

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

RISBY HALL

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**RISBY HALL**

Name:	RISBY HALL
District:	East Riding of Yorkshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Rowley
label.localisation:	Latitude: 53.802888 Longitude: -0.46852593 National Grid Reference: TA 00958 35153 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001419 Date first listed: 12-Mar-1999

## Details

Formal gardens probably of late C17 date which survive in the form of earthworks; formal canals and walkways probably of similar date, and pleasure grounds with lakes probably of late C18 date.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The site was owned by the Ellerker family from 1401 to 1655, when it passed through marriage to James Bradshaw, who built a new house on a new site and laid out gardens. In the late 1760s Eaton Mainwaring Ellerker made plans to alter the grounds, and probably created lakes in the valley. The whole estate was sold in 1787, passing in the 1880s to Charles Wilson, Lord Nunburnholme and subsequently to other private owners. It remains (1998) in private ownership.

An undated view, probably of early C18 date, shows the Hall and gardens from the south. The site is a scheduled ancient monument.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Risby Hall lies c 2km south-west of Beverley on land which slopes down to a valley to the south, in a setting which is rural and agricultural. The c 30ha site is bounded on the north-west side by a sunk fence, thought to be the remains of a park pale which formed part of the southern boundary of a deer park of c 1550. A C20 fence divides woodland from arable land on the north side of the site. The south boundary is formed by Dunflat Road, and by the outer precincts of Risby Park Farm. The east boundary is formed by a track which runs north from Dunflat Road, while the south-west and west boundary is formed by fencing. The fragmentary earthwork remains of the deserted medieval village of Risby lie on the north-facing side of the valley.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The entrance to the site is from Dunflat Road from which a track runs north, crossing the bottom of the valley, continuing to the northern boundary. A hollow-way connects this drive with Risby Farm. The C18 view shows the drive running north from the valley bottom and running to the rear (north side) of the house. A drive aligned with the house site and running northwards towards Cellar Heads (see below) is visible in soil marks in the field north of the site and outside the registered area. There are various secondary entrances from tracks and paths.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Risby Hall was built c 1680 by James Bradshaw to replace an earlier manor house, which was probably on a moated site c 450m to the north and outside the registered area, called Cellar Heads (scheduled ancient monument). The early C18 view shows a symmetrical classical facade with a central entrance. The house was seriously damaged by fire in

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the late C18 and subsequently demolished, leaving the house platform which is sited at the top of the north side of the valley. A building sited c 150m north-west of the house platform, which was demolished in the 1980s, had a date stone of 1760, and may have been a replacement for the house.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** Immediately south of the house platform there is a raised terrace, with views over the valley to the south, overlooking a level platform. A pyramidal earthwork lies at each of the south-east and south-west corners of the platform, and between them there is a ramped slope. Another level platform lies at the base of the slope. To the south in the valley bottom there is an elongated pond with an irregular semicircular projection on its south side which has traces of brickwork footings around the edge.

This arrangement conforms with the gardens on the C18 view which shows the terraced walk in front of the house overlooking a parterre with statuary, with garden pavilions on top of pyramidal platforms on each side. At the base of the slope the lower platform has paired parterres with geometric patterns delineated by low hedges, and at the southernmost part of the garden is a canal with a semicircular bow. Walls surround the garden and there is a semicircular wall surmounted by railings with a central entrance in front of the canal. A dovecote is shown outside the garden walls south-west of the house.

To the east of the garden site there is woodland, Yewtree Plantation immediately east of the gardens and Blackdike Plantation to the north-east. Aligned with the raised terrace, c 40m east of the house site, there is a linear canal with a line of yew trees along its southern bank. A line of trees in approximately this position is shown on the C18 view. Immediately north of this is a smaller pond, and at its east end there is a roughly circular depression which may have been another pond. To the north-east, c 80m from the house platform and running north/south for a distance of c 180m, is another canal, Black Dike, which has a raised bank, possibly a former walkway, running along its east side. To the west there are the remains of ponds which are shown as three canals oriented north/south on the 1855 OS map.

Paths lead east and south-east through the Blackdike and Yew Tree Plantations, down the valley side. In the bottom of the valley there are three small lakes. The western and middle lakes are overlooked by the wooded slopes of Gorse Plantation on the north side, and by open land to the south. The middle lake is not shown on the 1855 OS map and has been reflooded in the late C20. The eastern lake is surrounded by woodland called Fishpond Wood and Folly Wood. On the south shore, c 700m east of the house site, there is a platform overlooking the water, with a gothic folly, possibly of late C18 or early C19 date. The folly is arcaded and has the remains of a fireplace within it.

The valley immediately south and south-west of the house has a flat bottom, suggesting that the lakes may have extended, or may have been intended to extend, in front of the house.

The lakes were probably created by Easton Mainwaring Ellerker during the period 1769 to his death in 1771. An account by Arthur Young, who visited Risby in 1769, states: 'the valley ... is to be floated with water, and will then have the appearance of a very noble irregular lake, winding both to the right and the left into a wood.' Young also mentions plans for a 'Grecian temple' amongst the trees. The account makes it plain that Ellerker planned to remove the garden walls to throw the park and garden together. It is possible that he erected the gothic folly in place of the proposed Greek temple.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The C18 print shows walled orchards and gardens running down the slope immediately to the east of the gardens in front of the house, but little trace of these appears to survive.

#### REFERENCES

A Young, *A Six Months Tour Through the North of England* 1, (1769), p 243 *The Victoria History of the County of York East Riding* 4, (1979), p 147 *Georgian Society for East Yorkshire Newsletter*, No 6 (1980) D Neave and E Waterson, *Lost Houses of East Yorkshire* (1988), pp 50(2 D Neave and D Turnbull, *The Landscaped Parks and Gardens of East Yorkshire* (1992), pp 55-7 *Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1855 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1910*

Archival items *View of Risby Hall and gardens from the south*, nd (early C18), (Gott Collection 6/99), (Wakefield Museum)  
Description written: April 1998 Amended: April 1999 Register Inspector: CEH Edited: November 1999

## Legal

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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.