



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

## Wood Hall park and garden

### Statement of Significance

This statement of significance for Wood Hall park and garden, created by the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, is derived from research carried out as part of Selby District Historic Designed Landscapes project.

#### 1. Heritage Values Summary

A little known landscape but with a long history of occupation, Wood Hall is a typical small gentry estate that was largely laid out in the 19th century. It is a flat site with the Hall just high enough to afford views to the River Derwent to the east and Wressle Castle beyond. To the north, south and east, perimeter planting encloses the landscape from public roads and the railway on its southern border. Choice specimen trees, some of which still remain, add to the interest, together with the Fishpond to the west.

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

Lying on the opposite bank to the important site of Wressle Castle, owned by the Percies, Wood Hall has been the site of a manor house then Hall for at least 500 years. Its strategic location next to the River Derwent is its key attraction. The former manor house was developed by John Graham in the second half of the 18th century and he may have been responsible for one of the earliest surviving parts of the landscape, a terrace built along the riverbank. However it was the building of the current Hall in 1802 that led to the development of the historic landscape that we see today by Robert Menzies and his son, Robert William. This includes the parkland both north and south of the Hall, the pleasure grounds, the remodelling of the kitchen garden and the creation of the 'Fishpond'.

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

The remains of the medieval village together with the manor house complex to the east can be seen on the 1835 estate map. Further archaeological survey of the area would give a better idea of the layout and perhaps specifically more information on the walled enclosures surrounding the manor house to the south that may have been its gardens.

Near the riverbank is the 'Line Pond' (c. 0.2 acres) that was created before 1835 and may be part of the late 18th century landscaping as it is next to the raised terrace. It is shown on the first map of 1835 as conjoined ponds and then on later maps as a single area of water. Its purpose is unknown but it may have been used to store fish, as a 1602 plan of Wressle (on the opposite side of the river) shows fish weirs in the river here. Further research and exploration of the area may help explain why it was created.

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

Wood Hall lies in the 'Humberhead Levels', an area of low lying farmland, so the remaining parkland and specimen trees give variety to the area. The Hall and western section of parkland is on flat land



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at 5m AOD, the land sloping gently down to the River Derwent at 3m AOD. This gives views to the river and to Wressle Castle on the opposite riverbank.

13.07.18