

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

Hornby Castle Park

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

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
Inventory of Great Britain
Hornby Castle Park*

Name: Hornby Castle Park

County: North Yorkshire

District: Hambleton (District Authority)

Parish: Hackforth

County: North Yorkshire

District: Richmondshire (District Authority)

Parish: Appleton East and West

County: North Yorkshire

District: Richmondshire (District Authority)

Parish: Hornby

label.localisation: Latitude: 54.343091
Longitude: -1.6456730
National Grid Reference: SE2313394229
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

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label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1420079

Date first listed: 27-Nov-2014

Statutory Address 1: Clutterbuck & Co, Hornby Castle, Hornby, Bedale, DL8 1NQ

Historique de la conservation

The manor of Hornby was held by the St Quintin family by the early C14, passing by marriage to the Conyers family in the late C14. Hornby Castle, a manor house styled as a quadrangular castle, is traditionally thought to have been built by William, the first Baron Conyers, in the early C16, however it may have been originally established by the St Quintins and subsequently enlarged by Sir John Conyers in the mid C15, there being a 1448 documentary reference to the establishment of an private chapel at the castle. William Conyers had married Anne Neville, daughter of the 3rd Earl of Westmorland, and is thought to have used Hornby as his principal residence. In 1517 he was arraigned before the Commission of Inquiry into Enclosures for imparking the village of Hornby, although there is extensive evidence that a deer park existed at Hornby from at least the early C14, originally serving an earlier moated site just south of Hornby parish church (grade I listed Church of St Mary the Virgin). This moated site, which has been archaeologically investigated, is likely to be the moated hunting lodge noted in charters dated 1115 and 1175 as belonging to the Dukes of Brittany.

In the 1630s, the 4th Lord Conyers was a participant in tulipomania as documented by the survival (in the archive of the Duke of Leeds held by the Yorkshire Archaeological Society) of extensive lists of tulips, notes and bills, mainly from the florist Petus of Norwich. The notes suggest that at least a proportion were intended for planting in "ye great square in my garden closet" at Hornby Castle, although it is thought that Conyers was also actively involved in financial speculation using tulip bulbs. Petus also appears to have supplied a wide range of other plants to Hornby including quince, peach and lime trees as well as a wide range of other flowering bulb plants. Two complementary plans, possibly drawn up for the 5th Lord Conyers (created Earl of Holderness 1682) in the mid C17, shows details of Hornby Castle, village and its park, although "ye great square" is not named. However a possible orchard is depicted between the castle and the village, with the more detailed plan possibly showing a formal square garden to the south of the village, in the general area of the original medieval moated site. Archaeological excavations have uncovered evidence of an early C17 formal garden here, including spreads of regularly sized gravel incorporating datable finds. Both plans also show the park pale of the earlier deerpark (which partially survives as an upstanding earthwork), as well as the road to the castle from the east which became the principal approach in the C18.

Robert Darcy, 4th Earl of Holderness, was a politician, a prominent member of the Society of Dilettanti and also a patron and friend of William Mason. As well as being a keen agricultural improver, he was also an active supporter of Lancelot Brown who he employed to landscape Syon Hill in Middlesex in the late 1750s (this predating Brown's work at the nearby Syon Park for the Duke of Northumberland). In the 1760s John Carr was engaged to substantially remodel the south and east ranges of Hornby Castle. In the late 1760s the model farms of Park House (now Arbour Hill), Hunter's Hill (now Home Farm) and High Street Farm (now Street Farm) were also built, probably also designed by Carr (all grade II Listed). As well as being part of the general agricultural improvements of the estate, these farms formed eyecatchers for an extensive remodelling of the setting of Hornby Castle which saw the western two thirds of the earlier deer park reverting to farmland (this area not being included in the Registration), most of the rest of the medieval park formed into pleasure grounds, with new open parkland extending eastwards beyond the earlier park pale. The landscaping saw the mill stream to the south of Hornby Castle dammed to create a

ribbon of lakes, including a duck decoy; extensive earthmoving to lower hillocks and probably earlier terraces; the laying of turf and gravel paths; as well as the construction of a ha-ha, a rustic bridge of five arches (grade II Listed Bowling Green Bridge) and a gothic summerhouse (grade II Listed Museum, so named for its use in the C19). Across the wider estate, designed rides also appear to have been laid out to take in features of interest with views back to Hornby Castle, however their extent and survival are currently poorly understood and they have thus not been included in the Registration.

No proposal plans for this re-landscaping have been identified. However two plans do survive dating to 1765 and 1766 showing the estate before these alterations were carried out, and a plan dated 1806 showing the work completed. Accounts and records for Lord Holderness's estates are incomplete, divided between archives, and often confused by lacking clear reference to individual estates. However there is record of a payment of £100 to Brown in November 1768 which is thought to be for the preparation of a proposal for Hornby Castle. The overall landscape design is certainly Brownian in style. Bowling Green Bridge and the summerhouse could for instance be seen to be re-workings of unexecuted designs produced by Brown for Rothley in Northumberland, although both structures may instead have been by John Carr.

William Mason, the writer of the poem in four books "The English Garden" is known to have advised his friend and patron Lord Holderness in 1768. Mason was highly influential in the later development of picturesque garden design, even though he had a direct hand in a very small number of projects. His most celebrated design is the Grade I Registered Nunham Cortenay Oxfordshire where he first designed a flower garden in 1771-2 and then advised Brown on the significant expansion of the park in 1779-82. The extent of his involvement at Hornby is currently unknown.

The 4th earl died in 1778, with Hornby passing to his son-in-law Francis Osbourne, Marquess of Carmarthen (5th Duke of Leeds from 1789) whose wife eloped with Captain Jack Byron (father of the poet by a subsequent wife) some six months after her father's death. The 5th duke was a politician, serving as Foreign Secretary (1783-91) and the Hornby estate appears to have been maintained rather than actively developed during his lifetime, the principal family seat being Kiverton near Harthill in the West Riding of Yorkshire. However, further significant development of the park took place in the early C19 for the 6th Duke (1799-1838) following the demolition of Kiverton in circa 1811 with Hornby then becoming the principal family seat. Developments included the construction of an ice house and waterfall in 1815. Estate accounts also suggest the fashionable creation of a menagerie at Hornby with peacocks, pheasants and an eagle house all mentioned. Accounts for 1820-21 document the planting of 50,000 trees, probably dating the tripling in size of the park as seen by comparing the 1806 plan with the 1857 Ordnance Survey map which shows how an extensive area of former farmland to the east and north were emparked between these dates. During this period three gate lodges were built and a second duck decoy was added further downstream from the C18 decoy. In 1847 Augustus Pugin produced initial designs for a comprehensive remodelling and enlargement of Hornby Castle, but his mental breakdown whilst staying at Hornby prevented the designs being executed.

In 1930, the wider Hornby Castle estate was broken up and sold to clear the gambling debts of the 10th Duke of Leeds, with most of the castle (save the principal, south range) demolished for architectural salvage.

Details

LOCATION, SETTING, LANDFORM, BOUNDARIES, AREA Hornby Castle is set on a high point in the rolling landscape of the Vale of Mowbray (the northern part of the Vale of York), and commands distant views to the North York Moors in the east and the Yorkshire Dales to the west. The small village of Hornby, clustered around the medieval church, lies below Hornby Castle on the western edge of the designed landscape. The park is set in a rural area of mixed farmland, much being arable. The land is very gently undulating, generally dropping away from the high point occupied by Hornby Castle. Boundaries to the park are not strongly defined, but this is thought to have been deliberate to make it appear more expansive by visually taking-in the surrounding countryside. Contributing to this design aspect is the use of the model farms of Arbour Hill, Home Farm and Street Farm as eye catchers. All three farms lie outside of the park with the first two lying to the south west of Hornby Castle, designed to be viewed from there and Street Farm being nearly 3.5km to the east, designed to be viewed from the approach

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to Hornby Castle from the Great North Road (the current A1), one of the designed rides extending out across the wider estate. The area of the park is around 240ha.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main approach to Hornby Castle in the medieval period is thought to have been from the west, from Richmond, with the tower of the parish church appearing on the skyline along with those of the castle, visually adding to the size of the castle. This approach is preserved as the modern road through Hornby village, with the grade II listed Hornby Lodge lying on the boundary between the park and the village.

The remodelling of the landscape in the C18 saw the lane to Hornby village from the west adopted as the principal approach, with two further C19 lodges: the first being Hackforth Lodge sited on the eastern boundary of the park, the second being Lawn Lodge controlling access from the lane to the garden front of Hornby Castle. All three lodges are early C19, built of sandstone ashlar with crenulated wall tops and hood-moulded openings, Hornby lodge being in the form of a two storey tower, the other two being single storey. The associated stone gate piers are ball-topped.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Hornby Castle is grade I Listed, and although much reduced in 1930, retains the south east tower and southern range in use as a house. C15 in origin, the house was remodelled by John Carr in the 1760s who gave the building Classical proportions and regular, enlarged sash windows combined with gothic architectural detailing. The outer east and west walls of the original quadrangular castle also still stand, forming an enclosed courtyard to the rear of the surviving range. Service buildings to the north (including coach house, stables, laundry) have been converted into a number of separate domestic properties and are not included in the Registered area.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS Immediately around the southern side of Hornby Castle there is a terrace with formal lawns and beds with views across the countryside, with the string of ponds appearing as a meandering river in the middle distance with Arbour Hill Farm, framed by mature trees, forming an eye catcher beyond. The hillside below the formal terrace (beyond C19 iron estate fencing but enclosed by a ha-ha), is given over to meadow, studded with parkland trees.

Extending between the castle and the village down hill to the west, is the Rookery: an area of gardens including a number of mature yews and other trees likely to represent at least early C19 planting. These gardens are separated from the public road to the north and the village to the west by a high stone wall. At the foot of the hill there is the mill stream which is crossed by three simple bridges, the southernmost one clearly depicted on the 1806 plan at the northern end of Bowling Green Pond, with a path leading to the gothic summerhouse beyond the former bowling green occupying the level ground to the west of the pond. The summerhouse (the grade II Listed Museum) is ruinous, but had a raised ground floor room which was heated, with a basement below. It forms an alignment between Hornby Castle and Home Farm and retains the remains of a small, constructed pond on its south western side. To the north of the summerhouse there are the archaeological remains of the medieval moated site which included a high status stone building. In this area, overlying the moated site, archaeological remains of an early C17 formal garden have been identified, overlain by later landscaping. Archaeological remains of late 18th gravel paths have also been identified here and elsewhere within the pleasure grounds.

The summerhouse is also linked to Hornby Castle by a broad path that crosses Bowling Green Bridge. This grade II Listed bridge spans a cascade between Bowling Green Pond and Long Pond, and links to the western end of the ha-ha. A rustic bridge of five arches, it is built of tufa. Long Pond is formed by a long dam forming its south western side, along the top of which there is a path with a gateway into the parkland at the southern end. West of Long Pond is Springs Wood which was also part of the late C18 designed landscape, one surviving feature being a cascade, fed by Long Pond, which is crossed by a stone slab ford. This cascade and a smaller sluice feeds into Stone Pond which was largely silted in 2014. The dam at its southern end includes a brick lined tank interpreted as being for fish rearing, probably constructed in the C19. The next pond is Great Pond which is a serpentine C18 duck decoy pond which is mainly open water, although the decoy pipes are largely silted. On the northern bank at the eastern end is a partially ruined, twin chambered boat house. A second boat house, named on the 1857 map on the southern side of the pond, is not clearly identifiable. The southern side and eastern end of Long Pond are wooded to a similar extent as depicted in 1806, and two separate cascades issue from the pond, that at the east end retaining remains of a footbridge crossing the head of the cascade, with a later timber bridge crossing its foot. Great Pond formed the eastern end of the C18 designed landscape, however the stream continues to the early C19 New Decoy which is a four-armed duck

decoy with a square pond which is still largely open water. This is set within New Decoy Plantation which forms part of the southern boundary of the eastern extension to the park.

PARK The park is largely pasture although also includes some land that is now arable. It retains a number of parkland trees and clumps and is bisected by the tree lined drive from Hackforth Lodge to Hornby. Parts of the park retains areas of surviving ridge and furrow and the northern half of the park retains a scatter of fish ponds. The park extends from the ha-ha to the south and east of Hornby Castle eastwards as far as North Road, the lane that leaves Hackforth village heading northwards. The watercourse with its chain of ponds forms the southern boundary. The northern boundary is marked by a road, extending eastwards to include New Covert Plantation (formerly West Close Plantation) which marks the north eastern corner of the park.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES Elements of the wider C18 and early C19 designed estate landscape extend beyond the Registered area. These include, on the northern edge of the park, the Grade II-listed Old Gas House (formerly the estate gas-works, now converted into a house); Icehouse Wood; kennels (unlisted); and the three model farms - Park House (now Arbour Hill), Hunter's Hill (now Home Farm) and High Street Farm (now Street Farm) - which form eyecatchers for the estate (all listed grade II). Elements of a network of extensive designed rides across the former Holderness's Hornby estate also lie outside the area Registered.

The extent and level of survival of the medieval deer park is currently poorly understood and so its western extent, which lies beyond the C18 pleasure gardens, is not included in the area Registered.

KITCHEN AND WALLED GARDENS To the north of the road through Hornby, marking the western end of the park, are the walled gardens (walls and attached structures are Grade II-listed) established between 1765 and 1806, and altered and enlarged in the second half of the C19. The inner kitchen garden contains a small late C20 housing estate. The walled gardens are excluded from the Registered area.

Summary

Medieval hunting park modified as a landscaped pleasure gardens and park for Lord Holderness in the 1770s, possibly to the design of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and William Mason.

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.

Reasons for Designation

Hornby Castle Park, a medieval hunting park modified as a landscaped pleasure gardens and park for Lord Holderness in the 1770s (possibly to the design of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and William Mason) is Registered at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Landscape Design: as a well preserved example of a Brownian landscape, particularly notable for its string of ponds emulating a meandering river when viewed from the house; * Architectural elements: in addition to the grade I Listed Hornby Castle, Bowling Green Bridge and the summerhouse beyond are particularly notable features. Other structures such as the lodges also contribute, but are more typical survivals; * Historical: the long history of the park and the associations with its previous owners (many of national repute) adds to the significance of the landscape; * Association: while the extent of the role taken by William Mason and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown at Hornby Castle Park is currently poorly understood, the likelihood of their involvement contributes to the significance of the landscape.

Bibliographie

Books and journals

'Country Life' in Hornby Castle, Yorkshire, (July 14, 1906)

G Worsley, , 'Country Life' in Hornby Castle, Yorkshire, (June 29, 1989)

Other

Land Use Consultants, London, Hornby Castle, 1992,