

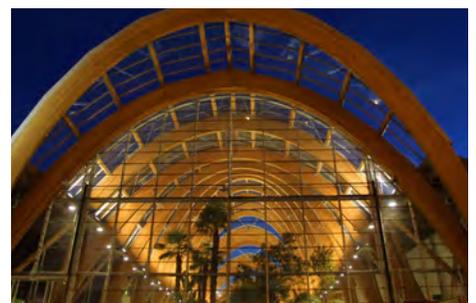
WEDDLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN



PRACTICE HISTORY 60 YEARS



1957 to 2017



WEDDLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

PRACTICE HISTORY 60 YEARS

TIMELINE

Arnold Weddle was born in 1924. He trained as an Architect after the second World War and subsequently worked as a Planning Officer for a short time.

His interests were in Landscape Planning and he became Lecturer in Landscape Architecture in the Department of Civic Design at Liverpool University in 1956

1957 started private practice as 'Arnold Weddle Town Planning and Landscape Consultant' aged 33

He established his practice office in Bluecoat Chambers, Liverpool. He started with several garden designs for private clients in Liverpool and Wirral

Between 1957 – 1967 he also worked in collaboration with Professor Myles Wright on urban and regional planning projects

By 1960 the small profession of Landscape Architecture had only 120 qualified to work independently. Only a handful were running successful practices.

Major rebuilding of infrastructure and new towns throughout Britain needed Landscape Consultants

During the 1960s Weddle worked on Liverpool University campus projects, for the Central Electricity Generating Board and for Skelmersdale New Town Development Corporation. Weddle believed that much of his work as a landscape architect was of a research nature and that research was best carried out within a practice environment.

1967 he was appointed to the newly established Granada Chair of Landscape Architecture at Sheffield University aged 43

'Arnold Weddle Landscape and Planning Consultant' moved his landscape and planning practice to The Grove, 87 Endcliffe Vale Road, Sheffield where he employed lecturers and postgraduate students to work part-time on professional projects.

OFFICE LOCATION

1957 - 1967

BLUECOAT CHAMBERS, LIVERPOOL



1967 - 1977

THE GROVE, 87 ENDLIFFE VALE ROAD, SHEFFIELD



WEDDLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

PRACTICE HISTORY 60 YEARS

1973 he took additional offices next door to the University Landscape Department at 3 Northumberland Road, Sheffield. This office was initially used for joint work with Sheffield City Council on Landscape Planning for Mosborough New Town

It became the main office in 1977

1977 Practice renamed 'Professor A E Weddle Landscape and Planning Consultant'

Mike Browell joined the practice in 1977 having studied for the MA in Landscape Architecture from 1974 – 1976 at Sheffield University and subsequently carried out postgraduate research into Environmental Impact Assessment

1985 – 1988 Weddle opened a branch office in Cambridge for three years while considering his possible retirement there.

1987 Weddle retired from Sheffield University and moved his practice to 27 Wilkinson Street, Sheffield

The practice was incorporated as 'Landscape Research Office Ltd' in 1987 and continued to operate as 'Professor A E Weddle Landscape and Planning Consultant'

1992 Arnold Weddle retired from practice. He died in 1997 aged 73.

Mike Browell took over as Principal in 1992. The practice name became 'Weddle Landscape Design' and our work became Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning to reflect our services in Arboriculture and Ecology.

2005 the practice offices moved to the Mews Studio at 8 Kenwood Bank, Sheffield.

in 2007 we began to work in China and the next ten years saw the biggest projects we have ever handled.

2017 sees the Weddle Practice reach its' sixty years anniversary.

1973 - 1987

3 NORTHUMBERLAND ROAD, SHEFFIELD



1987 - 2005

27 WILKINSON STREET, SHEFFIELD



2005 - 2017

MEWS STUDIO, CHARNWOOD HOUSE, 8 KENWOOD BANK, SHEFFIELD



WEDDLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

PRACTICE HISTORY
60 YEARS

PRACTICE PRINCIPALS

ARNOLD WEDDLE PPLI
PRINCIPAL 1957 - 1992



MIKE BROWELL FLI
PRINCIPAL 1992 - 2017



WEDDLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

PRACTICE HISTORY 60 YEARS

KEY PROJECTS

1957	Gardens in Liverpool & Cheshire	1971	Dungeness Power Line Corridor	1981	Newmill Beck Diversion Natterjack Toad Conservation	1993	Pearl Assurance Peterborough
1958	Formby Coastal Land Reclamation	1972	Drax Ash Mound	1982	Calder Ramparts Screen Planting	1994	Cable TV Tree Conservation
1959	Bootle Urban Planning	1973	Mosborough New Town	1983	Dounreay, Annan, Capenhurst and Sellafield EIA	1994	Ash Green, Chesterfield
1960	Liverpool University Campus	1973	Range Rover Factory Solihull	1984	Hinton House Birchwood Science Park	1995	Khalifa Park Abu Dhabi
1961	Peterborough Brickpits Reclamation	1974	Barking Oil Power Station River Thames	1985	Drigg Woodland Management	1996	Supsa Oil Terminal & Pipeline, Georgia
1962	Greenbank Halls of Residence	1975	Rotherham District General Hospital	1986	York Bull Lane Ecology Park	1995	Peterborough Southern Township
1963	Connahs Quay Nuclear Power Station	1976	Humber Bridge and Approach Roads	1987	Stocksbridge Steel Valley Project	1995	River Trent Flood Defences
1964	River Clyde Regional Plan	1977	Lincoln County Hospital	1988	Vision Park Cambridge	1996	Avesta Stainless Steel Sheffield
1965	Trent & Ouse Power Stations	1977	Hallamshire Hospital Sheffield	1989	Pearl Sports Ground Castor	1997	Wathwood Hospital
1966	Regional Plan for Dublin	1978	Sellafield Landscape Masterplan	1990	Drax Flue Gas Desulphurisation	1998	Conksbury Old Hall
1967	Skelmersdale New Town	1978	Nypro Flixborough Memorial Garden	1991	Slag Reduction Rotherham	1998	Staff Secondment
1968	Heriot Watt University	1979	Sella Park Hotel	1992	Calder Heat and Power Plant	1998	Rolls Royce, Derby
1969	Property Services Agency Hull & Sheffield Crown Courts	1980	Hessle and Barton Country Parks	1992	Calow Sub Station, Chesterfield	1998	Killingholme Gas Fired Power Station
1970	Drax Power Station	1980	BP Hull Oil Refinery			1999	Sefton Park Palm House

WEDDLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

KEY PROJECTS

2000	Sheffield Winter Garden	2008	Nanjing Creative Industries Business Park	2012	Pizhou City Green Space Planning, China	2017	Nanqiao Sculpture Park & Meadow Park, China
2001	Heriot Watt University Masterplan	2009	Avery Hill Winter Garden Greenwich University	2012	Delta Hospital Shanghai, China	2017	Drax Ash Disposal Mound
2001	Dore Church	2009	Templeborough Business Park Rotherham	2012	Sheshan Social Housing, China		
2001	Stoke Hall Coach House			2013	Kaifeng Expo Square, China		
2001	Fulham Football Stadium, London	2010	Marsh Farm Childrens' Centre Luton	2013	Newbold Road Chesterfield		
2002	Green Memorial Garden, Mexborough	2010	Yangtse River Science Centre Shanghai, China	2013	Nanjing Mountain Buddhist Temple, China		These are a small selection from over 2000 separate projects carried out over a sixty year period
2003	Kingston Community Superstadium Hull	2010	Hangzhou Blue Harbour Residential, China	2014	Adelphi Wharf Salford		
2003	Flagstaff Park Berwick upon Tweed	2011	Qingdao Horticultural Expo Plant Pavilion, China	2014	Shanghai Botanical Garden, Shanghai		
2003	Kettlebridge Doorstep Green	2011	Chenzhou Residential, China	2014	British Garden - Qingdao International Horticultural Expo		
2004	Ramparts Business Park Berwick	2011	Ningbo Airport, China	2015	New Era Square Sheffield		
2004	Oval Cricket Ground London	2011	Suining River, China	2015	Royal London, Wilmslow		
2004	Abbey House Whitby	2011	Ran Farm Japanese Garden, Sheffield	2016	Shanghai Fish, Nanqiao New City, China		
2005	Cornford House Pembury	2011	Lafite Development, Zibo, China	2017	Ikea Sheffield		
2005	Castle Hill Hospital, Hull	2011	Barnsley District General Hospital	2017	Backdale Quarry, Peak District National Park		
2006	Josephine Butler College Durham	2012	Heriot Watt Green Flag Award				
2007	Riber Castle Derbyshire						

WEDDLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

60 YEARS FROM 1957 TO 2017

LOOKING BACK - PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

PRINCIPAL MIKE BROWELL

December 2017

Looking back at the history of the Weddle practice from December 2017, the most significant revelation is how much the work of the practice has changed. Not just once, but many times over the sixty years since 1957. My personal perspective covers 40 of those years.

The practice was founded in the post war decade of the 1950s. The Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 had set the guidelines for rebuilding of Britain's infrastructure and industry. Countryside recreation was just beginning following the establishment of National Parks.

Today in 2017 there are over 3000 qualified Landscape Architects and 500 Registered Landscape Practices in the UK. In 1957 the profession was very small, and Arnold Weddle had a vision to change that. He had worked for a short time as a Planning Officer and recognized the need for expert Landscape Architects.

The Expert Landscape Consultant

Arnold Weddle was a young man aged 33 in 1957 when he started his Landscape Consultancy practice. He had worked for a short time as a Planning Officer and took up a teaching job in 1956 as lecturer in the Department of Civic Design at Liverpool University. His subject was Landscape Architecture.

The profession was very small, just 120 qualified to practice as Landscape Architects. Arnold Weddle was one of the more prominent 'expert' Landscape Consultants. He quickly became sought after.

His early commissions were private gardens. He also worked with Professor Myles Wright on urban planning projects in Bootle, and then at a regional scale in studies of Dublin and the Clyde.

The first major landscape architecture commissions began to arrive in the early 1960s Skelmersdale New Town, Drax Power Station and Heriot Watt University. These were all personal Landscape Consultant appointments whereby the client selected Arnold Weddle for his unique expertise. These projects ran for many years.

Skelmersdale New Town ran for 22 years, from 1964 - 1986. Heriot Watt University ran for 44 years, from 1968 - 2014. Drax Power Station is still running after 50 years, from 1967 - present.

These commissions were characterised by multi-disciplinary teams where the landscape architect made an input into site planning and project programme.

Trees, wildlife, hydrology and other environmental issues were all within the Landscape Consultant's remit.

Payment for professional time was almost always on an agreed time basis. The type of projects were long running and landscape issues were not fully known at initiation. Clients were kept informed by regular reporting either in formal written progress reports or by attending regular meetings

Techniques of Landscape Architecture

Whilst teaching Landscape Architecture to Civic Design students from 1956, Weddle recognized the wide diversity of professional skills of other practitioners. There was no defined scope of basic skills and the other experts offered widely different services; from garden design to landscape planning. There were experts in horticulture, forestry planting, urban design, architectural landscape and construction.

Weddle invited leading practitioners to contribute their own areas of expertise as separate chapters for publication as 'Techniques of Landscape Architecture'.

Weddle edited this first standard textbook on behalf of the Institute of Landscape Architects. It was published in 1967, just before he took the Granada Chair of Landscape Architecture at Sheffield University in 1967.

Looking back at the content of 'Techniques' it is very clear that there was no recognized skills base for the landscape profession.

'Techniques' summed up Weddle's approach and the textbook shows just how diverse the various specialist techniques were at that time. The profession included experts in planting design, engineering, land reclamation, urban planning, infrastructure and countryside planning. But no core skills.

The Central Electricity Generating Board gave Weddle a number of site planning tasks. One was to appraise the sites for future Trent and Ouse power stations. The largest one was Drax. Shortly after Weddle started as Granada Professor at Sheffield the CEGB asked him to assess two more sites. Weddle replied that he was heavily committed for the next two years and could not help immediately. However, he was able to recommend another experienced Landscape Architect who had spare capacity at that time.

Early site planning work for the new power station at Drax involved appraisal of a number of potential sites for an as yet untried dry tipping process for pulverised fuel ash. Weddle persuaded the Central Electricity Generating Board client and expert geotechnical engineering consultants that planting hedges and small woodlands on shallow soil over up to 40 metres depth of pfa was feasible. This set off a research programme which demonstrated the tree roots did not penetrate the compacted ash and instead grew perfectly healthy, wind stable trees on less than 300mm topsoil.

Having set up his growing landscape practice in Sheffield, Arnold Weddle was invited to join a team from Sheffield City Council to develop the new township of Mosborough. The practice grew in number while Weddle himself was heavily engaged in establishing teaching programmes in the new independent Department of Landscape Architecture.

When I arrived at Sheffield University in 1974, some lecturers and students in the landscape department were engaged with the Weddle Practice projects, bringing their specialisms in Ecology, Town Planning and Horticulture.

I joined the practice in 1977 following a year's Departmental post graduate research into the emerging technique of Environmental Impact Assessment. At this time the practice was named 'Professor AE Weddle Planning and Landscape Consultant'.

One of the current ongoing projects was research into Environmental Impact Assessment on behalf of the Central Electricity Generating Board. The task was to find the least damaging power line corridor between the new Dungeness Nuclear Power Station and London.

Mosborough town planning work was coming to an end. Drax Power Station first phase was complete and generating power, and the pulverised fuel ash mound was in its early years.

The Humber Bridge was also on site but major delays in engineering works caused the landscape works north and south of the river to be stretched out over a decade.

The nature of the practice's work in the 1960 to 1980s was of large scale long running commissions. Hospitals, power and university campus developments were a continuous series of separate projects. The nature of Weddles personal appointment meant that he was able to influence these developments with his experience gained from hindsight, and his long term vision for the future.

In 1978 the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority asked Weddle to take on the task of Landscape Consultant to Sellafield following the Public Inquiry into the Thorpe reprocessing project. This was a multiple project commission, working with many separate design teams over a 25 year period.

The number of separate projects for the Sellafield site alone was over 250 and were as diverse as countryside planning, roads, rail and marine infrastructure, hostels, hotels and guest housing. There were continually changing contractor working areas, river diversions, recreation parks, sports grounds, canteens, car parks, offices and process buildings. Later came tourism, with sightseeing tours, exhibition buildings, and visitor centres. For a short time Sellafield became the most visited tourist attraction in Cumbria before the threat of terrorism brought a halt to sightseeing bus tours.

Weddles coordinated a cohesive landscape vision for Sellafield, achieved through multiple landscape projects. We were asked to work on several other UKAEA and British Nuclear Fuels sites. Meanwhile Drax Power Station and the Flue Gas Desulphurisation project were in progress and we were also asked to look at gas fired power stations and power lines and sub-station siting.

By the late 80s the Weddle practice had the most diverse energy sector portfolio in the country.

Project Management

The biggest change in how landscape architects were to be appointed to future projects began to become clear in the late 1980's. The traditional role of the Architect or Engineer as Design Team Leader changed to the Design Team being led by a Project Manager. Often with a cost control function, the Project Manager took control of individual projects within long-term developments. We were first introduced to these concepts on Sellafield projects, and in particular to the 'value engineering' process.

In the 1980s competitive tendering arrived; prior to that virtually all Weddles projects were charged on an hourly rate. This changed the way in which Weddles practice worked.

Weddles were not prepared for competitive fee tendering. Weddle had vast experience of major projects and the ways in which the scope of landscape work often expanded as the full requirements and timescale of project work became apparent. He knew that no-one had built a Humber Bridge, Sellafield or a Drax Ash Mound before and he approached each new competitive tendering challenge with professional caution.

Meanwhile the landscape profession had grown to over 2000 qualified Landscape Architects, many having been trained on Weddles Sheffield course and the other similar Landscape Institute recognized courses in the UK. There were many more small private practices.

I recall Weddle returning from a Development Corporation competitive interview. He was annoyed to have been interviewed by one of his past students who wanted him to agree to spend the £100,000 landscape budget on moveable trees. Weddle said that the Development Corporation had a £1M scale task and needed spending over 10 years to achieve success. He advised that the small budget would be doomed to failure if the money was spent on street trees in wooden boxes. He was completely correct but it took ten years for others to see it.

Towards the end of the eighties we had our first computers, and as we moved through the nineties the drawing boards began to disappear and CAD design took over. By the millennium we had thousands of tracing paper drawings in six huge hanging plan chests, and eight flat plan chests. The attics were packed with rolls of drawings from old projects.

Our long running projects, notably Heriot Watt University, Drax Power Station and Sellafield each had many hundred drawings. Two office rooms and a large attic were serving solely as archives for projects which were long finished.

Eventually we disposed of the waste paper, keeping just one plan chest. We threw out all our drawing boards together with fourteen hanging and flat plan chests. Our need for secretarial support dwindled from three to one, and eventually none.

The transformation of a landscape architecture practice from a drawing office to a computer based profession was profound and rapid.

Planning led Landscape Architecture

Following an economic recession in the late eighties, I took over as Principal in 1992. Fortunately a major National Grid commission was awarded and we began to pick up a number of smaller projects.

From the 1990s the Weddle Practice work changed dramatically. Work shifted from major long running projects as a number of smaller short term projects were awarded. These usually required landscape architectural input as a requirement of the planning process, either as a landscape scheme to support a planning application or subsequent landscape details required by a condition.

Since the 1970s we had always carried out our own Tree and Ecology Surveys. We wrote wildlife conservation plans and woodland management plans. These began to be standard requirements of the planning system. Our professional work moved away from the full project implementation service which our major projects had required. We found ourselves increasingly serving the Planning Application process.

Tree Surveys were in particularly high demand. Approximately 25% of our work was tree related and this increased dramatically from 1994. The press and media ran major features about the threat to street trees caused by the mass installation of below ground cables for the telephone and tv industry. Licenced franchises were digging up tree root lined footpaths and roads and damaging old trees. We approached the cable companies directly and offered training in how to avoid damage, and particularly useful; a technique of Visual Tree Risk Assessment to advise the cable planners on how to get past the old trees safely.

We were soon working for most of the UK Cable Franchises and for 10 years worked around the country, from London to Edinburgh and Plymouth to Newcastle.

During the eighties and nineties several of the largest landscape practices were 'acquired' by large multidisciplinary practices, typically Engineering or Architecture consultancies. Weddle talked to several but he didn't like the feel of being a small department within their giant organisation.

Today our work is 90% led by the Planning Process. Tree Surveys and Ecology Surveys account for 33% of our work. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is another 15%. The rest is landscape design and landscape detailing. Only rarely are we asked to follow the project through to completion. The exception are the rare garden design projects where the client requires high quality design and attention to detail.

in 2007 I was invited to visit China and deliver lectures in public and at universities as a guest of the China University of Mining and Technology and Xuzhou City Government. Since then we have been very active in China and I have visited many times

Our specialism in carrying our huge landscape projects in China has been due to a regular intake of post-graduate Chinese students arriving in Sheffield to study for a Masters degree in Landscape Architecture. The course that Professor Weddle created now attracts hundreds of Chinese students!

The scale and speed of Chinese projects is astonishing. However, their basic requirement is for good technical solutions and an ability to work with other professions. Ecological design, green roof and green wall detailing, sustainable drainage (sponge earth) and countryside landscape planning skills are not easily available in China yet, although that is changing as students return with their Sheffield University MAs.

Looking back from 2017, we have seen the rise and fall of the individual expert Landscape Consultant. We have seen the profession expand from 100 to over 3000 landscape professionals. Local authority landscape teams grew until they equalled the number of private practitioners. The public sector landscape skill base was then swept away in the recession from 2007 and has not recovered.

Our Achievements

Our most significant achievements have been made through site planning. We have been able to influence where and how projects are built, from New Towns through to Power Stations. We have helped develop clients' briefs beyond their initial expectations and sometimes to the benefit of the landscape, and the wildlife and people who use it.

Weddles have planted millions of trees, mainly native species. We have helped to protect street trees in towns and cities, and countryside throughout the UK by our work with Cable, Water, Gas & Electric utilities.

As well as using our skills as Landscape Architects, we have been able to deal with Environmental Planning issues on behalf of our Clients. Using our specialist skills in Arboriculture and Ecology, we have been able to protect and retain important trees, and conserve wildlife habitats and protected species. By being able to deal with all the Environmental Planning aspects of a development site has ensured that our Clients receive 'joined-up thinking', properly balancing all the issues.

Our landscape design work has created new countryside, parks and gardens and provided recreation and leisure opportunities to people of all ages and with diverse interests. We have helped restore historic parks and gardens, improve the settings of historic buildings and enhanced the quality of protected landscapes. We have created many lovely places which people enjoy visiting.

We have worked on housing projects at New Town and neighbourhood scale, and many smaller housing developments, all of which have improved the quality of people's lives.

We have restored derelict land left behind by industry and quarrying, from demolition sites and from construction project waste.

The Weddle Practice's Unique Selling Point (USP) is our ability to deliver 'Technical Landscape Architecture' to diverse project types. Usually project types which haven't been done before, and require the application of specialist knowledge. Roof Gardens, Green Walls, Interior Parks and Gardens have been amongst our specialisms for the past 25 years.

From the outset we have been a small independent Landscape Architecture practice. We have mainly had just one office, small enough to be overseen by a single Principal. Professor Weddle had always wanted his clients to be able to speak to him personally about any aspect of their project. He did not want to have branch offices scattered throughout the country. We have retained that independence and it has served our clients well.

Weddles have spent some 60 years learning and refining these skills, and applying them repeatedly on different projects.

Success

by Ralph Waldo Emerson

To laugh often and much;

To win the respect of intelligent people
and the affection of children;

To earn the appreciation of honest critics
and endure the betrayal of false friends;

To appreciate beauty;
To find the best in others;

To leave the world a bit better, whether by
a healthy child, a garden patch
or a redeemed social condition;

To know even one life has breathed
easier because you have lived;

This is to have succeeded.