



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

## Bedale Park

### Statement of Significance

This statement of significance for Bedale Park, created by the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, is derived from research carried out as part of Hambleton District Historic Designed Landscapes project.

#### 1. Heritage Values Summary

Bedale Park has been an integral part of the town of Bedale since medieval times and today forms an important green space on its northwestern side. The designed landscape was developed by the Pierse family over two centuries, following the latest fashions on garden and parkland designs. For most of its history, it was a largely private space but now is publicly owned and the space is enjoyed by a wide variety of visitors.

#### 2. Historical Value ('Narrative')

Reputedly there was a castle (or possibly a hunting lodge) on the site in the medieval period and Bedale Hall has been the principal house in the town since the eighteenth century. The siting and layout of the Hall and park have dominated the town and had a major influence on its development.

The park reflects changes in garden design and landscaping taste. The earliest phase was carried out around 1730, when a garden with pools and statues was laid out. By 1784 the formal garden was removed and 'The Lawn' and ha-ha were laid out, marking the start of the development of the parkland that survives today.

The two key features of 'The Long Walk or Terrace Walk' c. 1786, formed from the old Lancaster road that was closed up after 1772 and 'Rand Walk', formed when the Crakehall road was diverted to the east side of Rand Grange in 1810, frame the designed landscape. Successive owners continued to develop the site until the end of the 19th century.

#### 3. Evidential Value ('Research')

No accounts appear to survive for the work undertaken on the formal garden by Henry Peirse c. 1730 and only the boundary wall and a clump of trees is shown on the 1772 map. For a description of the formal garden, we are reliant on Hird's account written sometime after 1812. So further research and archaeological survey is needed to discover more about this earlier garden.

There is documentary evidence that there was a deer park in or around Bedale in the medieval period. Despite some clues in place names to the south of the modern town such as 'Lodge Pasture' and 'Bedale Wood', no physical evidence has been found for its boundaries. A closer examination of these areas may yield some more information on its location.

No specific designer has been attributed to the layout of Bedale Park, although Adam Mickle II, the noted landscape designer, was resident at the nearby Rand House from c. 1792. No reference has



## YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

been found to confirm his direct involvement in the development of the landscape, although he did alter the immediate surroundings of his rented home. More research is needed to establish the extent of his wider involvement.

### **4. Aesthetic Value ('Emotion')**

The modern view of Bedale Hall is a country house placed in a town, with one facade facing the main street, with the other looking towards the parkland and now visible from main road. From the 1780s until the 1950s however views of the Hall were restricted by the high garden walls opposite the parish church and access into the park was restricted by the lodges and gates. This changed when the Hall and The Lawn were sold to the local Council and the Crakehall road diverted across the north-east corner of the 'The Lawn'. This allowed clear views of the north side of the Hall for the first time.

Looking northeast from the Hall, the various shelter belts planted east of Crakehall road from the 1790s still frame the view of the wider landscape. Close to the Hall, the Rand Walk bounding the golf course has developed into a thicker belt of trees and shrubs. However, the eastern end of Long Walk retains its aesthetic value, now a path flanked by an avenue of lime trees, with remnants of its raised walkway.

### **5. Communal Value ('Togetherness')**

Until the mid-twentieth century, the gardens and parkland were very much a private enclave secluded from the adjacent town. The use of the Hall as a hospital in World War I and the use of the Hall and park by the army in World War II made the site more accessible and holds memories for those who were stationed there. The sale of the Hall and The Lawn to Bedale Rural District Council in 1950 gave the Hall a public role as Council offices, while the former Lawn bounded by the ha-ha became a public park.

The recent handing over of the Hall and park to the Bedale Hall Trust has meant that the site enjoys considerable public use and has great communal value with the Hall housing the town library, museum and tourist information centre. The park is the venue for car boot sales and other outdoor activities.

November 2017