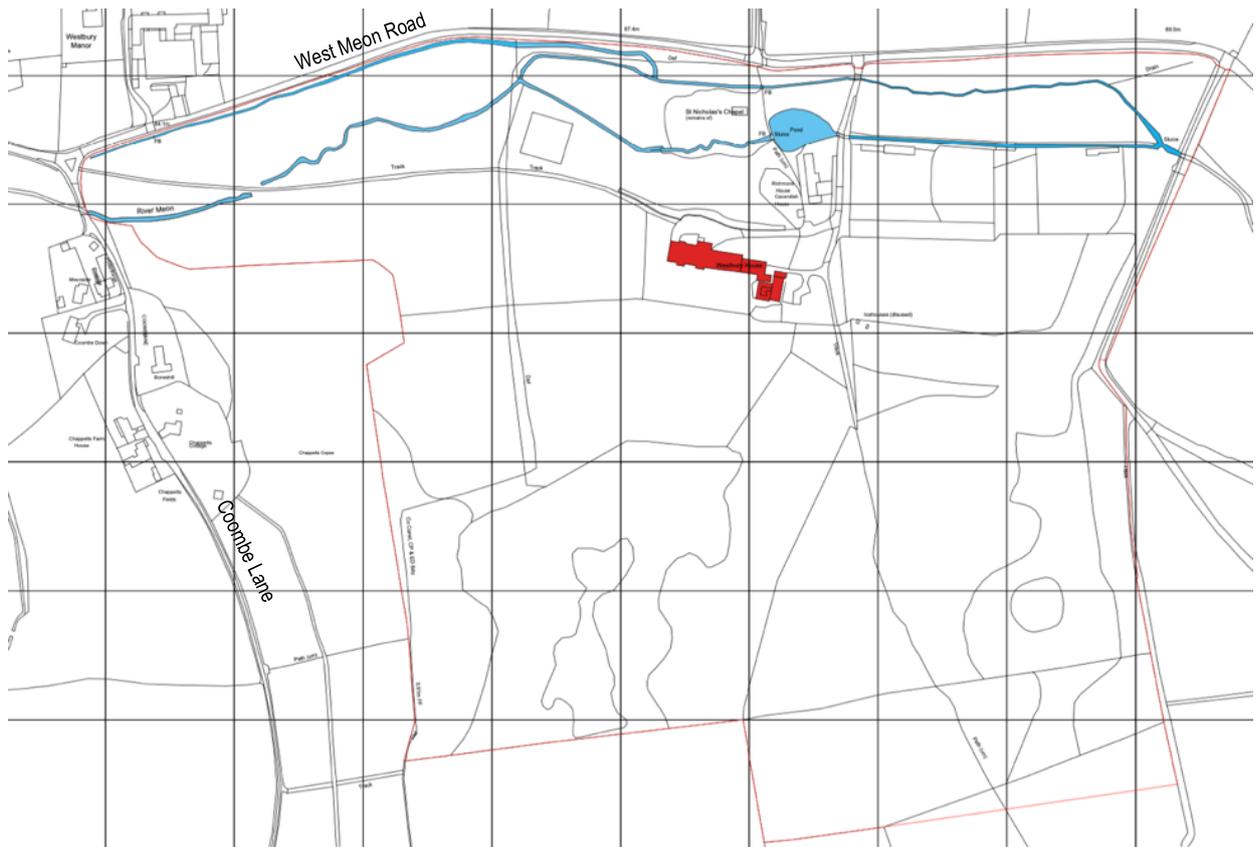
- 6.30 Approximately 100 metres north-west of Westbury House is a levelled section of land with the remains of a pair of tennis courts. These were built during the years when Westbury House was used as a school and are not considered of historic significance.

## **Bibliography and references**

Kinchin-Smith R 2019 *Westbury House, East Meon Heritage Statement* RPS group

Bullen M, Crook J, Hubbock R and Pevsner N 2010 *The Buildings of England Hampshire: Winchester and the North*

## Appendix A: Location Plan



**Appendix B: Historic Maps**

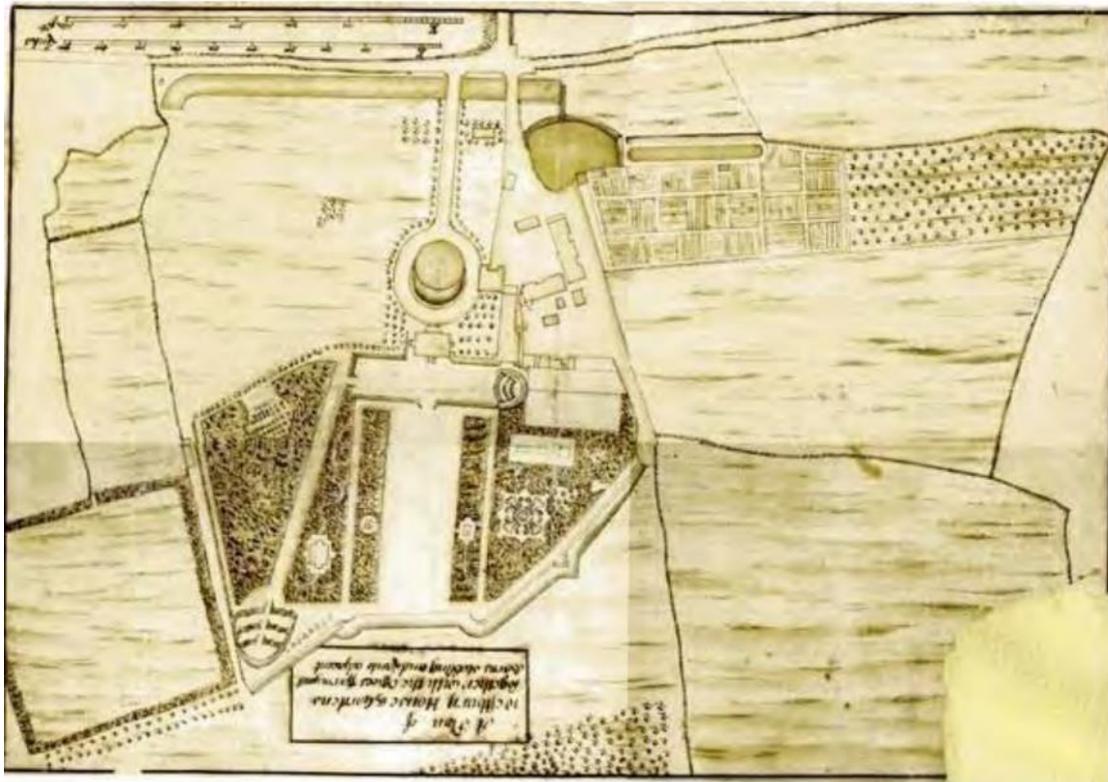


Figure 1: Survey plan by Charles Bridgeman c1720 for Admiral Philip Cavendish.



Figure 2: West Meon tithe map 1839



Figure 3: Ordnance Survey 6-inch map of 1869-70



Figure 4: Ordnance Survey 6-inch map of 1869-70 Inset of Westbury House



Figure 5: Ordnance Survey 6-inch map of 1909 showing Westbury Park.

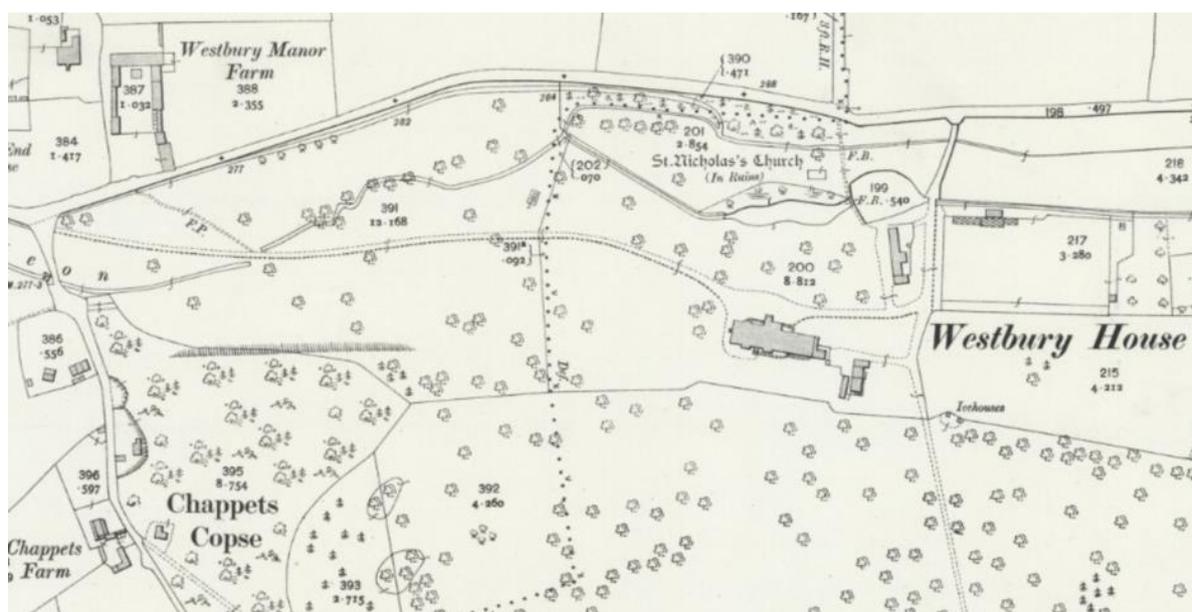


Figure 6: Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1909

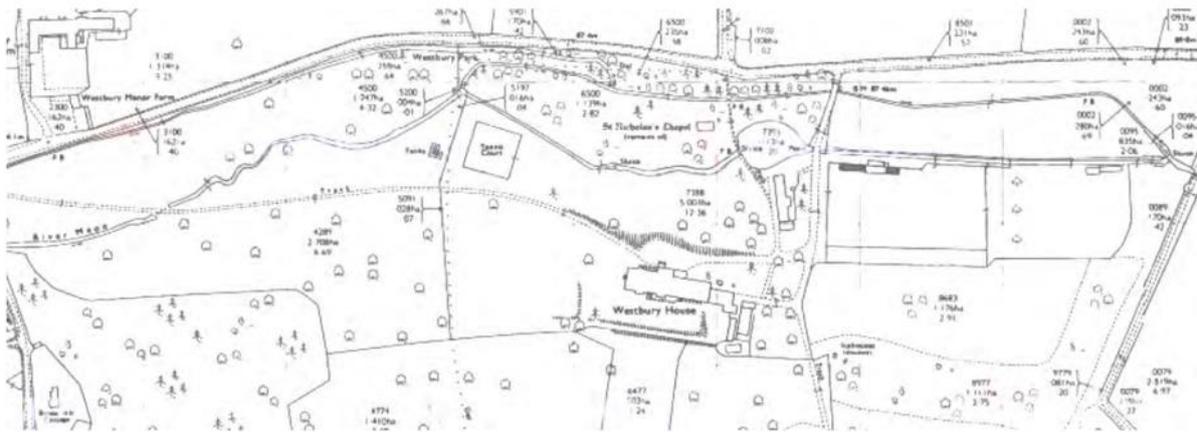


Figure 7: Ordnance Survey 25 inch map of 1972

Appendix C: Historic Images



Figure 1: Westbury House immediate post-fire 1904 – west elevation (and part south)



Figure 2: Westbury House immediate post-fire 1904 – South elevation



**Figure 3:** Westbury House rebuilt c1904-6 (photo taken early after re-construction) – south elevation



**Figure 4:** Westbury House rebuilt c1904-6 (photo taken early after re-construction) – north elevation



Figure 5: Westbury House north elevation from the north bank of the serpentine lake c1920s



Figure 6: Westbury House - the school room c1930s



**Figure 7:** Westbury House - the drawing room c1920s



**Figure 8:** Westbury House – ‘The Big Hall’ c1920s



**Figure 1:** Westbury House – north elevation



**Figure 2:** Westbury House – South elevation



Figure 3: Westbury House – west elevation



Figure 4: Late Georgian wing to the east of the 1904-6 reconstructed house



**Figure 5:** Roof of late Georgian extension



**Figure 6:** Mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century wing, Westbury House



**Figure 7:** Relatively late internal finishes to the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing (probably dating from c1904-6)



**Figure 8:** Late 20<sup>th</sup> century wing extension to the east – east elevation with large half-hip



**Figure 9:** Former 'boiler house' possibly flint and brick 19<sup>th</sup> century outbuilding



Figure 10: Partially collapsed roof of former 'boiler house' (to east of Westbury House)



**Figure 11:** Typical internal finishes and condition of principal rooms to main house



**Figure 12:** Plasterwork and panelling surviving albeit in a very poor condition



**Figure 13:** Principal stair ground to first floor



**Figure 14:** Lower ground (basement) 190406 main house- central corridor looking west



**Figure 15:** Lower ground (basement) looking east through late 18<sup>th</sup> century wing



**Figure 16:** Scheduled Monument (deserted medieval village) and remains (just seen) to the chapel of St Nicholas



**Figure 17:** Former Stables and coach houses to the north of Westbury House – south and part east elevation



**Figure 18:** The former stables and coach houses from the north with Westbury House



**Figure 19:** The two Grade II listed ice houses within the grounds of Westbury House



**Figure 20:** The roots of mature trees are beginning to significantly impact on the structure of the ice houses



**Figure 21:** Walled garden to east side of access drive to Westbury House



**Figure 22:** Late Victorian glasshouse to the northern boundary of the walled garden

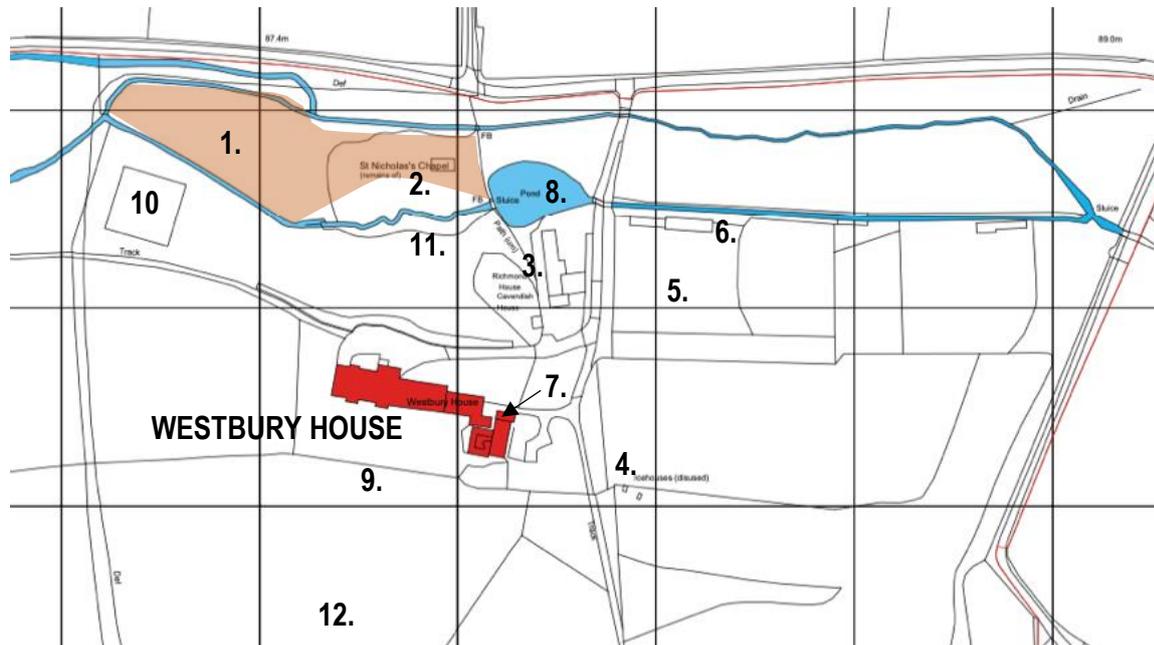


**Figure 23:** Pond to north of stables and coach houses (part of Bridgeman's early landscaping of the grounds)



**Figure 24:** Retaining flint wall element of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Ha-Ha to the south of the house

## Appendix E: Heritage Assets and Relevant list descriptions



1. Scheduled Monument (deserted mediaeval village)
2. Grade II listed Chapel of St Nicholas (ruins)
3. Grade II listed (former) stables and coach houses
4. Grade II listed ice houses
5. Walled Garden
6. Victorian glasshouse
7. Early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century outbuilding 'The boiler house'
8. Pond
9. Ha-Ha
10. Tennis Courts
11. Site of former serpentine lake
12. Bridgeman's planned parkland

## Relevant List descriptions

St Nicholas Chapel and deserted medieval village, Westbury, East Meon - 1001942 | Historic England

30/10/2023, 13:56

# St Nicholas Chapel and deserted medieval village, Westbury

## Official list entry

Heritage **Scheduled Monument**

Category:

List Entry **1001942**

Number:

## Location

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: **Hampshire**

District: **East Hampshire (District Authority)**

St Nicholas Chapel and deserted medieval village, Westbury, East Meon - 1001942 | Historic England

30/10/2023, 13:56

Parish: **East Meon**National Park: **SOUTH DOWNS**National Grid **SU 65619 23975**

Reference:

## Summary

Not currently available for this entry.

## Reasons for Designation

Not currently available for this entry.

## History

Not currently available for this entry.

## Details

This record has been generated from an "old county number" (OCN) scheduling record. These are monuments that were not reviewed under the Monuments Protection Programme and are some of our oldest designation records. As such they do not yet have the full descriptions of their modernised counterparts available. Please contact us if you would like further information.

## Legacy

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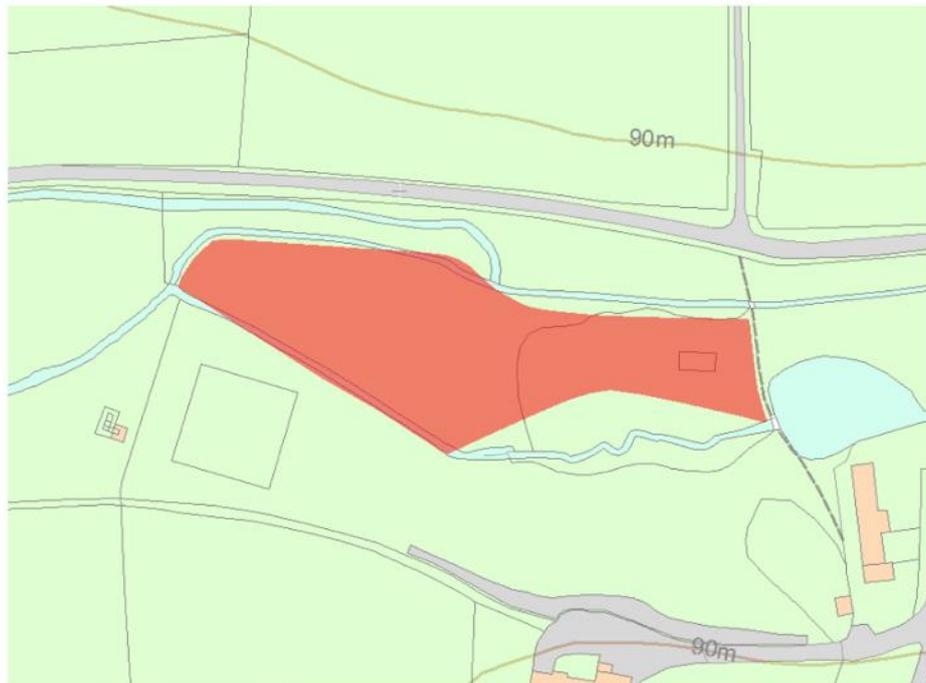
Legacy System **HA 26**

number:

Legacy System: **RSM - OCN**

## Legal

This monument is scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as amended as it appears to the Secretary of State to be of national importance. This entry is a copy, the original is held by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.



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RUINS OF ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL, East Meon - 1179009 | Historic England

30/10/2023, 13:57

# RUINS OF ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL

## RUINS OF ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL

### Official list entry

Heritage **Listed Building**

Category:

Grade: **II**

List Entry **1179009**

Number:

Date first listed: **16-Mar-1954**

List Entry **RUINS OF ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL**

Name:

Statutory **RUINS OF ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL**

Address 1:

RUINS OF ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL, East Meon - 1179009 | Historic England

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## Location

Statutory **RUINS OF ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL**

Address:

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: **Hampshire**

District: **East Hampshire (District Authority)**

Parish: **East Meon**

National Park: **SOUTH DOWNS**

National Grid **SU 65692 23972**

Reference:

## Details

SU 62 SE EAST MEON WESTBURY

2/5 Ruins of St Nicholas Chapel

16.3.54 II

Ruined chapel. C13. Walls of flint with stone dressings. Roofless rectangular building; the west gable is virtually complete, with coupled high windows and two lower windows (now blocked). The north wall reaches eaves height for most of its length, the eastern lower side having the remains of stone jambs to an opening, one blocked opening and two very small square openings. The south wall drops to ground level towards the east, showing a window (half-height) and the base of a doorway. The east wall exists on the north side, from a central window jamb to the north-east corner, but below eaves level. Now an Ancient Monument. Note: the font bowl, on a later base, remains in the south aisle of All Saints Church, East Meon.

## Legacy

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Legacy System **142897**  
number:

Legacy System: **LBS**

## Legal

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STABLES TO WESTBURY HOUSE, East Meon - 1351145 | Historic England

30/10/2023, 13:57

# STABLES TO WESTBURY HOUSE

## STABLES TO WESTBURY HOUSE

### Official list entry

Heritage **Listed Building**

Category:

Grade: **II**

List Entry **1351145**

Number:

Date first listed: **16-Mar-1954**

List Entry **STABLES TO WESTBURY HOUSE**

Name:

Statutory **STABLES TO WESTBURY HOUSE**

Address 1:

STABLES TO WESTBURY HOUSE, East Meon - 1351145 | Historic England

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Statutory **STABLES TO WESTBURY HOUSE**

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County: **Hampshire**

District: **East Hampshire (District Authority)**

Parish: **East Meon**

National Park: **SOUTH DOWNS**

National Grid **SU 65749 23923**

Reference:

## Details

SU 62 SE EAST MEON WESTBURY

2/6 Stables to Westbury House

16.3.54 II

Stables and coachouses. C18, with mid C19 minor changes and rear extensions. Red brickwork in Flemish bond, with blue headers to north and south walls and Flemish Garden Wall bond at the rear; plinth, 1st floor bands to end blocks, brick dentil eaves, cambered arches to windows. Tile roof. Symmetrical west front, with central blind arcade (masking a hay-loft above stables) of seven bays, the centre with a deep recess containing doors at each side (to stables) and in the centre (to tackroom), and a high door to the loft. Each bay has a window, and a Diocletian light at the top of the 2nd and 6th bay. At each side there is a tall square tower, appearing as two but masking three storeys, with a ground-floor carriage arch flanked by blank openings (altered on the south side) the north tower has a clock face, and the pyramid roof has at the rear a leaded dormer, which contains the bell (the mechanism from bell to clock extending across the top floor, within a boarded case). At the rear there are small C19 extensions, and added chimneys.

## Legacy

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Legacy System **142898**  
number:

Legacy System: **LBS**

## Legal

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ICE HOUSES 60 METRES SOUTH OF THE STABLES, East Meon - 1302167 | Historic England

30/10/2023, 13:58

# ICE HOUSES 60 METRES SOUTH OF THE STABLES

## ICE HOUSES 60 METRES SOUTH OF THE STABLES

### Official list entry

Heritage **Listed Building**

Category:

Grade: **II**

List Entry **1302167**

Number:

Date first listed: **12-Mar-1986**

List Entry **ICE HOUSES 60 METRES SOUTH**

Name: **OF THE STABLES**

Statutory **ICE HOUSES 60 METRES SOUTH**

Address 1: **OF THE STABLES**

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## Location

Statutory **ICE HOUSES 60 METRES SOUTH**

Address: **OF THE STABLES**

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County: **Hampshire**

District: **East Hampshire (District Authority)**

Parish: **East Meon**

National Park: **SOUTH DOWNS**

National Grid **SU 65784 23809**

Reference:

ICE HOUSES 60 METRES SOUTH OF THE STABLES, East Meon - 1302167 | Historic England

30/10/2023, 13:58

## Details

SU 62 SE EAST MEON WESTBURY HOUSE

2/7 Ice houses 60 metres south of the stables

II

Two adjoining icehouses, let into sloping ground. Early C19. Brick lined cylinders some ten metres deep, with domed heads, from which vaulted brick passages lead to outside doorways, which have battered jambs. The earth cover slopes to low splayed walls, on each side of the entrances.

Listing NGR: SU6777422014

## Legacy

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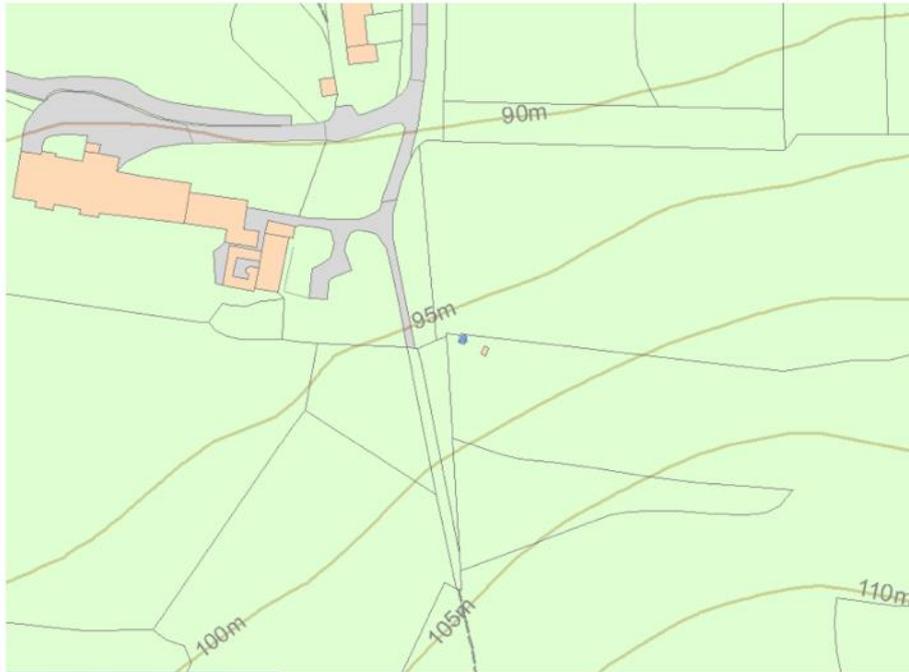
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