



K. River Mimram emerging under the causeway

After about half a mile, turn right onto the east entrance drive across the river Mimram which runs through a brick culvert (**K**) under the causeway and continues along the valley bottom. The river was dammed in the eighteenth century, creating an ornamental lake within the park. Further along is the bridge (**L**) which spanned the end of the lake. It was created for Thomas Brand by Sir William Chambers c.1764 (restored 2004). Just beyond the bridge, take the footpath on the left across the field, towards the gate by the wood.

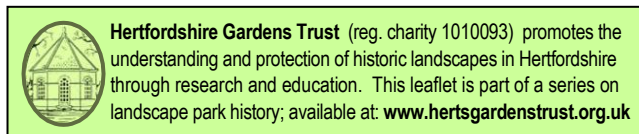


L. Portland stone bridge by Sir William Chambers



N. Early 18th century Hoo Estate map (walk in red)

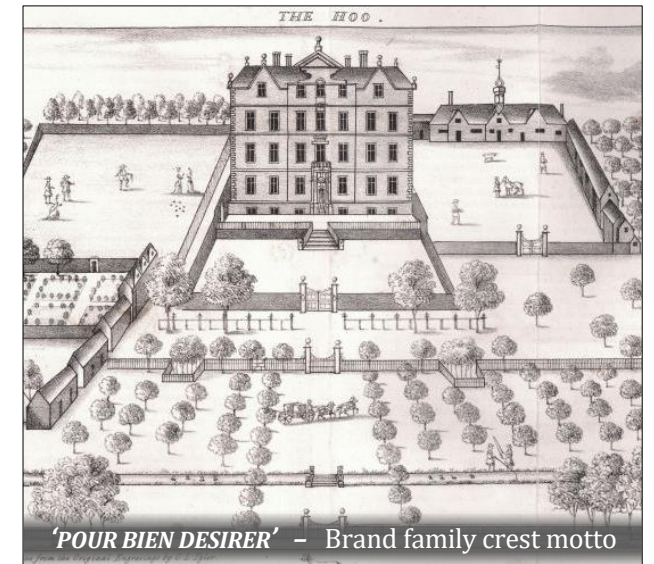
Turn round and take in the long views, before skirting the wood, where there is a seat. Across fields to the right are the stables and the site of the mansion, now built over with modern housing (**F**). Follow the path towards Hoo Park Cottage and turn left onto the drive. From the early nineteenth century it linked the estate to the village of Kimpton and its parish church (**M**), via Hoo Lodge on the junction with the B651. A few yards down the road, a path leads to the church. The church of St Peter and St Paul has memorials to two owners of The Hoo: a wall-mounted marble plaque with entablature and fluted pilasters in the south chancel chapel dedicated to Sir Jonathan Keate (d. 1700); and an Early English style tabernacle frame on the north chancel wall to Thomas Brand, 20th Baron Dacre (d. 1851).



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Hertfordshire Landscape Parks

Kimpton Hoo

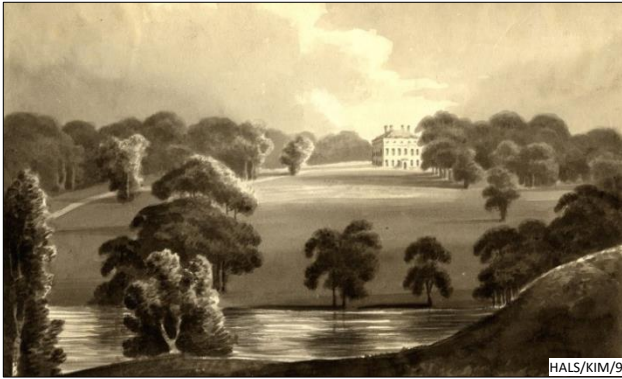


A. The Hoo at Kimpton, engr. J. Drapentier 1700

The Walk is a hilly circuit of about 4½ miles (7.5 km) over roads and footpaths with good views. OS Explorer Maps 182 & 193 Grid Ref. TL178184.

Park on Kimpton High Street near the White Horse Pub  and walk up Church Lane past the churchyard on the right, or in Parkfield Sports Ground car park (**C**), off the Hitchin Road B651, and join the footpath there northwards.

The Hoo at Kimpton was landscaped (**B**) from an earlier formal style (**A**) following payment of £150 to Lancelot Brown by Thomas Brand, in 1758. A lake, sinuous drives, wooded belts and woodland walks were laid out 1760-62. The mansion was demolished in 1958 and much of the 120 ha estate returned to agricultural use.



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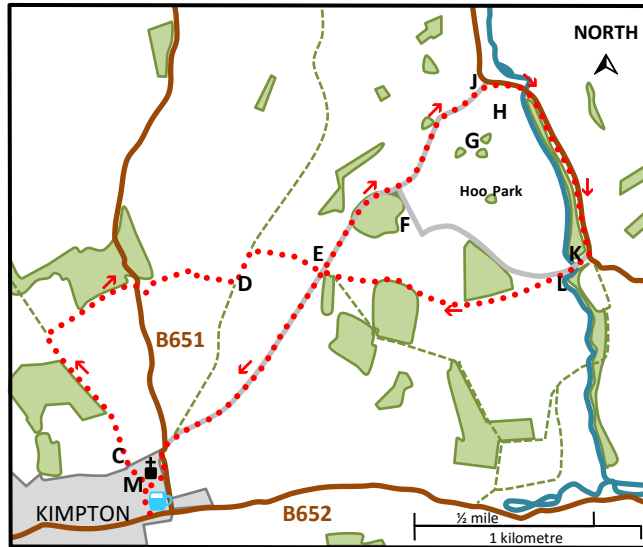
B. *The Hoo and widened river Mimram (anon.)*

Start northwards on the footpath that extends from the end of Church Lane via an alley and passes Parkfield Sports Ground car park (C) and skirts a wood on the left. After fields open on either side, turn right towards the solitary house. Cross the Hitchin Road (B651), bearing slightly right, to where a footpath leads off. Follow the hedge line and on a left bend turn right across the field to a small copse (D) and then immediately left across the same field to regain the hedge line, now running eastwards. At Hoo Park Cottage (dated 1902) (E), turn left onto the drive under a canopy of trees and pass a cricket pavilion (right).



F. *The stable block amongst modern housing*

The park shelters the site of the mansion and contains predominantly mature sweet chestnut, lime and oak trees. The route skirts Round Wood on the right, formerly known as Lady Wood, and part of the pleasure grounds for the mansion. On emerging from the trees there is a splendid single cedar of Lebanon to the left and the tower of St Paul's Walden church in the distance. Sweeping views east and north towards King's Walden remain an attractive feature of the site.



At a junction keep left, downhill; the right fork leads to the site of the former mansion, which has been replaced by executive houses. Only the stable block (F) designed by Sir William Chambers is left standing. A diffuse line of sweet chestnut trees ahead marks the course of a seventeenth century avenue (G) pre-dating Brown's landscaping and shown on an early eighteenth century estate map (N). Out of sight on the lower slopes near to the site of the former lake, an ice house was built during the eighteenth century.



G. *Seventeenth century avenue of sweet chestnuts*

Hoo Farm comes into view across the fields ahead, with a three-acre walled kitchen garden (H). As the drive approaches the junction with the road, there is a distinctive white lodge house beside the drive (J), with cornice detail and round arched recesses. Turn right and follow the road past a pond on the left, controlled by a sluice gate at the bridge. Along the road on the right are the remnants of the flint and brick boundary walls of The Hoo. The platform of the former mansion may be glimpsed through the trees (F).



J. *Hoo Farm Lodge on Codicote Road*