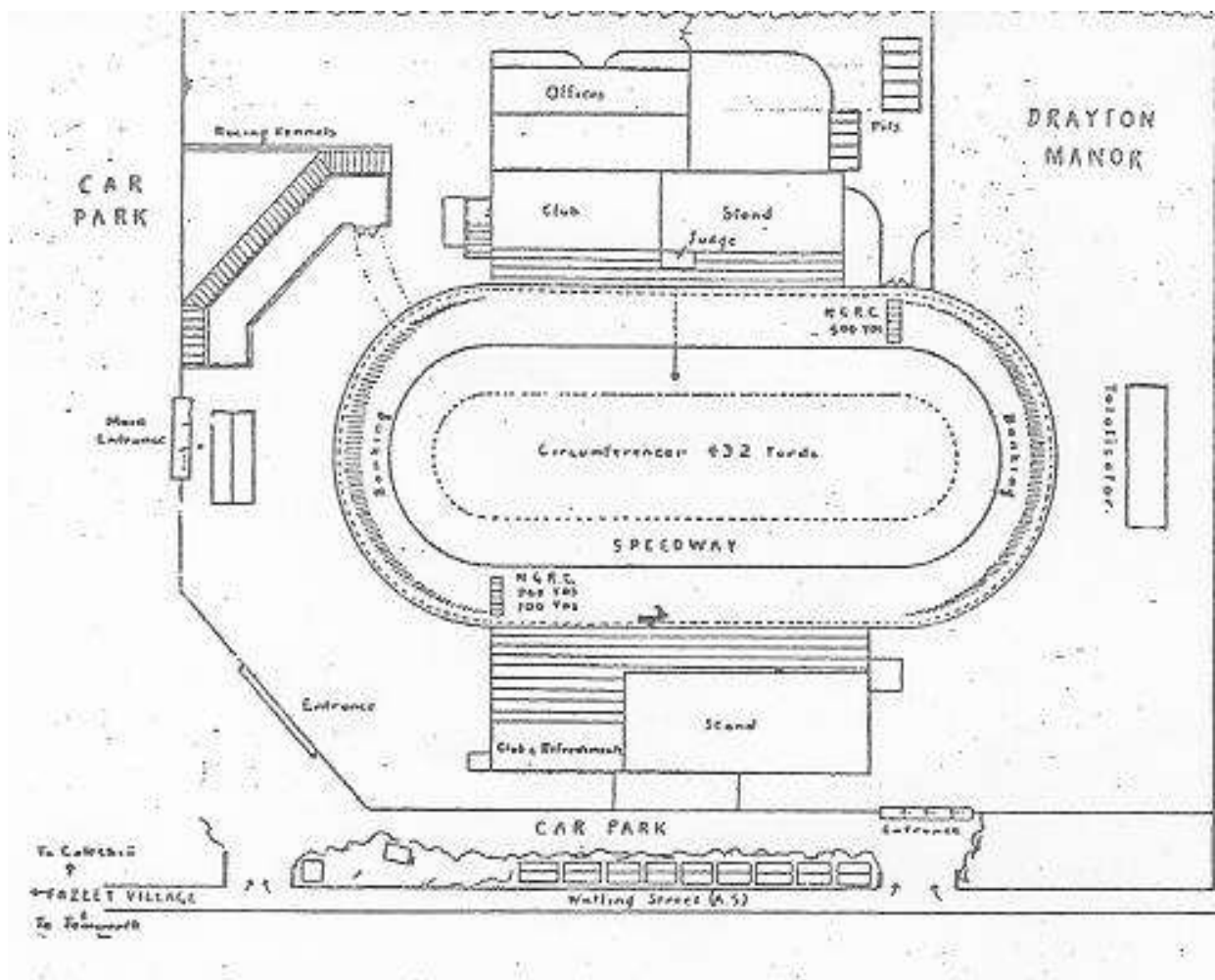


Tamworth

The Drayton Manor Estate on the west side of Fazeley has history dating back to the Norman Conquest and fast forwarding nearly 900 years brought us to 1929 when the Drayton Manor house was demolished. The grounds covered a huge area and included deer parks, the large deer park to the north of the estate and below Long Wood eventually had a cricket ground in a small section just above Bourne Brook. The cricket ground existed after Sir Robert Peel laid out a first-class facility including a pavilion and dance hall around the same time that the house was demolished. During the Second World War the Drayton Manor Park which was by this time established as a pleasure resort came under the control of the military.

In 1946 Captain Arthur Westwood began the construction of a greyhound track on the site of the cricket ground and it was also clear that much of the estate was being sold off. The greyhounds started on 30 August 1947. The main area that had included the house and gardens was sold in 1949 and it became leisure gardens which would eventually become Drayton Manor Theme Park. The remaining parts of the estate were split up forming much of what we see today which is farmland, a business park and a considerable amount of housing.



.....continued

Before the greyhound track was lost to housing (believed to be around 1962) it stood in a remarkable setting that on the estate of the late Sir Robert Peel. Described as an average size course with a 432 yards circumference and an 'Outside Sumner' hare it must have been idyllic walking to the main gates or driving to the car park from Watling Street and finding yourself in such nice surroundings at the time.

Speedway arrived shortly afterwards in 1947 and ran until 1950 with the speedway track inside the greyhound circuit and pits behind the main stand. The greyhound circuit consisted of distances over 268, 500 & 700 yard races. Facing the Watling Street side (the back straight) was a covered stand and a Junior Club with refreshments, the racing kennels were situated on the first bend and on the home straight was the covered main stand and Senior Club featuring a restaurant and snack bar. There was a maximum capacity of 2,500 and it is also known to have been affiliated to the NGRC when it first opened.

The resident kennels were nearby at Park Farm, just a twenty minute walk from the track and this allowed the trainers to exercise the hounds throughout the whole of the estate. With each trainer having their own range it must have been like a smaller version of the famous GRA Hook estate in Northaw. The kennels would have been very close to where the Drayton Manor Zoo is today.

Sadly the stadium was lost to housing as mentioned earlier, it would have stood from Dama Road moving north up to Sambar Road (1° 42' 36.214"W 52° 36' 53.881"N).

Selected Track Records

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes
268y	Dancing Dinkie	15.70	22.11.1947	
500y	Penny Discount	28.68	25.10.1947	