

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

THE CASTLE, CASTLE EDEN

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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THE CASTLE, CASTLE EDEN

Name:	THE CASTLE, CASTLE EDEN
District:	County Durham (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Castle Eden
District:	County Durham (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Horden
District:	County Durham (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Monk Hesleden
District:	County Durham (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Peterlee
label.localisation:	Latitude: 54.751300 Longitude: -1.3251606 National Grid Reference: NZ4353439803 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001311 Date first listed: 23-Jun-1995

Details

An extensive pleasure ground laid out in a steep-sided dene, with parkland dating from the mid C18, forming the setting for a country house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

By 1678, Sir William Bromley owned the manor of Castle Eden. The 1733 Survey of Castle Eden shows the layout of the estate at that date. In 1758 Bromley's great grandson, William Throckmorton Bromley, sold the property to Rowland Burdon. The estate was in poor condition and unenclosed, the chapel was in ruins and the mansion house had gone. Burdon enclosed the land, in 1764 re-erected the church, and, c 1765, built the Castle, using William Newton as architect. The estate is presently (1999) in divided ownership, a golf course occupying the parkland.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Castle Eden lies 10km north-west of Hartlepool, at the southern edge of Peterlee from which the western half of the site is separated by a buffer of agricultural land. The 200ha site is bounded to the west by the A19 dual carriageway, to the south by agricultural land, and to the east by the sea at Dene Mouth beach. The A1086 crosses the site 3km north-east of the house, as does a railway line carried on a viaduct to the north-east of the road. The site is dominated by Castle Eden Dene, a steep-sided valley which runs parallel with and close to the north

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boundary, and a side valley which extends south to north, east of the Castle, joining the Dene north of the Castle. The setting is partly agricultural, with the New Town development of Peterlee adjacent to the north.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main, west drive to the Castle enters 1.1km south-west of the Castle, leading from West Lodge (William Atkinson c 1800, listed grade II). This castellated, gothic building stands on the road at the south-west corner of the park, adjacent to octagonal gate piers and a square gate tower (c 1800, listed grade II with the lodge) which flank the drive. The drive passes to the south of a substantial dower house, Parklands (outside the area here registered), which sits in its own gardens, separated from the park, then crosses north-east through the park before entering woodland. From here the route turns east towards the Castle, leading through the woodland, Beech Grove, along the north side of the park, to arrive at a carriage sweep on the west front. A castellated retaining wall 25m west of the Castle divides the park from the carriage sweep. At the northern end of the wall is a small castellated lodge to which is attached the curving iron framework remaining from an early/mid C19 glasshouse (lodge, glasshouse and wall, listed grade II). The wall continues southwards as a ha-ha dividing the park from the lawns round the Castle.

A second, south drive enters 300m south of the Castle at Church Lodge (late C19 with later additions, listed grade II), formerly known as East Lodge (OS 1861), which stands adjacent to St James' church on the south side of the park. The drive, at this point flanked by mid C18 sandstone gate piers supporting wrought-iron gates, leads north across the park to arrive at the west front of the Castle.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The Castle (W Newton c 1765, with later additions, listed grade II*) occupies a site at the top of the southern edge of a steep-sided dene, at the north-east edge of the park. The house was embellished with gothic details by Sir John Soane, c 1780, with later additions, including the prefabricated concrete palmhouse on the west front, by F R Hicks, 1863, and a northern service wing of 1893. Beyond this north wing stands a stable block. The stable yard, reached via a spur off the west drive, is screened at its entrance on the west side by two gate towers and a section of embattled wall in Gothic style (listed grade II).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS To the south of the Castle is a levelled area, laid out in the mid C19 as a parterre, surrounded by gently sloping lawns. The parterre had been removed by the end of the C19 (OS 1898).

The main area of pleasure grounds lies to the north of the Castle, with paths leading down through the steep wooded banks of Castle Eden Dene. The Castle Eden Burn flows through the Dene, broken into a series of weirs and falls. A road leading along the course of the Dene to the sea was put down in the mid C18, and the scenery was much admired through the next two centuries, the Dene becoming famed as one of the beauty spots of the county. Hutchinson, in his *History* (1794) noted the 'picturesque landscapes' the Dene offered, and it is described thus by Boyle (1892):

The dene is about three miles in length, and from end to end is an unbroken scene of secluded sylvan beauty, changing in aspect at every step. Beetling crags, crystal waterfalls, the kings and lords of the forest, wild flowers in endless variety, song-birds and wild fowl are all here, and the true lover of nature finds himself for the time in a veritable paradise.

In July 1985, the Dene was opened as a National Nature Reserve.

The Dene contains a variety of ornamental plantings and named features. Towards the upper, western end, at Gunner's Pool, is a suspension bridge, completed in 1878; along the length of the Dene, the Burn is crossed by a series of footbridges. Below Gunner's Pool, which lies 900m west of the Castle, is a swallow hole known as Black Bull's Hole, lying 600m west of the Castle, beyond which, by Devil's Scar, the Burn is crossed by the Devil's Bridge, standing 400m west of the Castle. Some 250m north-east of the Castle stands Castle Bridge, the surrounding area, Oakerside Batts, having been planted up as an arboretum in the late C19/early C20. Castle Bridge is overlooked by Mount Pleasant to the south, past which a path from the Castle leads down Castle Bank to the Bridge. Continuing downstream to the north-east, on the northern bank the Seven Chambers (marked Nine Chambers on OS 1861), stand c 700m north-east of the Castle, then 400m north-east of these the Burn is crossed by Dungy (formerly Dungeon, OS 1861) Bridge. To the north of the bridge is the Dungy (formerly Dungeon, OS 1861) Rock and White Rock, to the east, Ivy Rock and Devil's Lapstone, while to the south stands the Pegjellima's Cave.

The next feature, standing 1.75km to the north-east of the Castle, is the Garden of Eden, a gamekeeper's hut, rebuilt in 1881 and then set within an orchard. The Garden of Eden Bridge spans the Burn to the south of the cottage, with Mossy Bridge

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being the next bridge along. A bathing hut, Dene Cottage, was built in 1870. The Burn finally flows into the sea at Hartlepool Point, 3.5km north-east of the Castle.

Immediately to the east of the Castle, a side valley branches south off the main ravine, sweeping round the east side of the house and continuing southwards. A level track along the west side of the valley provides a walk linking the Castle to a bridge by Church Lodge and the church. The walk continues on the west side of the drive, leading south towards the kitchen garden.

PARK The main area of parkland lies to the west of the Castle and has been developed as a golf course. The area is defined by the wooded southern bank of the Dene to the north, and, to the south, the remains of the southern shelter belt. This runs parallel to the public road, the B1281, from which it is separated by a strip of fields.

KITCHEN GARDEN A path leads through the belt from the West Lodge to the kitchen garden, a walled enclosure standing 500m to the south-west of the Castle.

REFERENCES

W Hutchinson, *History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* 3, (1785-94) B Mackenzie and M Ross, *Historical, Topographical and Descriptive View of the County Palatine of Durham* 1, (1834), pp 401-4 J R Boyle, *The County of Durham its Castles, Churches and Manor Houses* (1892), p 621 C Holme, *Gardens of England in Northern Counties* (1911), p xxiii, pls 30, 31 H Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* (3rd edn 1995), p 701

Maps William Jones, *Survey of Castle Eden, 1733* (Durham County Record Office) J T W Bell, *Survey of Estate & Parish of Castle Eden, 1837*, (Durham County Record Office)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1861 2nd edition published 1898 3rd edition published 1923 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1856 2nd edition published 1897

Description written: 1999 Register Inspector: SR Edited: September 2000

Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.