

LANCASHIRE

AVENHAM WALK

PRESTON

GD3261

PRESTON

II

SD5328

A public walk acquired by the town of Preston in 1697 which retains all the essential characteristics it had developed by 1728.

### **CHRONOLOGY OF HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

Avenham Walk, also known as Top Walk, was acquired by the town of Preston for £15 in 1697 from Alderman Lemon. Evidence from late C17 diaries shows that the area was in use for promenading from at least 1686 and probably before (Clemesha 1912). The antiquarian Ralph Thoresby described it in a diary entry of 1702 as 'a very curious walk and delicate prospect' (Sartin 1988). Prince Charles Edward Stuart is said to have visited the spot in 1745 (ibid). It is prominently shown on a panorama of Preston of 1728 by Nathaniel Buck. By c 1855 an additional walk running parallel to the first had been laid out on the south-west side. The walk was integrated into Avenham Park (qv) in c 1861 by the construction of a lower walk and steps up to the Walk from the park.

### **DESCRIPTION**

#### **LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING**

The walk is situated c 1km south of Preston town centre, on a spur of land overlooking the River Ribble. It runs north-west/south-east off Avenham Lane, between Bushell Place on the east side and Avenham Colonnade on the west side. The northern boundary is formed by the road, the eastern boundary by cast-iron railings dividing the walk from Bushell Place, and the western boundary by the c 30m length of Avenham Colonnade and then by a stone retaining wall between the Walk and Avenham Park. The southern boundary is formed by the top of steps which lead down to a path into Avenham Park and on to the banks of the Ribble. The 1728 panorama shows the Walk fenced with what appear to be cast-iron railings. On the northern and eastern sides housing replaces the open fields shown in Buck's panorama. The setting on the west and south sides is formed by Avenham Park which was laid out as a public park in 1861. Views across falling ground to the River Ribble can be obtained from the south end and west side of the Walk.

#### **ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES**

The main entrance to the walk is on Avenham Lane. A row of cast-iron bollards separates the Walk from the pavement and short sections of stone wall curve around the roads on each side of the entrance. The walls are surmounted by cast-iron railings and they terminate at each end with stone piers supporting ornate cast-iron lamps. This entrance is shown on a photograph of 1882 and it replaces an entrance formed by gate piers between high cast-iron railings shown in an earlier C19 engraving. On the eastern side the cast-iron railings have a number of gates giving access from Bushell Place. At the southern end of the Walk access from the riverbank and from Avenham Park is from a flight of stone steps leading up from a path.

## OTHER LAND

Avenham Walk consists of a gravel walk lined on each side by lime trees. The 1728 panorama shows the trees as mature specimens. Council records indicate that the original trees, described as 'ffirs' were felled in 1736. The present trees are of different stages of maturity and probably reflect successive replacement and management through the C18, C19 and C20.

At some point a second gravelled walk was laid out on the western side of the avenue. This is shown on an engraving of c 1855.

## REFERENCES

H W Clemesha, *A History of Preston in Amounderness* (1912), p 148  
S Sartin, *The People and Places of Historic Preston* (1988), pp 56-7

### Maps

Map of Preston, 1805

Plan of Extension of Avenham Walk and Proposed Pleasure Grounds, 1861 (DDPR 141/7),  
(Lancashire Record Office)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1844

OS 25" to 1 mile: surveyed 1891

### Illustrations

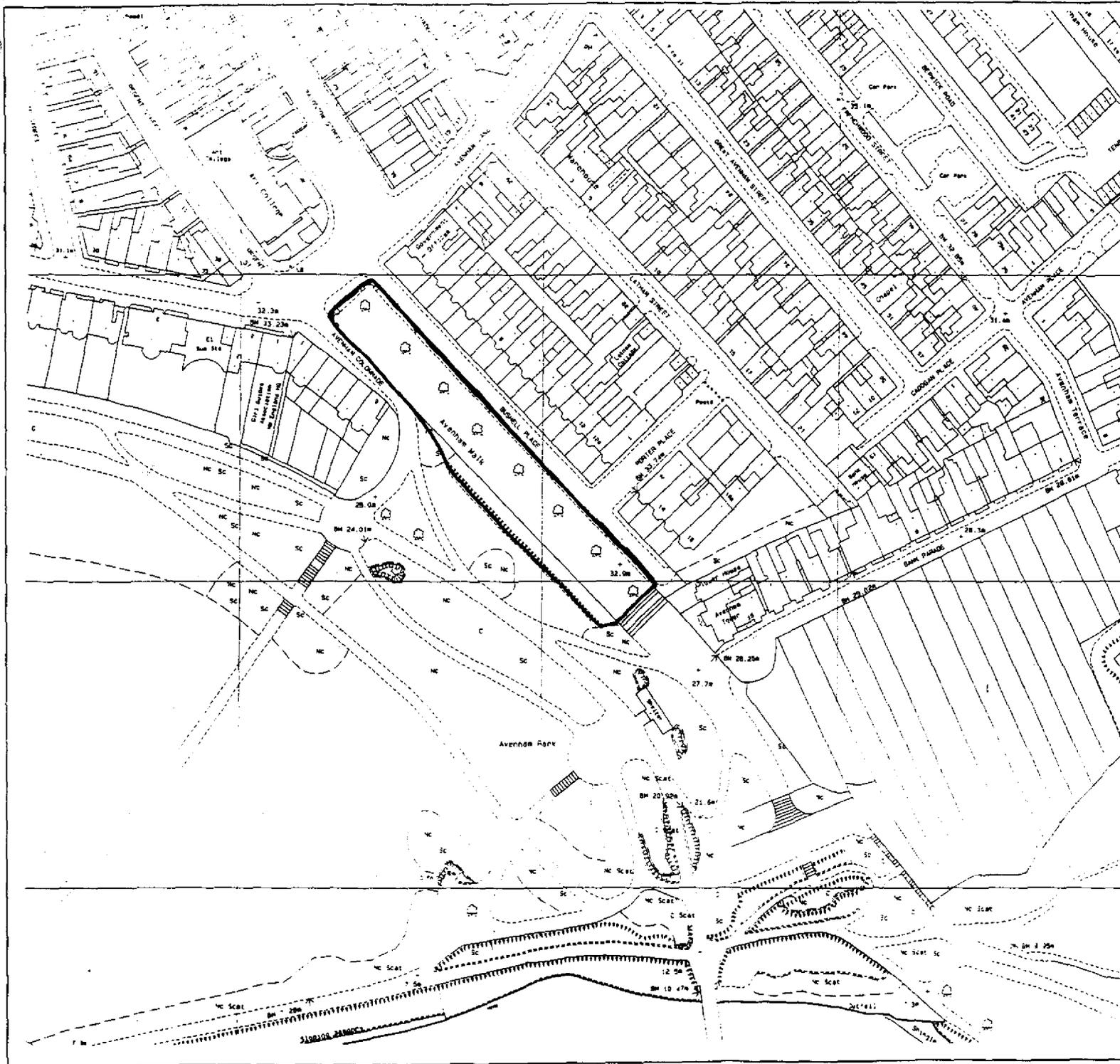
N Buck, *The South Prospect of Preston in the County Palatine of Lancaster*, 1728

Description written: July 1997

Amended: March 1999

Register Inspector: CEH

Edited: April 1999



**NOTES**

The boundary shown may be varied as knowledge of the history of the site improves. It is in any case desirable that the influence of the surrounding on the enjoyment of the site be recognized.

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**REGISTER UPGRADE PROJECT**

**PROVISIONAL BOUNDARY MAP**

To be treated as the current site boundary map for planning and consultation purposes pending publication of the new Register

**REVISIONS**

**DRAWING TITLE**

**AVENHAM WALK**

**LANCASHIRE**  
Extent of garden and other land of historic interest.



**English Heritage**

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**NORTH**



OS REF. SD5328

DRAWN CH

DATE 2/99

SCALE 1:10,000

DWG. NO. GD 3261