

Case information

Case ID	300016900
File Reference	HGPI/P/LA/7
Name of Site	Northfield

Local Authority	City of Edinburgh
National Grid Reference	NT 15673 66866
Designation No. (if any)	GDL00302
Designation Type	Garden and designed landscape
Case Type	Removal

Received / Start Date	03/04/2014
Decision Date	12/01/2016

1. Proposed Decision/Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Northfield is no longer considered to meet the criteria for inclusion on the Inventory of gardens and designed landscapes. The garden / designed landscape has been removed from the Inventory.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

Northfield was first included in the Inventory in 2001. No previous reviews of the Inventory entry have taken place.

Within the boundary of the Inventory, Northfield house is listed at category B.

2.2 Development Proposals

Recent planning (2010) included the erection of a 2-storey house within the footprint of the garden. New housing is currently proposed to be located on farmland to the north, outwith this site (14/020806/PPP) and Historic Scotland commented that the

proposed development would not have an impact on Northfield designed landscape (5 Aug 2014).

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

This site was identified for review as part of the Inventory Refresh Project, 2014-15.

Two site visits were undertaken. The first took place on 4 September 2014. Following consultation, a second site visit was undertaken on 8 June 2015 in order to see the garden at a different time of year and to review our initial findings.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

Northfield was found to no longer meet the criteria for inclusion on the Inventory.

An assessment against the criteria for inclusion on the Inventory of gardens and designed landscapes was undertaken in November 2014. This assessment was subject to consultation with the owners and the Local Authority. A revised assessment was carried out on 13 July 2015 following the second site visit and to take account of comments received at consultation (see **Annex A**).

The designation criteria are found in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), pp. 71-85. <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/shep-dec2011.pdf>

Elizabeth McCrone

Head of Designations
Heritage Management
Historic Environment Scotland

Contact	Julie Candy, Senior Designations Officer, Julie.candy@gov.scot ; 0131 668 8809
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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Criteria for Inclusion on the Inventory*

Northfield

1. Summary description

Northfield house and garden, dating to 1910 by Walter Crum Watson, is a small-scale domestic garden in Traditionalist style of the Arts and Crafts period which is set in an elongated rectangular plot, next to Lanark Road West along its south boundary, and open farm land along its north boundary, in the village of Balerno, now a suburb of Edinburgh.

The garden is the setting for Northfield house (listed category B), inspired by 17th-century Scots Traditionalist tower house architecture. The garden is largely compartmented and includes a series of lawns divided by clipped hedges (garden rooms), a central circular yew roundel which acts as a focal point; and to the periphery, a small herbarium, small orchard; and to the far east a copse contained by an arc of lime trees centred on a small pond; and to the west a small stand of mature specimen trees.

Ancillary structures set near the house include a gardener's cottage and glass houses.

A 2-storey house was inserted into the north-east section of the garden in 2010 in the area formerly comprising the kitchen garden and a new approach to this house intersects the east section of the site from Lanark Road West (A71).

2. Assessment Against the Criteria for Inclusion on the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes (SHEP 2011- <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/heritage/policy/shep.htm>) pp81-82

Criteria for determining whether a garden or designed landscape is of 'national importance' for inclusion on the Inventory under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 [<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/46/contents>]

To be included on the Inventory, it is generally the case that the greater the number of outstanding or high values, the more important the site. The criteria provide a framework within which judgement is exercised in reaching individual decisions. The condition of the site today and its overall integrity are important elements of the selection process.

2.1 Value as individual work of art in its own right

Value: Some

The garden at Northfield retains a number of its original Arts and Crafts features, as designed by Walter Crum Watson, and which are characteristic of the interest at the turn of the 20th century in formal Renaissance garden design.

However, the value score in this category cannot exceed 'some' for the following reasons:

- i. The loss of part of the original structure: While the garden at Northfield has no significant planting overlays, and while the elements which survive are of individual interest, the addition of a substantial dwelling with its discreet access and amenity infrastructure within its relatively modest area has contributed to the loss of part of the original layout and planting and has ultimately affected the integrity of the Traditionalist, compartmentalised design.
- ii. The garden at Northfield is a modest example of this formal garden type. No evidence is currently known to suggest that it was particularly valued as a work of art in its own right by contemporary society and the garden is not regarded as a trendsetter for other, later designed landscapes, given the small scale of the site and the range of landscape features present, which are typical for a site of this date. Inventory sites that score 'outstanding' in this regard are those that achieved particular fame due to their scale and/or innovation in terms of design (eg. Abbotsford in the Scottish Borders), or were particularly early and notable examples of their type which inspired the designers of later landscapes (eg. Penicuik House in Midlothian).
- iii. Northfield is not the work of a landscape designer who achieved national renown. Walter Crum Watson (1870–1934) built Northfield house and garden for his own use and named it after his parental home in Largs. He was a subscriber to Inigo Triggs' book on formal gardens (Triggs 1902), and may have drawn inspiration from this and other publications of the time. He is credited with a very small number of country house and garden designs, most of which were alterations to existing buildings and gardens. His interests were scholarly and in 1908 he published a book on Portuguese architecture.

To score more highly within this part of the assessment, Northfield would need to be associated with a nationally renowned gardener or designer, as is the case with the Inventory sites of Valleyfield in Fife (associated with Humphrey Repton), or Little Sparta (Stonypath) in South Lanarkshire, by Ian Hamilton Finlay.

2.2 Historic value

Value: Some

Northfield cannot be considered to have a high or outstanding value in this category.

- i) Although some information on the architect-gardener, Walter Crum Watson, has come to light through recent research, the total quantity of known historical documents is low and limited in range. Inventory sites that score well in this regard tend to be estate landscapes associated with large collections of primary historical records, such as Paxton House in the Scottish Borders, or sites associated with a smaller, but particularly rare archive, such as Glenarn in Argyll and Bute.
- ii) This garden is a good example of its period and style and in particular its layout which is characteristic of a trend towards structured planting and formal planning, popularised from circa 1890-1920. While there are only a small number of complete Traditionalist gardens in the Inventory such as Aultmore and Arisaig House, both of

these gardens have a number of outstanding values which are nationally significant. Northfield cannot be considered to be of national importance in this regard.

- iii) Northfield does not contain individual components which provide an outstanding example of a particular period or style.
- iv) As noted above, Northfield was not considered a trendsetting landscape at some stage in its history, rather it followed the example of the contemporary interest in formal, compartmentalised gardens.
- v) The garden does not present physical evidence of a particularly early form of designed landscape.
- vi) Northfield does not have strong associations with a nationally important historic personality.

2.3 Horticultural, arboricultural or silvicultural value

Value: Some

Northfield cannot be considered to have high or outstanding value in this category.

i) Northfield contains good horticultural and arboricultural elements, such as a single large specimen magnolia, a variety of established rhododendrons, two katsura trees and other mature trees in a small peripheral woodland, a daffodil border known as the 'daffodil walk' with rare daffodil bulb types, and good surviving arrangement of limes which frame a pond.

While this is of some interest in this category, this collection of plants and trees is not outstanding in terms of variety, presence of champion specimens, or unusual species.

ii) Northfield has no scientific collection.

iii-iv) There is no evidence to suggest that Northfield has an important place in the history of horticulture or arboriculture, or demonstrates important silvicultural practice.

In order to score more highly in this category, Northfield would require to demonstrate an important historical horticultural association, or contain a nationally significant collection of plants and/or trees. Inventory sites that score well in this category include botanic gardens, such as Linn Botanic Gardens, the four gardens managed by Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh, or estate landscapes that contain notable arboreta such as Monteviot in the Scottish Borders. Other examples include smaller horticulturalist's gardens with specific plant or shrub collections, such as Glenarn.

2.4 Architectural value

Value: Some

i) The designed garden at Northfield forms a setting for Northfield House, listed at category B in recognition of its regional architectural or historic interest. The setting also contains ancillary structures associated with the upkeep of the garden, including a gardener's cottage. These ancillaries are set close to the house itself and are not

themselves part of any formal layout or set out as eye-catchers in the landscape. The garden appears to have been originally conceived as a setpiece for the semi-fortified, baronial house but which is scaled within a suburban context.

Inventory gardens and landscapes that achieve an 'outstanding' score in this category are normally associated with one or more buildings of national importance (listed at category A) and may include a very large number of nationally and regionally significant buildings, structures and/or monuments. Examples include Culzean Castle in South Ayrshire, The New Town Gardens in Edinburgh or The Necropolis in Glasgow.

2.5 Scenic value

Value: Little

Northfield garden occupies a rectangular plot, formerly farmland parcelled off from the Earl of Morton's Dalmahoy estate and is set on high ground. The garden itself is mainly compartmented and was designed primarily as a set-piece for the house. There are some views from the northern edge of the garden to the north which lead the eye to the Forth Estuary and incidental views of the Forth Bridge and Forth Road Bridge can be glimpsed.

The immediate surrounding landscape is farmland to the north and suburban housing developments to the remaining aspects.

i) While the mature trees at the fringes of the garden contribute to the scenic character of an increasingly suburbanised local landscape, the garden does not make a major scenic impact in terms of scale, character, rarity, contrast or prominence. This is due to its small size, domestic character and lack of large-scale components which are more normally associated with estate landscapes (such as extensive woodlands, parklands or monuments). Inventory sites that make a major contribution in terms of their scenic value include Haddo House in Aberdeenshire or Brodick Castle on the Island of Arran.

2.6 Nature Conservation value

Value: Little

i) There are no nationally designated habitats at Northfield. Minor value in this category derives from habitats such as the small woodland, copse and orchard within the boundary of the property, and current garden management, which encourages wildlife (such as maintaining areas of wild flowers and grasses and providing nest boxes).

2.7 Archaeological value

Value: Little

There are no scheduled monuments or other known monuments within the designed landscape.

As with all estate or garden landscapes, there is the potential for future survey or investigation to reveal more information about the nature and development of the site over time.

3. Condition and Integrity (SHEP 2011, p82)

The condition of the site today and its overall integrity are important elements of the assessment process.

In the case of Northfield, the condition of the existing elements of the garden is good. However, although the site occupied by the new dwelling is arguably of lesser significance in terms of the overall designed landscape, the integrity of the formal arrangement, whose main reason is to complement Northfield house, has been affected by the subdivision of the garden for the new house and separate access.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Criteria for Inclusion on the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes**

Northfield is a partial survival of a Traditionalist garden of the Arts and Crafts period that is maintained in a good condition and managed to encourage wildlife and to display an interesting variety of plants and shrubs. When assessed against the above criteria, however, it does not exhibit any features that are nationally significant. Furthermore, while retaining elements of its historic structure, there has been alteration with the erection of a substantial dwelling within the boundary of the garden.

We have concluded that Northfield is not of national importance in terms of its garden landscape and should, therefore, be removed from the Inventory.

5. Designation Boundary

It is proposed to remove this site from the Inventory.

6. Other Information

N/A.

7. References

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Crum Watson, W. 1908, *Portuguese Architecture*, <http://www.gutenberg.org> [e-book accessed 09/06/2015]

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National Monuments Record of Scotland, Canmore,
<http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/50292/details/balerno+550+lanark+road+west+northfield/> [accessed 14.11.2014]

The Tree Register, <http://www.treeregister.org> [accessed 09.06.2015]

Triggs, H. I. 1902, *Formal Gardens in England and Scotland*, Antique Collectors' Club: Suffolk

Date of Assessment	13 July 2015
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* This assessment is based on our current state of knowledge and has been prepared for the purpose of consultation or to provide a view on the national interest of a site. This assessment is a consultation document and will form the basis of any new or updated Inventory record should the site be added to the Inventory. The content of this assessment may change to take into account further information received as a result of the consultation process.

** A site may be found to meet the Inventory criteria but in some circumstances may not be added to the Inventory. See **'When might Historic Environment Scotland add a garden or designed landscape to the Inventory?'** at <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/heritage/gardens/gardensinventory.htm>