

**HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT  
OF COLEORTON HALL**

**DRAFT  
JULY 2024**

## 1. Context

- 1.1. Coleorton Hall is in NW Leicestershire; the parish is Coleorton. The hall is about 15 miles south of Derby and about 16 miles NW of Leicester. The hall is about 1 mile west of the village Post Office<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2. The amended NW Leicestershire Local Plan (NWLDC, 2021) recognises Coleorton Hall as a ‘hamlet’, i.e. a “small group of dwellings with no services and facilities” and where development will be considered in the context of policy S3 (‘Countryside’).
- 1.3. For statistical purposes England is divided into Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). Coleorton Hall is in ‘NW Leicestershire 5D’. It is among the 40% least deprived LSOAs in England<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.4. The grounds to Coleorton Hall are situated on the Helsby sandstone formation. To the west the bedrock is overlain by superficial deposits; to the east the bedrock is exposed and it has been quarried. The paddock – the “park-like grassland” to the east of the grounds – is situated on the Pennine Middle Coal Measures formation. Prior’s map (1777) indicates coal pits on the paddock.
- 1.5. Coleorton Hall is situated on the eastern ridge of a plateau at about 160m AOD. The ground slopes away steeply to the north, east and south. To the north of the hall the edge of Rough Park is at about 135m AOD. To the east of the hall Rempstone Road is at about 140m AOD. The eastern boundary of the paddock is at about 110m AOD.

## 2. Historic development

### Sources

- 2.1. Section 5 contains a bibliography. In addition, the following sources have been consulted:
  - The tithe map (1843) held at Leicestershire Record Office (T1/76/1);
  - Ordnance Survey 1:2500 maps of 1882, 1903, 1923 and 1962;
  - Kelly’s Directories of Leicestershire and Rutland, 1891 to 1941;
  - Ashby Rural District Council’s building plan registers, 1948 to 1974;
  - NW Leicestershire District Council’s planning registers, 1974 to present;
  - The amended entry for Coleorton Hall on the Register of Parks and Gardens (1999).

### Manorial and administrative history

- 2.2. In 1426 the manor of Overton Quartermarsh was “brought in marriage to Sir Thomas Beaumont”. Nichols (1804) records that Sir George Howland Beaumont, seventh baronet, “is now the owner of this lordship”.

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<sup>1</sup> Coleorton is a ‘scattered’ settlement. The NW Leicestershire Local Plan (2017) identifies a sustainable ‘village’ on Lower Moor Road. Historically the ‘village’ was in Thringstone; it was ‘added’ to Coleorton in 1885 (Kelly, 1891). It was known as Rotten Row until at least 1923.

<sup>2</sup> There are 32844 LSOAs in England. These are ranked by deprivation with 1 being the most deprived and 16422 being the national median. NW Leicestershire 5D is ranked 21997.

- 2.3. In 1891 the hall was occupied by Sir George Howland William Beaumont, tenth baronet (Kelly). Between 1892 and 1900 the hall was occupied by Alfred Russell Donisthorpe (Wright, 1892, Kelly, 1900)<sup>3</sup>. In 1904 the hall was occupied by Francis Abel Smith (d.1908) and from 1908 to 1925 it was occupied by his widow (Kelly).
- 2.4. From 1928 to 1932 the hall was occupied by Major Sir George Arthur Hamilton Beaumont, eleventh baronet (d.1933) and in 1936 the hall was unoccupied (Kelly). In 1941 the hall was occupied by John Stanleigh Turner (Kelly). In 1948 the hall and its grounds were acquired by the National Coal Board (NCB) “for use as a divisional headquarters” (NWLDC, 2001).
- 2.5. Coleorton was administered from 1894 to 1974 by Ashby Rural District Council. It has been administered since that date by NW Leicestershire District Council.

#### **Development before c.1815**

- 2.6. Coleorton appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Ovretone*. The parish church has a fourteenth century west tower and spire<sup>4</sup>. The register entry describes a hall “built in the late seventeenth century incorporating an older stone turret”. The register entry refers to an eighteenth century brewery building and stable (the former survives).
- 2.7. Between 1804 and 1808 Sir George demolished the hall and erected a new hall – i.e. “the third house on the site” (register entry). Between 1806 and 1812 Sir George erected garden structures including the following:
- The stone ‘terrace retaining wall’ between the upper lawn and the rose garden;
  - The winter garden, including a monument and a ‘grotto and pool’;
  - The lime walk, including Reynold’s Monument and busts of Michelangelo and Raphael;
  - The yew walk, including Beaumont’s Memorial and busts of Milton and Shakespeare<sup>5</sup>.
- 2.8. Top Lodge was erected c.1812. Map 1 indicates the extent of the grounds c.1815.

#### **Development since c.1815**

- 2.9. Between 1815 and 1843 the grounds were extended to the north to include “a large hollow, possibly once a quarry garden and originally a mine or quarry” [1]. The grounds were extended to the NW to include a large sub-rectangular area containing a walled garden [2]. The walled garden was “nearly complete” in 1831<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Alfred Russell Donisthorpe of Donisthorpe & Son, wool and worsted spinners, Friar’s Mill, Leicester.

<sup>4</sup> “Before work commenced on the A512 bypass”, an archaeological excavation gave “substance to the belief that Coleorton was once the site of a medieval village” (Coalville Mail, 10 December 1992).

<sup>5</sup> The register entry also refers to a small boulder inscribed ‘Rcd Wilson 1812’ and a large boulder inscribed ‘brought here 1818’.

<sup>6</sup> According to a letter from Lady Beaumont to William Wordsworth dated 2 July 1831. Stewart (2015).

- 2.10. The seventh baronet died in 1827 and the hall was inherited by Sir George Howland Willoughby Beaumont, eighth baronet. Between 1827 and 1833 he erected the following:
- The 'broad terrace' on the south and east sides of the hall;
  - The 'dairy' attached to the north of the hall;
  - An extension to the eighteenth century stables;
  - The pheasantry in the winter garden.
- 2.11. The eighth baronet died in 1845 and the hall was inherited by Sir George Howland Beaumont, ninth baronet (d.1882). The picture gallery was erected in 1848. In 1862 he added the attic storey and the ballroom and rebuilt the service wing "as tall and elaborate" as the principal building (Pevsner, 1984).
- 2.12. 'The Cottages' were erected c.1903-23 [3].

### **3. Redevelopment (c.1948 to c.2001)**

- 3.1. In 1948 the hall and its grounds were acquired by the National Coal Board (NCB) "for use as a divisional headquarters" (NWLDC, 2001). The NCB demolished the conservatory and inserted six window openings in the picture gallery. The NCB altered the stable block, which was henceforth known as the 'canteen block' or 'dining hall' (ARDC reference AR/36). The NCB erected a 'house for the area general manager' c.1958-59 (AR/1230).
- 3.2. Between c.1956 and c.1966 the NCB erected an office and surface car park in phases (AR/965, AR/2609 and AR/3154) and a detached garage and workshop (AR/2468) [a].
- 3.3. The walled garden was demolished probably at some time between 1948 and 1962. Between c.1963 and c.1966 the NCB carried out development at the 'nursery' including a garage and workshop and a water tank (AR/2960 and AR/3187) [b].
- 3.4. In 1963 the NCB erected a 'new bedroom and bathroom' at Top Lodge (AR/2315) and a 'records repository' attached to the hall (AR/2380). In about 1967-68 the NCB developed a vehicular access, brick wall and gateways (AR/3258 and AR/3488) [4].
- 3.5. The A512 Coleorton bypass<sup>7</sup> was constructed c.1992-93.

### **4. The conservation area and further redevelopment (c.2001 to present)**

- 4.1. The Coleorton Hall conservation area was designated in October 1991. The District Council adopted a character appraisal in April 2001 and revisions to the designated boundary took effect in May that year.

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<sup>7</sup> In 1991 the improvement was "not likely to be started" until February 1992 (Loughborough Echo, 23 August). The bypass opened without fanfare in June 1993 (Ashby Mail, 24 June).

- 4.2. c.2000-02 the District Council granted listed building consent and planning permission for the redevelopment of the hall and its grounds (our references 00/00774/LBC and 01/00201/FUL). Principally the redevelopment comprised the following:
- Alteration of the hall to form twelve apartments.
  - Demolition of the multi-phase office and the detached garage and workshop, removal of the surface car park and the “restoration of the historic landscape” [a].
  - Demolition of development at the ‘nursery’ and erection of enabling development comprising 28 houses “within the rebuilt walled garden area”<sup>8</sup> [b].
  - Demolition of the stable block or ‘canteen block’ and erection of a terrace of five houses (1 to 5 Stable Yard) and a detached garage building [c].
  - Demolition of the 1960s ‘records repository’, extension of the brewery building and the erection of garage buildings.

## 5. Bibliography

Nichols J (1804) *History and antiquities of the county of Leicestershire* (volume 3 part 2)

NW Leicestershire District Council (2001) *Coleorton Hall conservation area appraisal and study*

NW Leicestershire District Council (2021) *NW Leicestershire Local Plan*

Pevsner N (1984) *The buildings of England: Leicestershire and Rutland*

Stevens H (1815) *Ordnance Survey drawing: Leicester and Loughborough*

Stewart S (2015) “The Coleorton Beaumonts”. *Coleorton village history: As seen through the eyes of the newspapers*

Welding J (1985) *Leicestershire in 1777: An edition of Prior’s map of Leicestershire*

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<sup>8</sup> This element of the redevelopment was varied under planning permission 02/00368/FUL.