

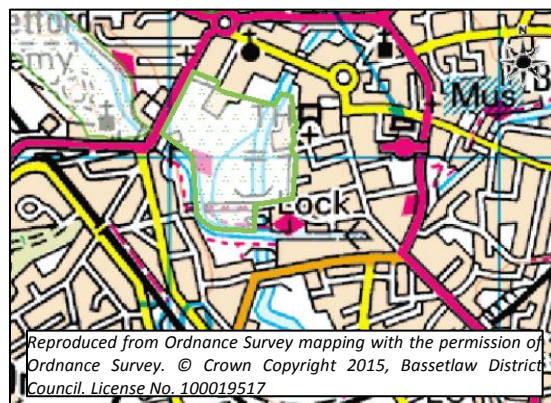
Unregistered Park & Garden:
Kings Park & West Retford Hall

NCC/BDC Ref:
UPG28

Date(s):
1699, C18, C19, 1938 & 1960

Description & historic information:

Landscaped park formerly associated with West Retford Hall (built 1699, grade II listed). Much of the park's present layout dates to 19th century and mid-20th century landscaping, although parts of the original late-18th/early-19th century garden survives around the hall.



Main façade of West Retford Hall

The oldest part of the park is that which immediately surrounds West Retford Hall. This was laid out in a rectangular plot on higher ground, perpendicular to both the former roadway that ran across the front of the hall to the north west and the former course of the River Idle, now called Carr Dyke, to the south east. The enclosure of 1774 saw the roadway stopped up and a new road built further to the north west, utilising a former access to the old West Retford Hall (now the site of Trinity Hospital), this road being called Hospital Road. A series of outbuildings adjacent to the hall, including stables, were also constructed in this period, probably for George Brown Esq (also of Ordsall Hall).



1774 West Retford Enclosure Map (source: Retford Library)



Late-18th century stable block

In 1777, the Chesterfield Canal was officially openedⁱ, which cuts through the southern part of the present park. The canal was designed by master engineer James Brindley. The River Idle was

straightened as part of these works and diverted eastwards, leaving the old course marked as Carr Dyke (the West Retford parish boundary also followed the old river course, until it was amalgamated with East Retford in 1921). Most of this area (between the old and new courses of the river) became used for agriculture/grazing, known as the West Carr and East Carr (see 1845 map).



Chesterfield Canal aqueduct over River Idle



1845 East Retford 'Inclosure' Map (source: Retford Library)

The brick boundary wall adjacent to Rectory Road/Hospital Road was constructed in the early-19th century. 1826 saw the addition of a dower house (West Retford Cottage) in the south west corner of the site for the widow of William Huntsman (of West Retford Hall). Much of the landscaping throughout the west half of the park dates to the 19th century, with open vistas, lawned areas, tree belts and specimen trees located throughout.



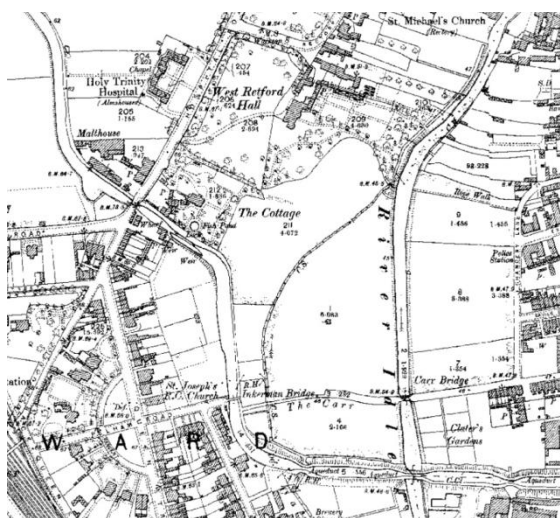
Boundary wall fronting Hospital Road



West Retford Cottage



1835 Sanderson's Map



1899 OS Map



1892 Chesterfield Canal Map (Source: Chesterfield Canal Trust)

Land to the east of the river was given to the town by the Huntsman family (of West Retford Hall) in 1937 for use as a public parkⁱⁱ - due to its low-lying nature, the land was raised between 1937-1938 using the town's refuse, with landscaping on topⁱⁱⁱ. Kings' Park was officially opened on the 29th June

1938^{iv} to commemorate the reign of King George V and the coronation anniversary of George VI^v. This included the entrance gateway with wall, piers, railings and gates along Chancery Lane and a series of formal gardens and leisure facilities.



Main entrance off Chancery Lane



Kings Park in 1938 (image source: Bassetlaw Museum)

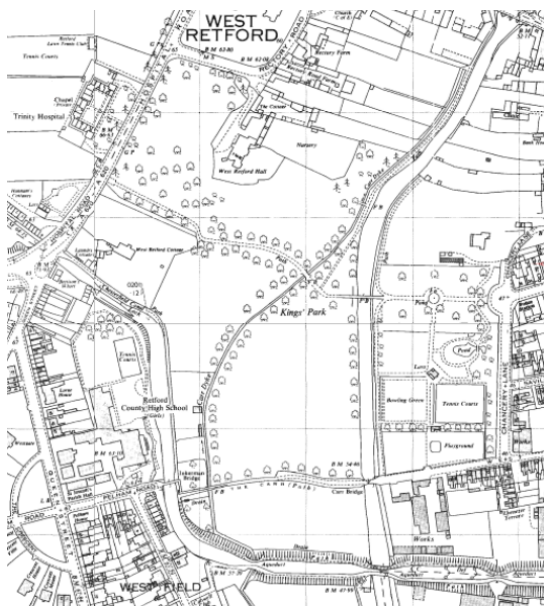
The land to the west of the river (originally associated with West Retford Hall) was incorporated into the park in 1960, being officially opened 27th April 1960^{vi}. This enlargement included considerable tree planting (especially along the river) and also the feature stone gate piers and iron gates off Hospital Road.



Main entrance off Hospital Road



Willow trees alongside River Idle



1964 OS Map

Today the parkland primarily consists of open grassed areas with tree-lined boundaries, of particular significance being the large specimen trees adjacent to the hall and the willows alongside the river.

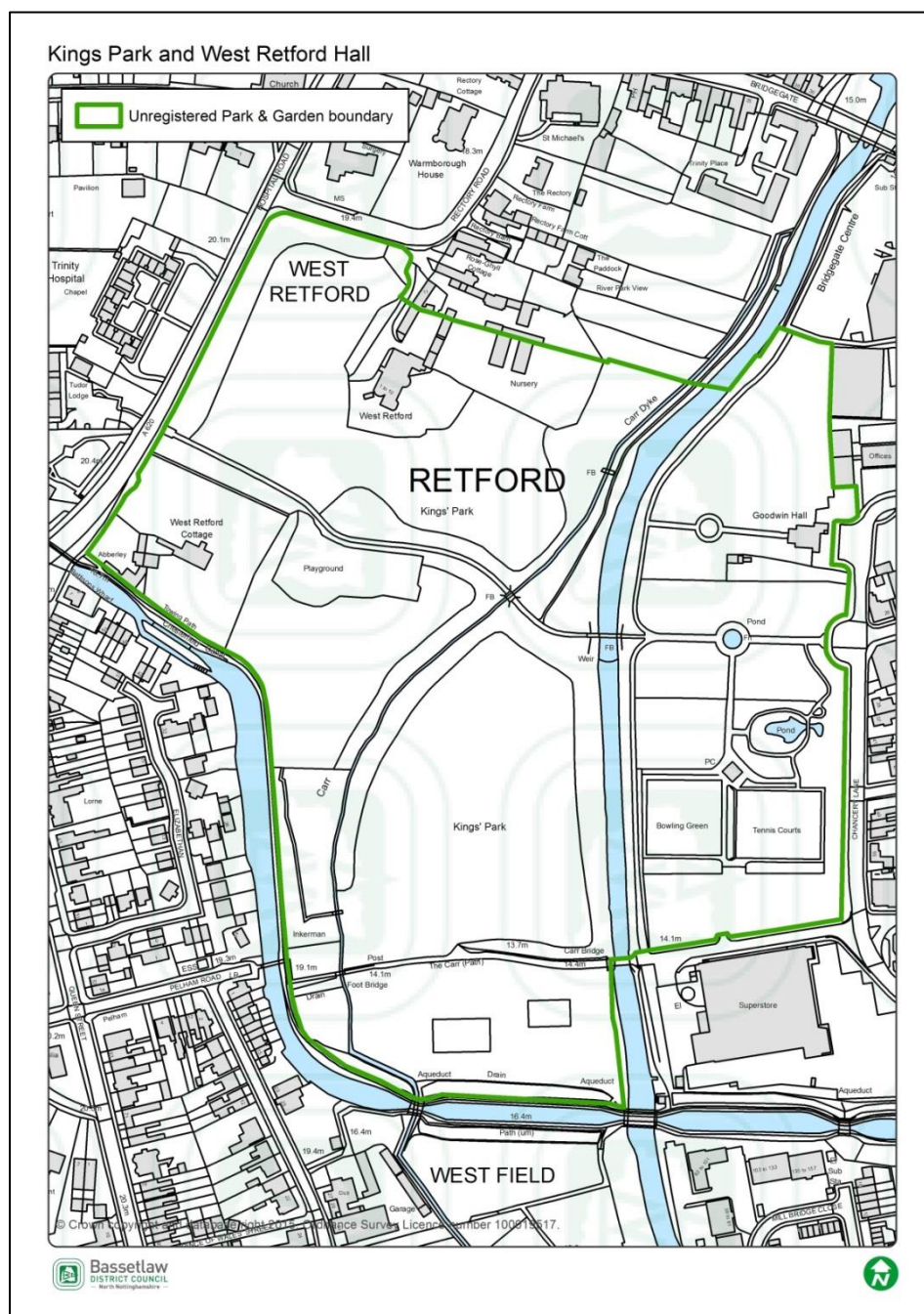
Features of significance:

West Retford Hall (grade II listed); Former stables to West Retford Hall (grade II); Dower house (West Retford Cottage), Abberley, boundary walls along Hospital Road and Rectory Road with feature entrance gateway; Feature gateway with wall, piers, railings and gates along Chancery Lane; east of river is landscaped park with open spaces separated by rows of trees along watercourses and footpaths; Formal gardens and park to east of river of 1938; large specimen trees throughout, especially close to hall and alongside River Idle; base of mid-20th century bandstand.



Aerial photograph of Kings Park, taken 2007 (source: Bassetlaw District Council)

Listed Buildings:	West Retford Hall (grade II); Former Stables to West Retford Hall (grade II)
Scheduled Ancient Monuments:	n/a
Conservation Area:	Retford Conservation Area (last designated 6 th July 2011) – All relevant unlisted buildings and structures within the Conservation Area are regarded as ‘positive buildings’
Local Interest Buildings:	n/a



References:

- ⁱ James Roffey; *The Book of Retford*; 2005.
- ⁱⁱ *Sheffield Independent*; 3rd March 1937.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Bassetlaw District Council; *Retford Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan*; May 2012.
- ^{iv} *Sheffield Independent*; 30th June 1938.
- ^v As stated on a plaque attached to a gate pier at the park's eastern entrance.
- ^{vi} As stated on a plaque attached to a gate pier at the park's western entrance.