

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

DEENE PARK

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

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Name:	DEENE PARK
District:	North Northamptonshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Deene
District:	North Northamptonshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Deenethorpe
District:	North Northamptonshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Weldon
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.518014 Longitude: -0.60639408 National Grid Reference: SP 94661 92038 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001030 Date first listed: 25-Jun-1984

Details

Gardens and park of C16 and later date associated with a country house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In the Middle Ages Deene was part of the estates of Westminster Abbey. It was leased in 1514 by Robert Brudenell, a successful London lawyer, who was building up a midland estate. He made Deene his principal house and was buried here in 1514. The family estate was further enlarged by his son Sir Thomas (d 1549), a friend of the King's Antiquary John Leland who sometimes stayed at Deene, and grandson Sir Edmund (d 1585) who entertained the Queen in 1566 at what by then had become a fairly substantial house. In 1606 Deene was inherited by Thomas Brudenell (d 1663), a recusant who married Mary, daughter of Thomas Tresham of Rushton. He was created Baron Brudenell in 1528 and Earl of Cardigan in 1660, and despite heavy fines and other outgoings including support for the financially beleaguered Treshams, was able to make further additions to the house and lay out a great garden on its east side. After the death in 1915 of the widow of James, seventh Earl (d 1868), and commander of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, Deene reverted to the descendants of the fifth Earl's youngest brother, Thomas Brudenell, first Earl of Ailesbury. It remains (1998) in private hands.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Deene Park lies on the north side of its park, at the east end of Deene village. Corby lies c 6km to the south-west and Stamford c 14km to the north-east. The village lies on the minor road along the north side of the park off the A43, which itself bounds the park to the south-east. To the south and west the park boundary follows wood and field edges, and in general Deene's setting is rural. The area here registered is c 230ha.

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
Inventory of Great Britain
DEENE PARK

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The usual approach to Deene Park is via the Deene road, north of the house. A straight drive, entered via a gate with tall modern piers, connects the two. The main approach until the mid C20 is no longer used. This was along a winding approach through the park from the lodge on the A43, probably of 1841 and by John Crake (d 1859), opposite the turning to Deenethorpe village. South-east of Deene Park this crosses the mid C18 bridge across the river, then runs c 100m east of the house before turning to enter the north forecourt.

The good series of C17 and early C18 maps for Deene show how, over that time, there were several changes to the entrances and approaches. In the C17 the main forecourt may have been on the south side of the house, while in the early C18 the east front was treated as the principal front. By 1746 the north front had become, or returned to being, the entrance front.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Deene Park (listed grade I) is a courtyard house developed by successive owners from a late medieval dwelling which survives embedded within the later structure. Some of the key works were undertaken in the late C16, when the Hall was raised and given its present roof of sweet chestnut, and the south front extended and given three-storey octagonal turrets (lowered in the C18), presumably prospect rooms, which gave access to the roof. In the early C17 the new formal gardens on the east side became the main focus of the principal rooms, and a prominent lodging tower was built at the north end of the east front looking across the central axis of the garden. From a loggia (now the chapel) at the south-west corner of the garden there was access to the main first-floor rooms. About 1810, emphasising the new importance of the southward view over the lake, the south front was extended by eight bays in a simplified gothic style to provide a suite of reception rooms: a library, drawing and dining rooms.

Some 50m north-west of the house are late C18 and C19 stables and riding school (all listed grade II). There is another stable (listed grade II), of the mid C18, 30m north of the Head Gardener's Cottage.

A seven-bay laundry block of 1752 east of the house, and a banquet hall or ballroom of 1865 to its north which linked with the main building, were demolished in 1960 and 1987. The foundations of the latter provide the boundary of the present sunken garden. Some 200m east of the house is the now redundant parish church of St Peter (listed grade II*). This contains many Brudenell monuments including that of the seventh Earl and his wife. Although outside the registered area it is an important element of the view towards the house from the south.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS To either side of the drive leading north from the house is rough grassland with specimen trees. At the southern end of the western block of grassland is the formal Black Garden, created in the late C20. Against the east side of the house is a formal lawn.

The main gardens extend along the south side of the house, and are mainly of 1962 and later within a framework established in the mid C19. They extend between Deene Park and the river-like lake which extends east/west some 75m south of the house. Running along the front of the house is a broad gravel walk. This abuts a parterre with low box hedges created in the 1980s, which extends the full width of the house. South of this a strip of lawn drops via a terraced ramp to a low wall (listed grade II) of limestone ashlar with central steps and polygonal castellated bastions at the corners which serves to contain and define the garden. The eastern section of this is early C19, while the western portion was added following the erection of the ballroom in the 1860s. South of the wall there is a narrow strip of lawn running down to the edge of the lake, which is crossed by a wooden footbridge of 1970.

On the west side of the house is the sunken garden. Further later C20 garden compartments, with lawns and formal hedges, extend west of the parterre and south of the kitchen garden, extending beyond (west) into a wilderness area with specimen trees and shrubs. Attached to the south-west corner of the kitchen garden, at the end of the long border, is a mid C19, two-storey, stone, octagonal summer house (listed grade II). Some 75m south-west of that, on the lawn along the north side of the lake, is a limestone monument (listed grade II) of 1794 recording the planting of oak trees in 1757 by Lady Elizabeth Montagu, later Duchess of Buccleuch.

Surveys of 1601 and 1630 show a great quartered parterre east of the house and a large rectangular pond with central island south of the church. In 1715 the third Earl consulted the Duke of Montagu's gardener at Boughton (qv) Van de Meulen (d 1717); he supplied hundreds of fruit trees and probably suggested new schemes. A survey of 1716 shows the parterre and pond unchanged, but there are large walled gardens west of the house and two, linked, moated gardens to the south-west. The moated

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
Inventory of Great Britain
DEENE PARK

gardens, probably constructed since 1704, were converted to a long, formal canal with apsidal west end in 1717/18 (perhaps one of de Meulen's ideas). Curiously this was set well apart from the house, separated from it by a kitchen court and planting. In the mid C18, and probably after 1746, the canal was transformed into the present lake, flowing past the south front of the house to join up with the pond south of the church and crossed by the new bridge.

By 1746 a new road to Deenethorpe was built down the east side of the house, across the site of the parterre. This led from a long north forecourt, which extended up to the public road. Down the east side of the forecourt was a wilderness or shrubbery, through which ran an irregular serpentine path. All these changes post-dated 1716; they may have been further products of de Meulen's suggestions of 1715.

The present gardens have been laid out and replanted since 1962, with a notable formal parterre on the south side planned by David Hicks.

PARK From the house the park is entered from the south-east corner of the gardens south of the house via a mid C18, limestone ashlar bridge (listed grade II). This has three segmental arches incorporating mid C17 balusters previously around the terraces on the north and east sides of the house. This part of the park, permanent pasture with specimen trees, represents the area called 'old park' in 1630. It is bounded to the north and east by the lake, on the south bank of which, opposite the house, is a terraced earthwork marking the site of a bowling green marked on early C17 maps. The earthworks of a second, early C18, terraced bowling green, c 80m square, lie c 75m to the south-west, on top of a spur of ground from which there is an excellent view over the house and its gardens.

Westward of the spur this section (now known as the Deer Park) of the park extends for c 1km, sloping down from Dibbin's Wood to the south to the valley-bottom fishponds which lie south-west of, and feed, the lake. On the northern edge of the east end of Dibbin's Wood is a mid C19 stone keeper's house. This may have replaced the now (1998) ruinous Venison House, which stands at the west end of the Deer Park. The site on the north side of Dibbin's Wood of the C17 High Standing, a grandstand-like structure from which the hunt might be watched, was planted with trees in the 1990s. North of the fishponds Cow Park, again permanent pasture with specimen trees, rises to meet the road running west from Deene village. In the early C17 there was a rabbit warren here, and several short mounds presumably represent the remains of artificial burrows. There was the a keeper's house at the east end of this section of the park; its site is marked today by a low mound, from which there is good visibility, on the north side of the east end of the western fishpond.

The park contains large amounts of ridge and furrow.

There is no record of a medieval park at Deene, and it was probably created shortly before the 1560s when the Brudenells began to consolidate their estate around Deene by exchange and purchase. Part of this phase of improvement was the enlargement of the park, which took in part of Deenethorpe's open-field land and woodland along its southern edge. In 1612 the whole manor was reorganised, Deene's open fields inclosed and the park further enlarged, from 183 acres (c 76ha) to 280 acres (c 116ha). In 1624 it contained 350 acres (c 145ha). By now the park extended south and west from the house, and measured c 2km from east to west and c 1km from north to south. Part of its roughly circular north-eastern compartment, crossed by avenues, was called 'the old park', and presumably represents its original core. The large, triangular fishponds in the western part of the park were in existence; north of them was the extensive rabbit warren.

In the C17 there was a bowling green in the park, c 200m south of the house. This was still extant in 1704, by when there was also a 'New Bowling Green' south-west of Deene village, on or close to the site of the mounded keeper's lodge mapped in 1601. In 1723 a little ornamental battlemented building (no longer extant) was built next to the bowling green, its roof decorated with flames of gilded wood. Map evidence suggests this may have been sited on the centre of the south side of the third of the bowling greens, that which occupies the spur of ground which overlooks the south front of the house.

Eayre and Jefferys' map of 1791 shows a network of avenues east and south of Deene, around Deenethorpe, and also a great avenue extending out from the west boundary of the park. The latter linked in with the northern avenues and rides of Boughton, the two estates being merged in 1775 on the death of Mary Montagu, the fourth Earl's wife, who he had married in 1730. The eastern boundary of the park moved east to its present line, from immediately east of the churchyard wall, in or soon after 1794

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England
Inventory of Great Britain
DEENE PARK

when the modern A43 was turnpiked. Although this provided space for the new lake south of, and connecting with, the existing waterworks, Bryant's map suggests it was not dug until after the mid 1820s.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden stands west of the house abutting the Deene road; stylistically the walls (listed grade II), red brick with burnt headers, look late C16. The overall area, roughly triangular, is divided internally by further late C16 walls (also listed grade II) into four compartments. Arched openings provide internal access. Against the outside of the east wall is the Head Gardener's Cottage (listed grade II), originally probably a C17 one-unit limestone house to which a two-unit brick addition was made in the C18.

In 1998 sections of the gardens continued to be used for horticulture, while the southernmost compartment had recently been laid out as a formal garden with yew hedging by David Hicks.

REFERENCES

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Maps T Eayre and T Jefferys, The County of Northamptonshire..., 1779 (2nd edn 1791) A Bryant, Map of Northamptonshire, 1827

OS 6" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1901

Archival items Northamptonshire Record Office holds several maps of the estate, including the following: 4093/3 (1601), 4096 (1630), 3105 (1704), 4091/1 (nd, C18), 4092/5 (nd, C18), 3281 (c 1730)

Description written: May 1998 Register Inspector: PAS Edited: January 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.