

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

BURN HALL

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

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**BURN HALL**

Name:	BURN HALL
District:	County Durham (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	City of Durham
label.localisation:	Latitude: 54.740898 Longitude: -1.5945898 National Grid Reference: NZ 26199 38512 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001310 Date first listed: 26-Oct-1995

## Details

An early C19 country house with surrounding grounds largely laid out at the same time.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1621, the Burn Hall estate was purchased from the Claxton family by Christopher Peacock and sold, in 1715, to Posthumous Smith. In 1783 John Soane produced designs for a large new house for George Smith, but the project was abandoned, all that was built being a copy of Soane's Cow House, designed and built for Smith at another of his properties in Suffolk (Stroud 1984). In 1806 the Burn Hall estate was purchased from Mrs Alice Hall by William Salvin. Brian John Salvin commissioned Joseph Ignatius Bonomi to design a new mansion, which was built between 1821 and 1834 by a local builder, Moody of Ushaw. The older house is thought to have stood on the hill above Browney Bridge, at the southern tip of the estate. In 1926 the site was sold to St Joseph's Society of Foreign Missions. The site is currently (2000) in private ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Burn Hall stands 3km south of Durham, adjacent to the west side of the main Durham to Darlington road (A167) which forms the east boundary. The 72ha site is enclosed to the north, west and south by the River Browney which flows into the River Wear 1km east of the Hall. To the south the land falls away, offering views down to the River Browney. The setting is largely rural.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main approach enters the park 500m east of the Hall, at which point the east drive leads through a pair of early C19 gates with flanking ironwork (listed grade II) which stand on the Durham to Darlington road. The lodges which formerly flanked the gates have been removed. The drive runs west across the park, passing between a pair of cast-iron gate piers standing 75m east of the Hall, to arrive at a two-storey porte-cochère on the east front. A lodge, North Lodge, stands at the northern tip of the park but this no longer provides a point of access to the Hall. North Lodge formerly stood at the head of a drive which led south-east, along the south edge of North Wood, via Home Farm, to the Hall (OS 1898).

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** The two-storey, sandstone Hall (I Bonomi 1821(34, listed grade II\*) stands towards the west side of the site, enjoying views south, across the stone-lined ha-ha (c 1830, listed grade II), down to the River Browney.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** Walks lead west from the Hall, down through wooded pleasure grounds to the 'Cascade Walk' alongside the river which here runs through a rocky sandstone cut. The Walk takes its name from a former weir, which has been replaced by late C20 concrete structures. At the northern end of the Walk, standing 250m north-west of the

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Hall, is a late C19 wooden conservatory (listed grade II) by Richardsons of Darlington, standing on a small balustraded terrace set against a backdrop of evergreen trees. To the south the lawns are levelled. Nearby, stone piers on either side of the river suggest the site of a former bridge, and there is a stone tower encasing a pumping mechanism (early C19, listed grade II).

The riverside walk continues northwards, past the early C19 stone icehouse (listed grade II), built down the steep bank of the river, through North Wood, past the site of a former summerhouse (shown on the 1857 OS but not on the 1897 edition), to join with North Lodge.

**PARK** The park is divided into north and south halves. The north park is approximately level, its main features being John Soane's semicircular stone Cow House and brick Bull House (late C18, listed grade II\*), which stand set in the Home Farm complex 250m north-east of the Hall, overlooking the park to the south. The original design for these buildings was executed in 1783 for George Smith at Marlesford, Suffolk.

South of the Hall, beyond a low terrace wall, is an apron of lawn. From here the southern half of the park falls away steeply, down to the canal-like fishpond (which was perhaps related to the old Hall), beyond which it stretches to the river.

The public road along the east side of the park is screened by a belt, and the parkland itself is dotted with small clumps. There is also a belt, North Wood, along the northern boundary of the site, forming the backdrop of views to the Hall from the south. A building known as Herwood House (formerly known as Herds House, OS 1857; 1898) stands in the south-east corner of the park, 600m south-east of the Hall.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The irregularly shaped walled kitchen garden (late C18/early C19, wall and house attached, listed grade II) and associated estate buildings (estate cottages, now (1999) offices, listed grade II) lie 300m from the Hall in the north-west corner of the site, alongside the river. The garden's curving walls are of brick and stone faced with brick. The kitchen garden is divided from the park to the east by a ha-ha.

#### REFERENCES

Victoria History of the County of Durham 3, (1928) N Whittaker, The Old Halls and Manor Houses of Durham (1975) D Stroud, Sir John Soane Architect (1984), pp 54, 58, 60, 241 Burn Hall: Inspector's Report (English Heritage 1995)

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1857 2nd edition published 1898 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1857 2nd edition published 1898

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.