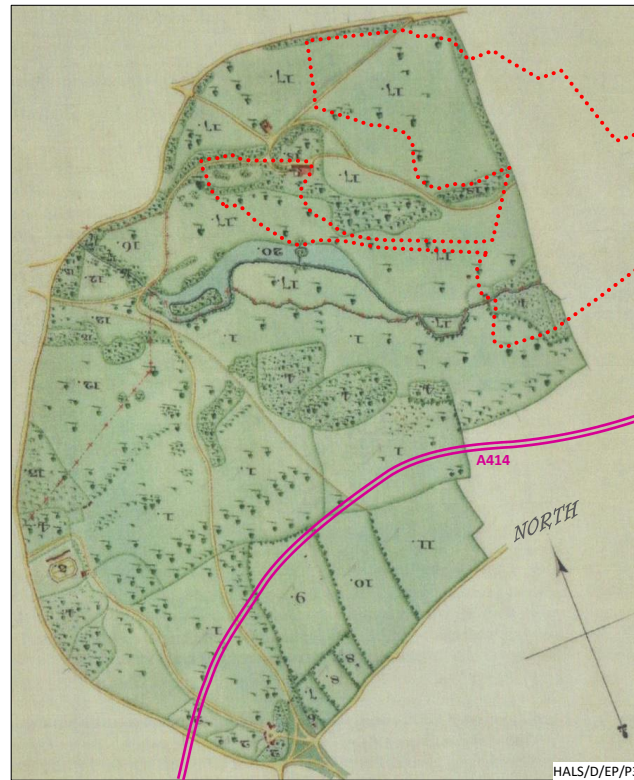


H. Cole Green and Panshanger in the 21st century

Turn left onto the ‘Oak Trail’ passing the serpentine lakes created by Repton; the waterwheel for delivering water to the mansion; and follow the trail up through the woods to the venerable Panshanger Oak. Further on are the Orangery (H c.1856) and the site of Panshanger House (C) with views to Brown’s Cole Green landscape. Repton was ‘*struck by the beauty of the two hanging banks forming the unusually broad river valley*’ and conceived the idea of a visual link between Cole Green and Panshanger. The track returns to Riverside Cottage and left up the hill. At the woods turn left and after the views open up, turn right onto the path alongside the track. Behind the trees to the left are the stables.



H. The Orangery circa 1895



1810 Estate Plan, Panshanger Archive (walk in red)



Follow the path past the 19th century North Lodge (J), alongside the B1000. The fields around have been excavated, in-filled and restored to arable cultivation, so the historic features of this part of the estate have been erased. At the junction (K) turn right, down to another junction above the flooded gravel pits. Turn left and join the old approach road to Panshanger, through Lady Hughe’s Wood and return to Thieves Lane car park.



Hertfordshire Gardens Trust (reg. charity 1010093) promotes the understanding and protection of historic landscapes in Hertfordshire through research and education. This leaflet is part of a series on landscape park history; available at: www.hertsgardenstrust.org.uk

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Hertfordshire Landscape Parks



Panshanger



B. Repton’s ‘Red Book’ for Panshanger, 1799

The Walk is 4 miles (6.5 km). OS Explorer Maps 182 & 194. The area between the car park and Riverside Cottage (F) is designated ‘open access’ via gates in the fencing, but as there are often grazing animals, dogs must be on leads.

Parking in Thieves Lane car park off the A414 roundabout in Hertingfordbury Grid Ref TL306125

Refreshments: White Horse Hotel, (☎), Hertingfordbury SG14 2LB. Grid ref TL306120. Access to walk via A414 underpass (U).

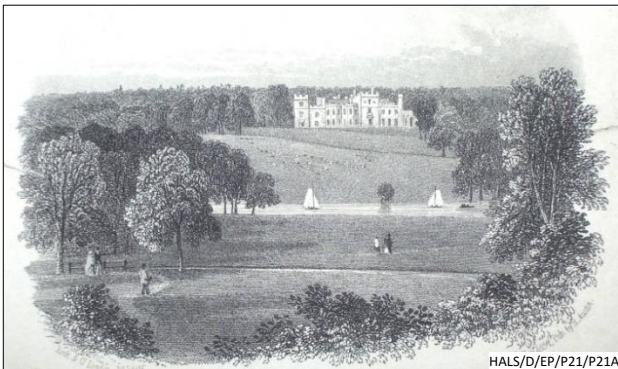




HALS/Oldfield/Vol3/P492

A. Cole Green House, raised 1704-11, razed 1802

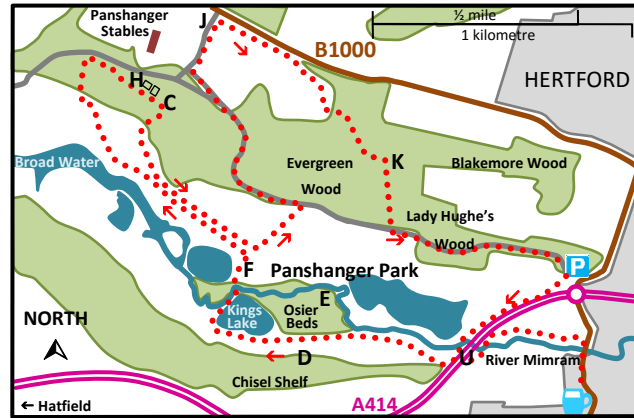
Lancelot Brown laid out a landscape park overlooking the Mimram valley at nearby Cole Green House (A) from 1755, and Humphry Repton submitted plans for improvements in his 'Red Book' of 1799 (B). Panshanger has been the site of a manor since medieval times, and a mansion (C) was built in 1801-10 by 5th Earl Cowper. With the loss of Cowper heirs in and after the Great War, the estate was gradually broken up with 1600 ha sold in 1919 for the creation of Welwyn Garden City. The mansion was demolished in 1953-4 and a part of its 35 ha grounds purchased for gravel extraction and infill, with the remainder retained as a private park.



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C. View of Panshanger across Broadwater, 1854

Start from the southwest corner of Thieves Lane car park (P), down the path, below the main road and over two footbridges crossing River Mimram. This is a typical chalkland stream fed by springs from the chalk aquifer underlying glacial outwash gravels and sands. Turn left onto a larger bridge with a concrete surface, then immediately right and enter the field through a kissing gate. Continue along the field with the river on the right.



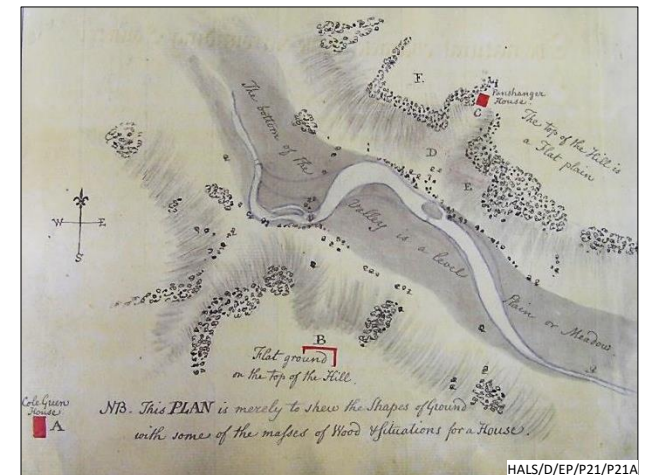
The Rifle Butts below Chisel Hill (D) on the left, were important in the years before the second Boer War (1899-1902) to train Rifle Volunteers. The Butts were temporarily closed in 1894, due to the tenant farmer complaining of stray bullets. At this time Panshanger was prominent in national life with the Prime Minister, A J Balfour, visiting frequently as one of the Souls, the distinguished social group which met here.

The Osier Beds (E) on the right provided coppiced willow. The slender regenerated stems were used for baskets, wattle fences and other products. At Panshanger the wood was later enhanced with other wetland trees to form an ornamental woodland in the overall historic valley landscape.



F. Riverside Cottage

Continue along to Kings Lake, one of several deep flooded gravel pits, and turn right to skirt the lake and reach Riverside Cottage (listed, Grade II) to the right, (F). It is a mid-18th century ornamental embellishment to the landscapes of Brown and used either as a gamekeeper's cottage or a fishing lodge. It was given a second storey and lean-to wings in the picturesque fashion of the early 19th century when Humphry Repton was laying out the valley (G).



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G. Repton's plan for landscape improvements