

## Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens Trust Walled Kitchen Garden Register

Name of House:	Rolleston Hall			
Address:	8, Rolleston Road, Rolleston, Leicestershire LE7 9EN			
Ownership:	Private ✓	Public	Institutional	Other
Grid reference:	SK7341300422	Map No: Explorer map 233		
Official Designations	Designation: English Heritage	Reference: 1335912	Grade: Gardeners Cottage Grade II	
Date original WKG created:	Undated. The brickwork matches that of the gardener's cottage that English Heritage suggests is early C19.			
<p>Other key dates in development:</p> <p>c.1279 – the ruling sub-tenants at Rolleston were John de Digby and Geoffrey de Skeffington (LJ)</p> <p>1346 – the manor lord was Sir John de Cobham who also held other manors. (LJ)</p> <p>1407 – Cobham died and was followed by a series of owners. (LJ)</p> <p>16C or 17C – Pevsner and Williamson suggest that this is the date of the original hall</p> <p>c.1700 - the hall was re-fronted and enlarged (P &amp; W): (LA)</p> <p>WWII – during the war the hall was used by the Red Cross as an orthopaedic hospital (LJ)</p> <p>1955 – the hall had dry rot and was demolished. (LA)</p> <p>Subsequently a new hall was constructed using Clipsham stone.</p>				
Size and brief description:	<p>c. 2 acres</p> <p>An irregular hexagon designed to get the maximum benefit from the sun. The WKG slopes down from North to South.</p> <p>The walled garden is unevenly divided into 2 sections by a cross wall running SW-NE. At either end there is a gap between the cross wall and the periphery wall of the WKG which today allows free access between the two halves of the garden.</p> <p>The much larger NW section of the WKG is itself subdivided by a sudden drop in level (partially supported by</p>			

	a low retaining wall) parallel to the cross wall.
--	---

**Current Use:** Kitchen and pleasure garden including a tennis court and swimming pool

**Features: further information and current condition:**

Walls, doors, gates	<p>The walls are built of Flemish bond brickwork. The bricks are hand-made with many inclusions and unevenly burnt. Towards the north the walls are buttressed within the garden. Three triangular buttresses occur outside the central section of the SE wall.</p> <p>The southern part of the west wall and northern half of the SW have been rebuilt, the central section being substantially lower than the rest of the wall with double wooden gates giving access to the hall courtyard.</p> <p>The 1<sup>st</sup> edition O/S map shows internal pathways. One path is around the periphery of the larger section of the WKG. Two more paths divide this section into quadrants. The smaller section of the WKG has a long central path with a small glasshouse in the middle. No entries are marked on this map.</p> <p>The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition O/S map shows an entry or gap in the southern section of the SE wall into the WKG. Most of the west garden wall is marked by a hatched line – its meaning is unclear but it marks part of the area where today a new wall has been constructed. No paths are shown.</p> <p>The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition O/S map shows no paths or entries.</p> <p>Today there are 3 arched gateways in the original walls – the openings at the south end of the SE wall and in the centre of the SW wall have iron gates; the opening in the NE wall, just to the north of the cross wall, has a wooden gate.</p> <p>There is evidence that the internal cross wall previously had a door at each end. The former doorway at the SW end is bricked up and a brick pier survives alongside the present opening. There is also evidence of a former entry at the eastern end of the NE wall which would have been aligned with the central path running the length of the SE portion of the walled garden shown in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition O/S map.</p>
Glasshouses	<p>There is one small glasshouse shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition O/S map. It is more or less in the centre of the smaller section of the WKG. There are no glasshouses shown on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> edition O/S maps.</p> <p>The 1938 sale catalogue indicates that there was a two-</p>

	<p>division Orchid and Plant House nearby.</p> <p>A traditional 3 section <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> scan glasshouse has recently been built and is situated by the SW wall between the end of the pergola and the dividing wall.</p>
Frames	No evidence
Pits	No evidence
Hotwalls/furnaces	No evidence
Heating pipes/boilers etc.	No evidence
Backsheds, workrooms, stores	<p>The 1<sup>st</sup> edition O/S map shows back-sheds along the entire SW wall and 3 large and 2 small buildings abutting the exterior of the SE wall.</p> <p>The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition O/S map shows one back-shed remaining on the outside of the SW wall and a smaller one inside the WKG. One long building abutting the outside of the SE wall with another one attached half way along its back wall.</p> <p>The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition O/S map shows no change to the buildings on SW wall. The long building on SE wall is reduced in size and no longer has a further building attached to it. A new structure is shown abutting the eastern end of the SE wall.</p> <p>The function of all these buildings is unknown.</p> <p>Today there is a modern L-shaped brick-built garden shed and store on the inside junction of the NE and SE walls.</p> <p>There are 2 small brick sheds within the WKG at the southern end of the SW wall. Opposite, on the external face, is a brick built shooting lodge.</p> <p>Within the WKG there is also one small brick built shed against the higher, new built, south end of the W wall beyond the double gates.</p>
Gardener's house, cottages, bothies	<p>A substantial head gardener's cottage is shown on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> edition O/S maps. It is sited across the lane from the WKG about 50 yards to the East. This cottage is still there today and the brickwork indicates that it is contemporary with the WKG.</p> <p>Today there is a long building backing onto the SE wall of the WKG comprising 2 attached cottages called Bothy 1 and Bothy 2. The façade brickwork dates from a similar period to the original garden walls and the head gardener's cottage. The brickwork for the side and back walls of the cottages is more recent and the roof has been raised. It is likely that the façade was part of the buildings shown in that</p>

	position on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition O/S maps.
Wells, ponds, tanks, towers	On the 1st edition O/S map a pond is shown in the SW quadrant of the WKG. We have found no further evidence of this or other water sources.
Planting	<p>We found little evidence of previous planting. In the head gardeners' diary there is reference to the planting of a new orchard in November 1906 but there is no evidence that it was in the WKG. Some fruit trees remain in the paddock opposite the head gardener's cottage.</p> <p>In the same document there is reference to the gathering of quantities of strawberries for preserving, July 1909, and it is likely that these would have come from the WKG.</p> <p>In 1916 there is reference to vegetables, fruit and flowers sent to London every week for a year.</p> <p>Today there are mature cordon fruit trees on several walls and on supports running beside and parallel to the pergola (see below).</p> <p>The tennis court and swimming pool are screened by a pergola that runs from East to West, this is situated in the lower part of the NW section of the WKG. There are roses growing on it and underneath there is mixed planting. To the south of the pergola is a parterre with dwarf box hedges and a central fountain. It is abundantly planted with a mixture of flowers, shrubs and vegetables.</p> <p>Beyond the dividing wall there are two broad, well- stocked herbaceous borders with a central path.</p>
Other key features	
Any other information:	The extracts from the head gardener's diary tell us little about the history of the garden but there are many references to the weather and the changing seasons such as the appearance of the first snowdrop and the first swallow. There is also a photograph c.1920 showing 18 men including the head gardener and his team of co-workers.
Date site visited	April 2016, July 2016
References:	<p>O/S, <u>Explorer Map 233</u>, Ordnance Survey, 2000</p> <p>O/S, <u>1<sup>st</sup> Edition Map</u>, Ordnance Survey, 1886</p> <p>O/S, <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Map</u>, Ordnance Survey, 1904</p> <p>O/S, <u>3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Map</u>, Ordnance Survey 1929</p> <p>Frank Ibbotson, head gardener, <u>Extracts from our</u></p>

	<p><u>Grandfather's Diaries whilst working at Rolleston Hall, edited by Frank Ibbotson's granddaughters, no names given, 1904-1935</u> (Copy of this document provided by the current head gardener)</p> <p>Historic England, <u>National Heritage List for England</u></p> <p><u>Leicester Advertiser</u>, Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1955 (LA)</p> <p><u>Leicester Journal</u> 7 – 5 – 60 (LJ)</p> <p>Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Record Office (LLRO)</p> <p>Pevsner, N and Williamson, E. <u>Buildings of England Leicestershire &amp; Rutland</u>, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1984 (P &amp; W)</p> <p>John D. Wood &amp; Co. <u>Rolleston Hall Estate Sales catalogue</u>, 18<sup>th</sup> May 1938</p>	
Researched by:	Gill Knight, Rowan Roenisch and Elizabeth Bacon	
Record Compiled by:	Gill Knight, Rowan Roenisch and Elizabeth Bacon	Date: 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2017



Northwest wall showing buttresses and espalier fruit tree with  
In front is a modern low retaining wall where the land suddenly drops  
to a lower level.



The pleasure garden parterre with central fountain and giant planters



The Grade II Listed Head Gardener's Cottage early 19<sup>th</sup> century



Bothy 1 and Bothy2 with raised roof and rebuilt rear



Broad herbaceous borders on both sides of the central path in the smaller section of the WKG