



## Walled Kitchen Garden Register

Name of House:	Prestwold Hall			
Address:	Prestwold Lane Loughborough Leicestershire LE12 5SQ			
Ownership:	Private x	Public	Institutional	Other
Grid reference: SK58217		Map No: OS Explorer No 246 - Loughborough		
Official Designations	Designation:	Reference:	Grade:	
Historic England (HE)	Prestwold Hall	1074564	Grade I	
	Prestwold Hall – Park and Garden  (date first listed 17 March 1986)	1000964	Grade II	
	Prestwold Hall – Garden walls  (This relates to the terrace walls for the ha-ha constructed by the architect, William Burn)	1074563	Grade II	

Date original WKG created:	The perimeter walls of the walled kitchen garden were probably constructed when Prestwold was emparked ca 1770. (Ref HE 1000964 – see above)
Other key dates in development: 1842: Scottish architect, William Burn remodelled the Hall and laid out new gardens to the south of the Hall.	

**Size and brief description:**

A rectangular brick-walled kitchen garden. 80m east/west by 50 m north/south. The garden lies 100m north-east of the Hall.

The land slopes west towards the Hall.

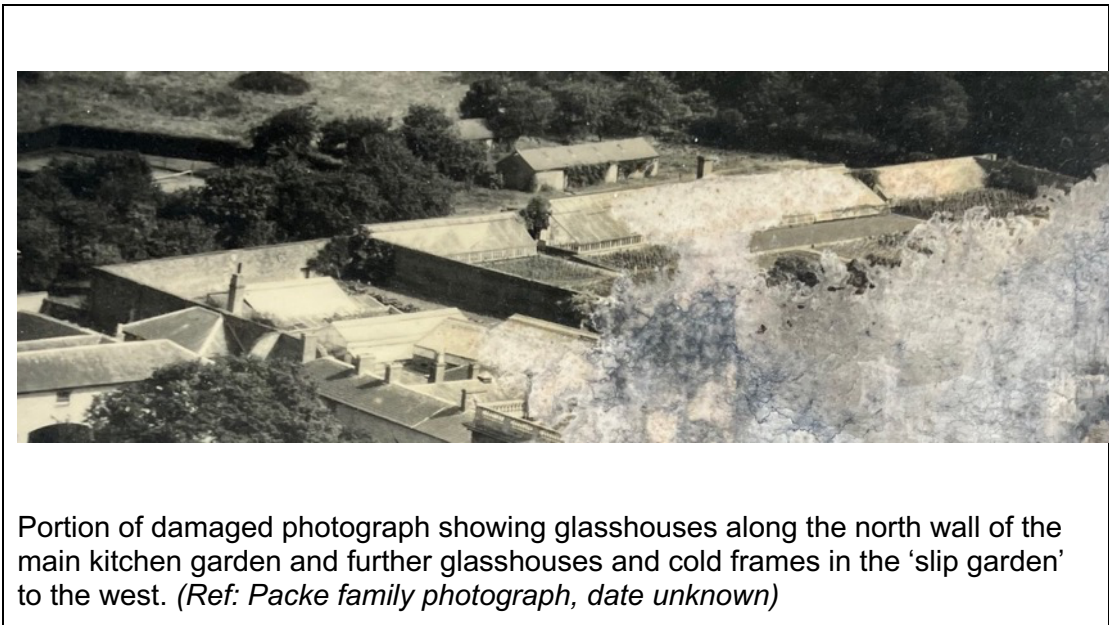
A good range of brick sheds, perhaps mid C19<sup>th</sup> stand alongside the outside of the north wall of the garden. The listing suggests that these are mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

(Ref: HE 1000964 and site visit on 10 July 2024)

The 1884 Ordnance Survey map (see below) shows the main garden laid out in a traditional format as a quartered garden with a path round the outside and beds against the walls.

Between the west wall of the garden and Hall (and its adjoining buildings) is a smaller partially walled area which was also used as a kitchen garden. Various glasshouses are shown here on the 1884 OS map. An area such as this is usually referred to as a “slip” or a “slip garden”.

(Ref: National Library of Scotland historic Ordnance Survey map: Leicestershire Sheet xviii.NW. Surveyed 1883, published 1884. 25": 1 mile. Maps.nls.org. Also site visit)





“Slip” garden to the west of the main garden which was also used as a kitchen garden (*Photograph: Sarah Bailey, LRG T*)

**Current Use:** The main walled kitchen garden currently houses two rows of photovoltaic panels which supply electricity for the Hall:



(*Photograph: Sheila Burnage, LRG T*)

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

Walls, doors, gates

The HE Listing for the Park and Gardens suggests that the perimeter walls of the kitchen garden were probably constructed when Prestwold was emparked c 1770.

It was not possible to inspect the entrances into the garden closely, due to the uneven and overgrown terrain.

The garden is accessed through a wide entrance in the north wall, next to the back sheds. This is ungated. The remaining entrances all have brick architraves and wooden gates: there are two in the east wall (one of these is in the south-east

corner); there is one in the south-west corner and one in the west wall. There is also one in the north wall, behind the photovoltaic panels. This would originally have been between the two ranges of lean-to glasshouses which were against this wall.

The north wall was heated: there are vents and flues at intervals towards the top of the wall.

The overall height of the wall is 12-13 ft. approximately. The brick size is 9" x 3".

There are varying brick bonds and types of brick in the walls: As might be expected, the lower courses are of older bricks.

Some of the brick courses are laid in Flemish bond with alternating courses of header and stretchers.

There is a band of brickwork towards the top of the wall constructed with lighter colour bricks.

There is flat stone coping along the top of the wall.

There is evidence of training wires to support plants along some of the walls.

*(Ref HE1000964 and site visit observations – 10.7.24)*



North wall showing brickwork, coping and heating vents

Garden gate on east wall





Photograph shows “ghost” image of line of former glasshouse.

Photographs:  
Sheila Burnage LRGT

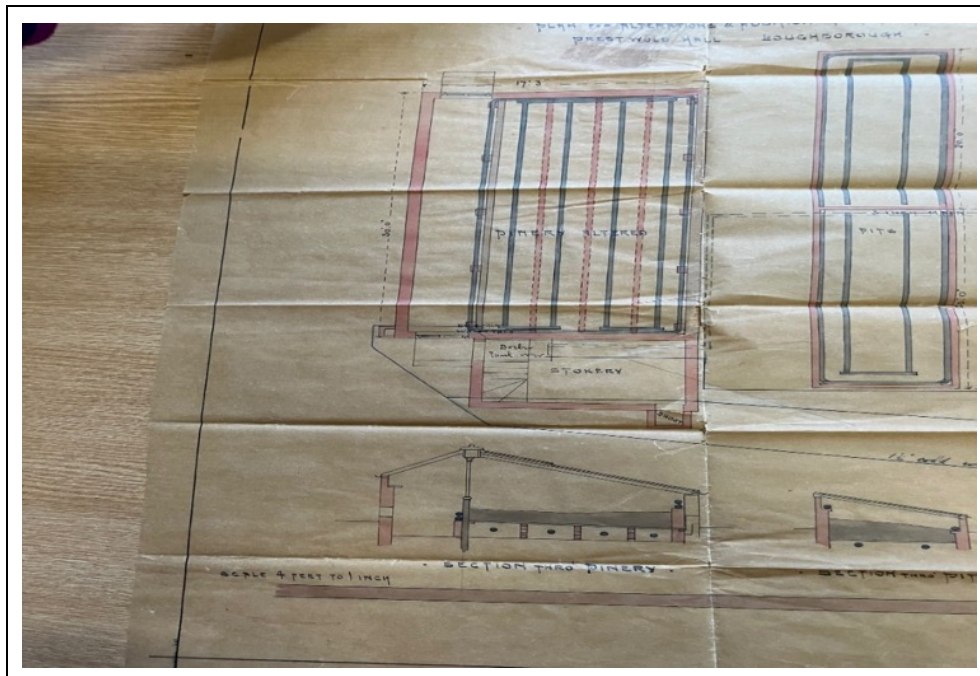
### Glasshouses

There are no remaining glasshouses; however, traces of whitewashed plaster on the walls indicate their location along the north wall.

The Thomas Messenger plans of 1869 show a design for a pinery (for pineapples). This appears to have been a  $\frac{3}{4}$  span glasshouse.

There was also a full-span “plant house” (LRRO reference DE1346/499/1-3)

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Record Office (LRRO) has an additional Messenger plan of alterations and additions to glasshouses, vineries etc at Prestwold Hall (late 19<sup>th</sup> century) Unfortunately, this document is not available to access at present as it is described as “closed needs repair.” The reference is DE1346/523



Thomas Messenger plans:  
(LRRO: DE1346/499/1-3)

Above: cross-section of pinery and plan showing heated pipework.  
Bottom right - cross section of one of the pits,



Left: Cross section of potting shed and plant house

(Ref: LRRO DE1346/499/1-3)

Frames	None visible in the main garden but in the damaged photo there appear to be cold frames in the 'slip garden'.
Pits	The Thomas Messenger plan of 1869 shows a cross section of a pit and the layout of the heating pipes (Ref: DE1346/499/1-3).
Hotwalls/furnaces	As indicated above, the north wall was heated and had flues.
Heating pipes/boilers etc.	The chimney for the boiler remains, though the boiler no longer exists, nor any of the pipework.
Backsheds, workrooms, stores	There is a good range of back sheds. One of the sheds (not viewed) has slate shelves, which would indicate that it might have been used for mushrooms or similar. (Ref: Site Visit – 10.7.24)



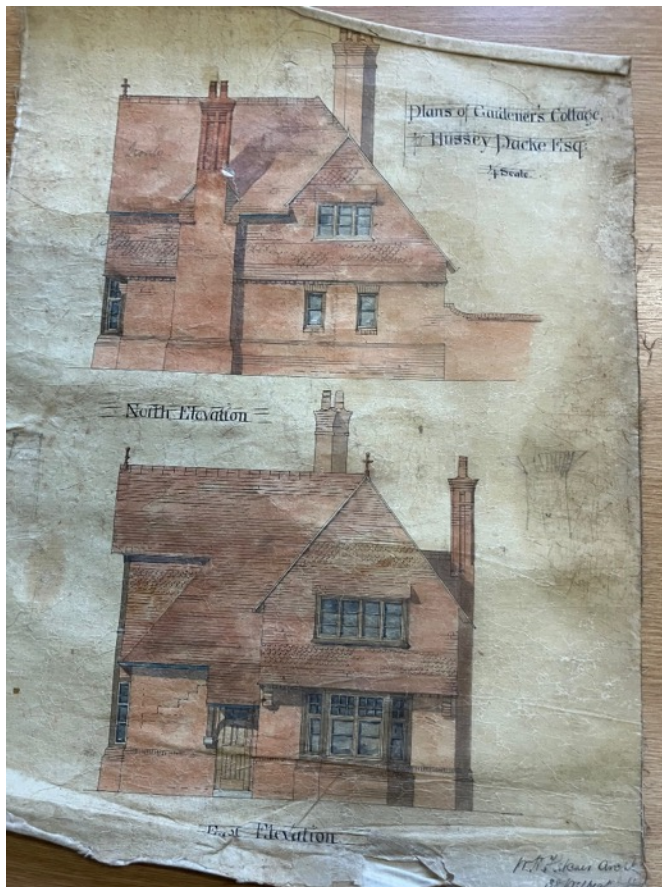
Back sheds



Boiler chimney

Gardener's house, cottages,  
bothies

The head gardener's cottage still exists,  
located to the north-east of the garden.



Architect's drawing for head  
gardener's cottage:  
Architect: N. Fletcher,  
38 Welbeck Street,  
London W1

(Ref: LRRO: DE1346/499/1-3)

Wells, ponds, tanks, towers	There is a tap protruding from the north wall, which would indicate that there is an underground water tank in that vicinity. <i>(Ref: site visit)</i>	
Planting	<p>Prestwold Hall was described in the "Gardener's Magazine" in 1831 by Mr Alexander Gordon, who was head gardener at Lowesby Hall: He describes the "superior mode in which the pine-apples are grown here: I never have seen any pines to excel, and few to equal them; they do the greatest credit to Mr. Brown, the gardener, who has managed them for twenty-three years".</p> <p>(The Gardener's Magazine was published by John Claudius Loudon and was aimed at professional gardeners.)</p> <p><i>(Ref: Biodiversity.library.org Gardeners' Magazine 1831)</i></p>	
Other key features	None	
Any other information:	See appendices attached with information regarding wages rates and inflation and employment of women gardeners during the 2 <sup>nd</sup> World War.	
Date site visited	10 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	
References:	<p>Historic England Listings:  Prestwold Hall – 107456  Prestwold Hall – 1000964  Prestwold Hall – 1074563  <a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing</a></p> <p>National Library of Scotland:  Historic Ordnance Survey maps  <a href="https://maps.nls.uk">https://maps.nls.uk</a></p> <p>Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Record Office (LRRO):  Ref: 1346/46,47,48  Thomas Messenger Plans for glasshouses  Architect's drawing for head gardener's cottage  Garden accounts and garden labour books</p> <p>Biodiversity.library.org  Gardeners' Magazine 1831</p>	
Researched by:	Sarah Bailey, Sue Blaxland, Sheila Burnage, Felicity Hector	
Record Compiled by:	Sue Blaxland	Date: November 2025

**Economic Framework 1875 to 1918**

From 1875 to 1918, the British economy experienced a period of relative decline compared to other major powers, despite still maintaining a strong position globally, marked by a slowdown in industrial growth as countries like Germany and the United States rapidly industrialised, leading to a shift in the global economic balance. The late 1870s saw a significant economic downturn known as the "Long Depression".

The United Kingdom was the hardest hit; during this period it lost some of its large industrial lead over the economies of Continental Europe. While it was occurring, the view was prominent that the British economy had been in continuous depression from 1873 to as late as 1896 and some texts refer to the period as the Great Depression of 1873–1896, with financial and manufacturing losses reinforced by a long recession in the agricultural sector. (Wikipedia)

1875 - 1896

Factory Act of 1878 fixed a 56-hour working week

**Agriculture**

- The depression caused destitution for farm labourers.
- The number of people involved in farming fell from 1.7 million to 1.2 million between 1851 and 1911.
- Agriculture's share of national income fell from around 20 per cent to 6 per cent. (Wikipedia)

For further information on the Great Agricultural Depression, see The Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture 1897

**Wages – Agricultural labourers’ wages – 1875-1914**

1875 14s  
 1885 13s 51/2d  
 1895 13s 81/2d  
 1905 15s  
 1910 15s 4d

Ref: British Labour Statistics: Historical Abstract 1886-1968 (Department of Employment and Productivity, 1971)

1894: Average weekly male wage: 20s 1d

**Prestwold Head Gardeners Wages:**

Year	Daily Wage	Weekly Wage
1875	£3. 4s	16 s
1899	£3. 8s	17 s
1905	£4. 0s	20 s.
1914	£3. 6s	16s 6d
1918	£6. 8s	32s

(Ref: LRRO: DE1346/142,143 – Garden Labour book)

## Appendix 2

### PRESTWOLD HALL:

Extracts from the Gardeners Wages Book, 1937-1948  
accessed 4th September 2024)  
(Ref: Leicestershire & Rutland Records Office DE 1346/143)

#### Weekly Payments

<b><u>December 1937</u></b>	W Coe	£2.15.0
	Percy Rands	£1.15.0
	Richard Rush	£1.17.0
	Thomas Stapleford	£1. 8. 0
	Edward Brown	£1. 5. 0
	Eric Rands	<u>14. 0</u>
	TOTAL:	<u>£9.15.0</u>

Six gardeners, including head gardener.

<b><u>December 1939</u></b>	W Coe	£2.15.0
	Percy Rands	£2. 0.0
	Bert Smith	£2. 5.0
	Ronald Tuckerwood	£1.16.0
	Edward Clarke	<u>15.0</u>
	TOTAL:	<u>£9. 11.6</u>

Five Gardeners, inc. head gardener.

<b><u>December 1940</u></b>	W Coe	£3. 0.0
	Percy Rands	£2.10.0
	W Naylor	£2. 8.0
	Harold Geary	£2. 2.6
	Nellie Taylor *	<u>£1. 5.4</u>
	TOTAL:	<u>£11.5.10</u>

Five gardeners, including one woman, who was paid about 2/3rds of male wage.  
(The Equal Pay Act did not come into full force until December 1975.)

\* Nellie was still working there: 1948-49 (see National Insurance Contribution card below.)

<b><u>December 1941</u></b>	W Coe	£3.10 0.
	Percy Rands	£2.15.0
	W Naylor	£2.15.0
	Nellie Taylor	<u>£1. 8.6</u>
	TOTAL	£9. 8.6

<b><u>December 1942</u></b>	W Coe	£3.12 0
	Percy Rands	£3. 2.0
	W Naylor	£3. 0.0
	Nellie Taylor	£1.11.8
	Edna Randall	£1.10.0
	Jean McDonald	£1.10.0
	Duty: £5/-*	<u>£5. 0.0</u>

TOTAL: £14.6.4 1/2

Three men & three women

\*It is unclear what "duty" refers to but from February 1945, it is referred to as "duty for fires"

**December 1943**

W Coe	£3.17 0
Percy Rands	£3. 7.0
William Naylor	£3. 5.0
Nellie Taylor	£1.18.8
Edna Randall	£1.18.0
Norah Riddleston	£1.18.0
Duty: £1/-*	n.b. this was a one off

TOTAL: £16.8.0

Three men & three women

**December 1944**

W Coe	£3.17 0
Percy Rands	£3. 7.0
William Naylor	£3. 5.0
Nellie Taylor	£1.18.8
Edna Randall	£1.18.0
Norah Riddleston	£1.18.0
Duty:	£5. 0.0

TOTAL: £16.8.0

Three men & three women

New Head gardener: L. Brightwell, June 1945

**January 1945**

Number of gardeners reduced to four - three men and one woman

**December 1945**

Five gardeners - three men and two women

**December 1946**

L Brightwell - head gardener

3 men & 1 woman

Five gardeners £20. 9.6

**December 1947**

Five gardeners £17. 9.0

3 men & 1 woman (Nellie Taylor)

**December 1948**

Five gardeners £17. 9.

3 men & 1 woman (Nellie Taylor)

**Nellie Taylor National Insurance Card – 1948/49**

