

Lost Features of Boultham Park



Boultham Park



The lake

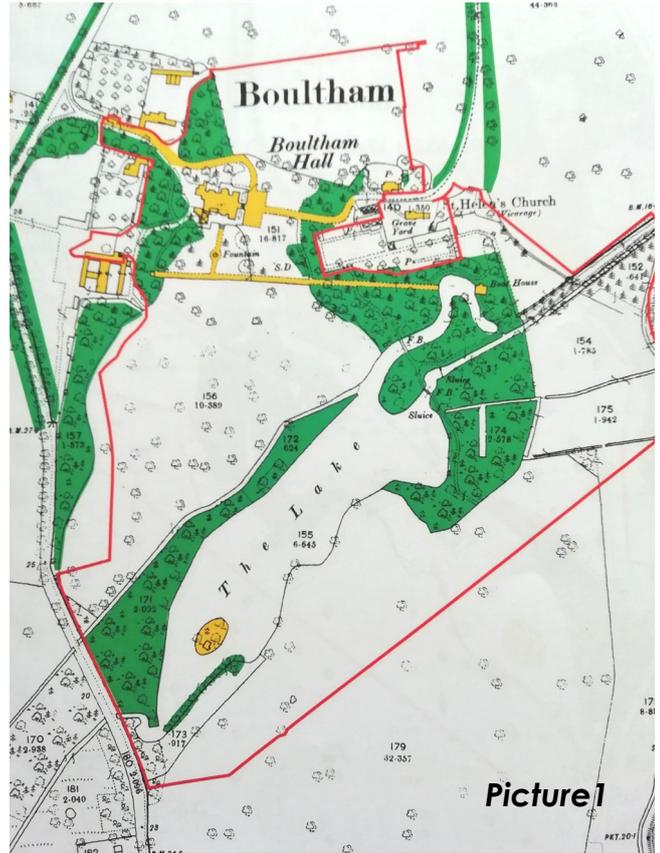
History and Importance

Boultham Park is listed in English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens as Grade 2 and therefore 'of special interest which warrants every effort being made to preserve it'. The Park is a Critical Natural Asset and has been designated by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust as a 'site of nature conservation importance'. It is one of the largest areas of woodland within Lincoln and one of nine predominantly woodland sites within the city and in a local context the site supports some rare and endangered species.

About

The Boultham Estate underwent a period of development under Colonel Richard Ellison, who was a Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, there is a record dating from 1851 of discussions surrounding incorporating a lake into the parkland close to the hall and this came to fruition in 1857 when the large ornamental lake was excavated. The lake took its feed water from Pike Drain (Pike Drain is fed from the lakes at Whisby, you can see this drain alongside Newark Road opposite the Ruston Sports Ground, it then runs through Boultham Moor skirting The Witham Academy crossing Rookery Lane at the end of Westwick Drive) the overflow water from the lake was diverted by a catchwater into the River Witham

The original lake was constructed in a 'serpentine' shape (looks like a goose neck in picture 1) and was excavated by hand, the majority of the soil removed was deposited round the site to produce garden area and raise the ground level at the east side of the lake up to the River Witham



Check out the Boultham Park Archive for more great images of the Lake



The Lake



Boultham Park



Picture2

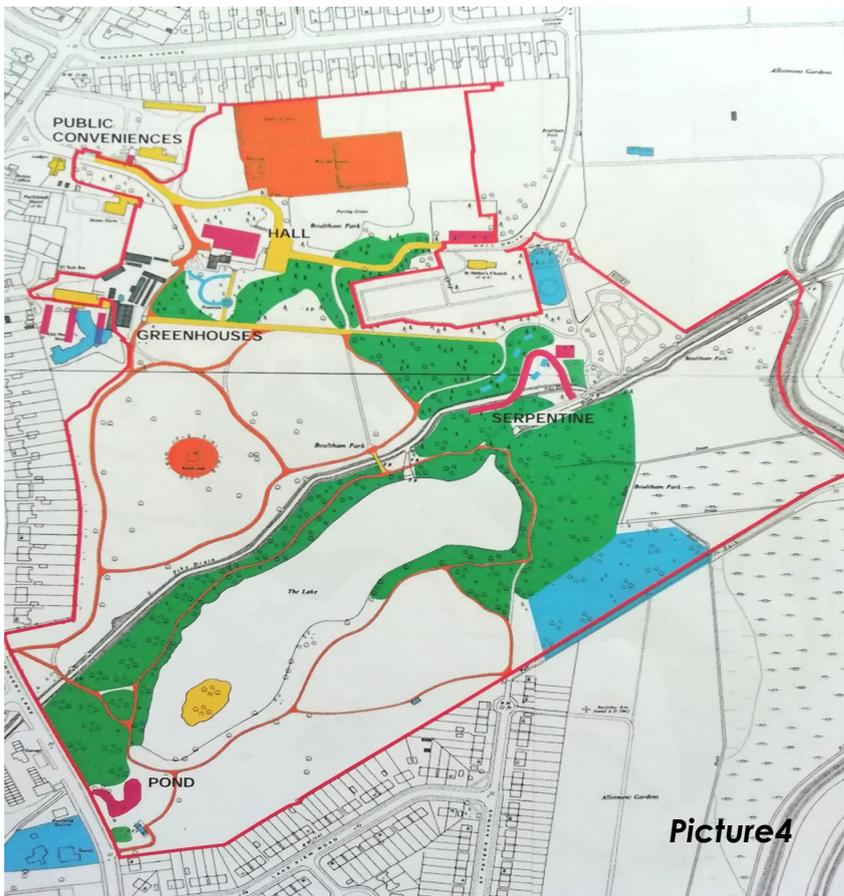


Picture3

At the time of construction the park covered an area of over 1,000 acres and the lake covered 4 acres.

Richard Ellison used to spend a lot of time at their home in London and became quite a socialite, he wanted to 'show off' his estate in Lincoln and to encourage his friends to visit he rebuilt and enlarged the hall during 1874 and once completed it was thrown open for garden parties, galas and fetes. Fishing and boating on the lake being one of the highlights (picture 2 and picture 3)

In May 1929 the park was purchased by Lincoln Corporation. In 1934/35 the land along the west side of the park was re-purposed and an extensive house building project took place resulting in over 1,600 new home along Skellingthorpe Road and the Westwick Drive. Between 1932 and 1950 there had been flooding along the course of Pike Drain and to improve the water flow the drain was straightened and connected with the River Witham (close to Russell Street bridge) to achieve this the lake was altered and the distinctive serpentine shape was lost (pic4)



Picture4

The reshaping of the lake reduced its size from 4 acres to 2.5 acres and represents 5% of the total wetlands habitat in Lincoln, by the early 1930's the Park's overall area became 50 acres.

In 1936 public boating was introduced onto the lake and remained popular all the way through to the mid 1960's.



If you have any old photographs of the Lake or any other part of Boultham Park please email us at : Boultham.park@lincoln.gov.uk



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The Lake



I know that many people reading this article will remember with fondness the time they spent 'messaging about' in rowing boats on the lake.



Memories

"When it became time to be called back rowing to the far side of the island and pretending you could not hear the boat keeper shouting your number".

"Pulling into the bank and letting all of your mates climb in".

"Splashing the girls in the next boat".

April 2021

So now we are up to date, at the time of writing the restoration project is well underway and each day I walk through the park I can better vision the beauty of the completed article. The boat ramp and fishing pegs have been installed and I also have it on reliable authority that we will see rowing boats back on the lake.

Thanks for taking the time to read this article and as always I look forward to receiving your comments, thoughts and memories about the park

Keep a look out for Robert's next instalment on the lost features of Boultham Park

Dogs ran across the ice on Boultham Park Lake, which broke - leaving them stranded on the island.
(+ owners going frantic!)

10/12/1981

DECEMBER - 1981

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