

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

ASKHAM HALL

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

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Name:	ASKHAM HALL
County:	Cumbria
District:	Eden (District Authority)
Parish:	Askham
National park:	LAKE DISTRICT
label.localisation:	Latitude: 54.607944 Longitude: -2.7503693 National Grid Reference: NY 51630 23901 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000660 Date first listed: 01-Jul-1985

Details

A formal garden and terraces, possibly with late C17 or C18 origins.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The manor of Askham was acquired in 1280 by Sir Thomas de Helbeck, and remained in the de Helbeck family until the early C14 when it passed by marriage to the Swynburn family. An inquisition of 1326 refers to a dwelling on the site being partially burnt by the Scots. Edmund de Sandford and his wife Idonea, co-heiress of Sir Thomas English, came into possession of Askham in 1375, and it remained in the family for c 350 years. In 1680 it was sold to the Lowther family. In 1828 the Hall was in use as a rectory and is so described on the 1st edition OS map surveyed 1859. Following the abandonment of nearby Lowther Castle in the mid C20, it became the country seat of Lord Lonsdale and remains in use (1997) as a private residence.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Askham Hall is situated on the eastern edge of the village of Askham overlooking the River Eamont, which lies some 200m to the east of the Hall, on land which slopes down to the south and east. The setting is rural and agricultural. The boundary of the c 3ha site is formed by a track between Askham and Broadgate on the west side, walls on the north and east sides, and a wall dividing the site from the by-road between Askham and Lowther on the south side.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main entrance is on the south side of the site where a gateway with stone gate piers (late C17/early C18, listed grade II) leads to a drive which runs north and north-east to the Hall. A second drive leads to the north side of the Hall from the track to Broadgate.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Askham Hall (listed grade I) originated as a pele tower, probably in the C14. It has three irregular wings around a rectangular courtyard. The tower forms the south front and was remodelled 1685-90, although medieval tunnel vaulting survives at ground floor level. The north wing retains some medieval work and the remainder of the building is of C16 and C17 date with later alterations and additions.

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GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens are on the south, west and east sides of the Hall. Immediately south of the Hall a sloping lawn is divided by a central path and there are signs of terracing, probably on the line of that shown on the 1859 OS map c 20m south of the Hall. South of this, and c 50m south of the Hall, there are two formal terraces (walls and steps listed grade II). The first terrace has an ashlar retaining wall with a cornice and a central gate which leads to steps down to the second terrace. This is also supported by a retaining wall and has central steps leading down to a lawn below. The terraces are c 22m long and are possibly of late C17 or C18 date. In the centre of the lawn below the terraces there is a mid C20 swimming pool.

On the north-east side of the Hall there is a rectangular formal garden with geometrical beds, enclosed on the north and south sides by yew hedges.

On the west side of the Hall there is a c 1ha area of woodland, with a central clearing. The large-scale OS map surveyed 1857-60 shows this area divided from the terraces by a boundary, possibly a fence or wall. An avenue is shown running north alongside the terraces on the east side of this division and the area now covered by trees is open land, with a possible vestigial avenue running from east to west across the area.

The gardens are shown extending eastwards down to the river on Greenwood's county map of 1824. A building is shown south of the Hall, fronting the road, on Jeffreys' county map of 1770, indicating a post 1770 expansion of the grounds down to the roadside.

REFERENCES

Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc 37, (1937), pp 183-5

Maps T Jeffreys, The County of Westmorland, 1770 C & J Greenwood, Map of the County of Westmorland, 1824

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1859 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1857-60

Description written: July 1997 Register Inspector: CEH Edited: March 1999

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.