

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

DERWENT GARDENS

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

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Name: DERWENT GARDENS

County: Derbyshire

District: Derbyshire Dales (District Authority)

Parish: Matlock Bath

label.localisation: Latitude: 53.118134
Longitude: -1.5609858
National Grid Reference: SK 29480 57974
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1001415
Date first listed: 02-Mar-1999

Details

A public park which originated as commercial pleasure grounds in the late C19 which has group value with Lovers Walks (qv), High Tor (qv), the Heights of Abraham (qv), and Willersley Castle (qv), a group of registered parks and pleasure grounds with common origins in the exploitation of the dramatic scenic qualities of the gorge of the River Derwent.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Matlock Bath developed as a spa during the late C17 and early C18. During the late C18 and early C19 communications were improved and the town became a popular summer resort for tourists who by this time were attracted as much by the dramatic scenery and caves as by the waters. Notable visitors included Byron who compared Matlock Bath with Switzerland. Derwent Gardens were laid out during the 1890s as a private enterprise featuring a switchback. They were acquired by Matlock Council in the mid C20 and remain in local authority ownership (1998)

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Derwent Gardens occupy part of the west bank of the River Derwent on the south side of Matlock Bath. The c 1.5ha site is on level ground with a steep bank along the line of Derby Road (A6) which forms the western boundary. The eastern boundary is the river and walls and fences divide the park from private land to the south and the precincts of the Pavilion to the north.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The park is entered from the north where a lane leads south from the Pavilion to a gateway with cast-iron gate piers and rustic kiosk probably of early to mid C20 date, which was a pay booth relocated from Jubilee Bridge, an entrance to Lovers Walks to the north. At the south end of the site there is a late C20 bridge which crosses the Derwent into Lovers Walks.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens have gravel paths, lawns and beds edged with small boulders in a layout of the late C20 which incorporates a range of earlier features. A fountain of C19 date restored in the late C20 lies c 70m south of the entrance. It rises from a central mound of rustic tufa in the centre of an informal pool. A path along the west side of the site runs beneath a wooded tufa bank past an elaborate tufa grotto with an openwork parapet, c 10m south-west of the entrance. A second tufa grotto, c 40m to the south, is a simple arched recess with tufa within it which was probably fed

by a spring. The path continues southwards past a small tufa alcove set into the bank and continues to a fountain from which water falls over a rustic stepped cascade to a pool, c 200m south of the entrance. These grottoes and fountains are the restored remains of a system of water features and grottoes fed by thermal spring water which were created during the late C19. A mid C20 shelter lies c 120m south of the entrance.

One of the principal features is the river and views across it to Lovers Walks to the east where the steep wooded hillside with craggy limestone cliffs forms a backcloth to the water. There are views from the south end of the gardens and the bridge south along the river and north to the Heights of Abraham.

It is located within the buffer zone of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage site.

This list entry was subject to a Minor Amendment on 14/11/2011

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.

Bibliographie

Books and journals

Pevsner, N, Williamson, E, *The Buildings of England: Derbyshire*, (1978), 273

Other

J Gratton, *Plan of Matlock Bath and its Vicinity*, 1848 [all in Lyne and Assocs 1997]

Matlock Bath, guidebook, (Derbyshire Countryside Ltd 1993)

Matlock Bath, illustrated guidebook, (Derbyshire Dales District Council c 1995)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1879

OS 6" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1899

The Matlock Parks, Proposals for a Restoration Management Plan, (Ian Lyne and Associates 1997)