

NUNEHAM HOUSE

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Official list entry

Heritage Category:**Listed Building**

Grade:**II***

List Entry Number:**1286179**

Date first listed:**18-Jul-1963**

Date of most recent amendment:**19-Aug-1986**

List Entry Name:**NUNEHAM HOUSE**

Statutory Address 1:**NUNEHAM HOUSE**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

Understanding list entries

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

Corrections and minor amendments

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

Location

Statutory Address:**NUNEHAM HOUSE**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:**Oxfordshire**

District:**South Oxfordshire (District Authority)**

Parish:**Nuneham Courtenay**

National Grid Reference:**SU5405298110**

Details

NUNEHAM COURTENAY NUNEHAN PARK SU5498 12/78 Nuneham House 18/07/63 (Formerly listed as Nuneham Park)

6V II*

Country house, now conference centre. 1757 by Stiff Leadbetter for the 1st Earl Harcourt, interior by James Stuart; altered 1781 by Lancelot Brown and Henry Holland for the 2nd Earl; extended 1832 by Sir Robert Smirke for Archbishop Harcourt. Limestone ashlar; Welsh-slate roofs with ashlar stacks. Double-depth main block with quadrant links to pavilions; south pavilion enlarged. 3 storeys plus attic and 3-storey pavilions. Symmetrical 7-window front breaks forward in the middle 3 bays below a

triangular pediment enclosing an oculus, now flanked by a balustraded parapet of 1904. Original cornice survives. Second-floor windows have moulded architraves and are probably enlarged. Lower-floor openings were destroyed by a 2-storey projecting extension of 1904 built above Smirke's rusticated 3-bay entrance arcade. Hipped roof has added dormers at sides. 2-storey quadrant links have an arcaded ground floor. Pavilions, of 3 by 3 bays, have, at first floor, a plain storey band, a moulded sill band and moulded architraves; the upper floor and cornice was added by Brown and the plain parapets by Smirke. The left pavilion is extended. 5-window return wall to right of the main block has 2 floors of architraved sashes over a projecting arcaded ground floor added by Brown. 3-window left return wall has a similar terrace above which a Venetian window is flanked by arched sashes, originally shown as square-headed. The garden front has a projecting middle section with sashes in its canted sides but with 3 Venetian windows in the central and flanking bays. These have arches breaking through the frieze and cornice in the manner of Hadrian's Aqueduct at Athens and have Greek-Ionic columns - "the first direct quote from Ancient Greece in English architecture" (Worsley) and the first use of that order. The 9-window garden front of the extended south pavilion breaks forward twice in a 4:1:3:1 arrangement, with a triangular pediment above the 3-bay section which also has cornices on its first floor architraves. Interior: Holland's oval 3-storey staircase has a cantilevered stone stair with a wrought-iron balustrade, and has plaster panelled walls with fruit-and-flower drops. The ceiling has large festoons in the cove and an oval domelight. It was built to give access to the piano nobile after the removal of Leadbetter's external double staircase. Stuart's Great Drawing Room has a compartmented ceiling, modelled on the Banqueting House, and the windows have fluted Ionic columns and pilasters. The marble fireplace, traditionally ascribed to the artist Paul Sandby, has a frieze of medallions and festoons, matching that of the room, and has recently been attributed to Stuart. The Octagonal Salon, with its high coved ceiling, also has rich decoration by Stuart, later embellished by Holland. The C18 fireplace is a recent addition. The Dining Room, as re-modelled and enlarged by Holland, retains Stuart's fine marble fireplace which has an eared egg-and-dart architrave, a large dentil cornice supported on lion-mask consoles, and a deep frieze containing medallions and crossed torches. The compartmented ceiling has lost Holland's festoons from the cove. The extension to the room is marked by 2 scagliola Composite columns in antis. Many other rooms, including Smirke's extension, have fine doorcases, fireplaces and coved ceilings. Leadbetter's design was illustrated in *Vitruvius Britannicus*. The house, conceived as a villa in a Classical setting, became the focus of one of Brown's first landscapes. (Nuneham Park is included in the HBMC County Register of Gardens at Grade I; V.C.H.: Oxfordshire, Vol.V, p.234; *Buildings of England: Oxfordshire*, pp.726-8; G. Worsley, "Nuneham Park Revisited I"; *Country Life*: Vol.177, 1985, pp.16-19; M. Batey: Nuneham

Courtenay, 1970).

Listing NGR: SU5405298110

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:**248315**

Legacy System:**LBS**

Sources

Books and journals

Batey, M, Nuneham Courtenay, (1970)

Pevsner, N, Sherwood, J, The Buildings of England: Oxfordshire, (1974), 726-8

Salzman, L F, The Victoria History of the County of Oxford, (1957), 234

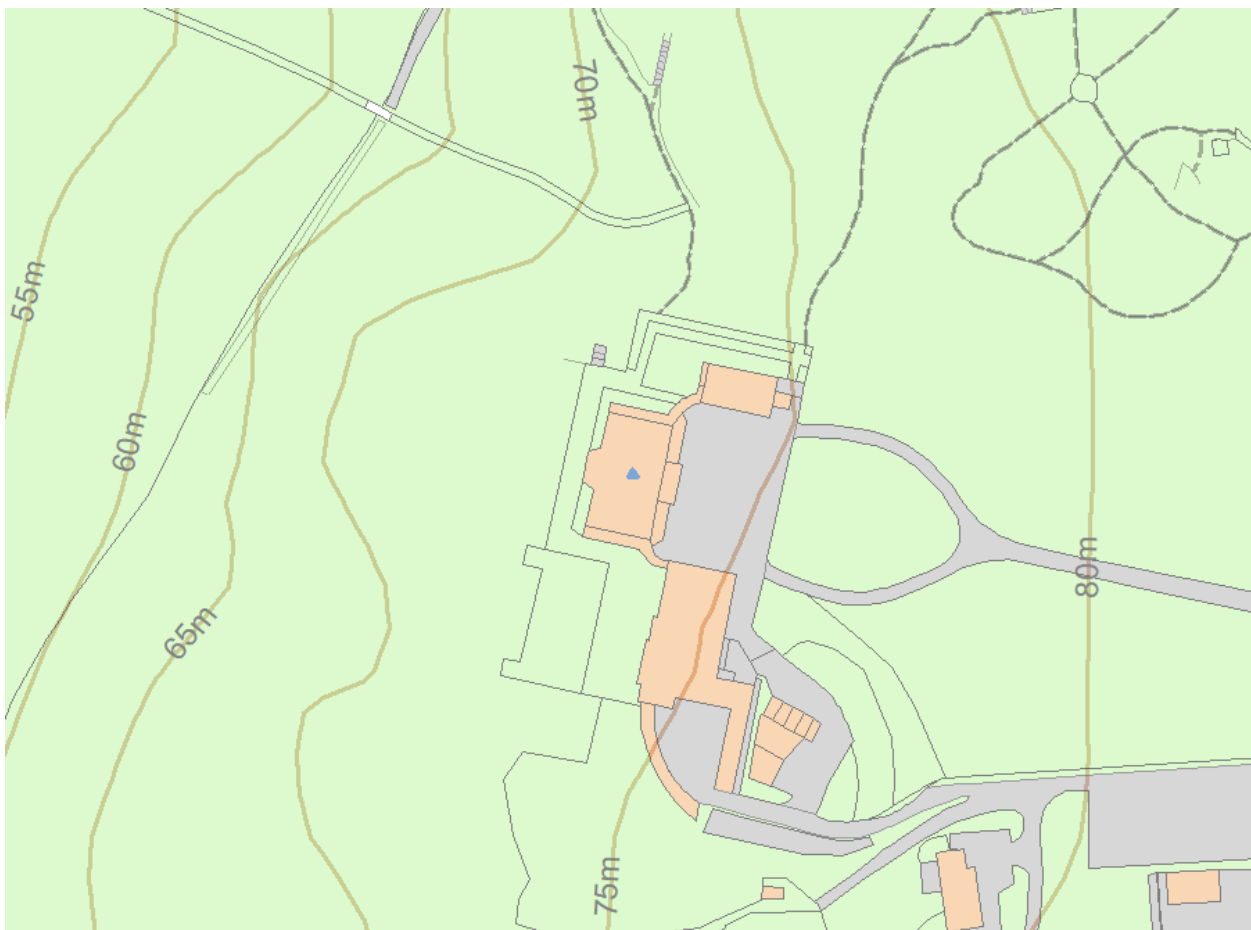
'Country Life' in Country Life, (1985)

Other

Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England, Part 34 Oxfordshire

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. This copy shows the entry on 17-Mar-2025 at 13:15:46.

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End of official list entry