

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

GILLING CASTLE

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Name:	GILLING CASTLE
County:	North Yorkshire
District:	Hambleton (District Authority)
Parish:	Yearsley
County:	North Yorkshire
District:	Ryedale (District Authority)
Parish:	Gilling East
label.localisation:	Latitude: 54.175197 Longitude: -1.0842862 National Grid Reference: SE 59871 75877 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001064 Date first listed: 10-May-1984

Details

A park with medieval origins, and gardens probably of the early C18 possibly with earlier origins.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The site was owned by the Mowbray family from the C13 or before and it was acquired by the Etton family by 1390, who received licence to impark. The property passed to the Nevill family and was subsequently claimed by Thomas Fairfax who was related to the Ettons through the female line. His claim was confirmed in 1492. The estate remained in the family, passing through the female line after the death of Viscount Fairfax in 1772. It was sold in the late C19 and in 1904 it was sold again to the Hunter family. It became a school in 1929 and remains in this use in the ownership of the Ampleforth Abbey Trust (1998).

DESCRIPTION LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Gilling Castle lies immediately west and south of the village of Gilling East in a rural and agricultural area. The c 420ha site is on high land which falls to the south and west. The boundaries are largely fenced with a lane between the village and Redcar House forming the northern boundary and fences dividing park and woodland from agricultural land and woodland forming the other boundaries.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The principal entrance is from Main Street (B1363) in the village where there are stone gate piers (early C18, listed grade II) surmounted by carved lions from which a drive runs west through woodland, shown as an avenue on the 1856 OS map, to the north side of the Castle. On the south side of the site there is an entrance with a lodge called High Lodge from which a track runs north and north-west through woodland to a point c 1.2km south-west of the Castle. The drive then continues as The Avenue (replanted late C20). The west front of the Castle, with which The Avenue is aligned, comes into view and there are impressive views of the Castle with long-distance views to the east from the point at which The

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Avenue ends, c 400m from the building. The Avenue is shown on a county map of 1771 and on an undated estate map, probably of C18 date. A drive continues eastwards from The Avenue to the west side of the Castle.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Gilling Castle (listed grade I) is a C14 tower house with late C16 alterations which was extensively remodelled, with the creation of a new west front, in the early C18. The architect of the C18 work is unknown, though William Wakefield and William Thornton of York have been suggested as possibilities (see for example Pevsner 1966). The building contains a great chamber of c 1580 and contemporary panelling and stained glass. A classroom wing was added to the south by Giles Gilbert Scott in 1930. The building is in use as a school (1998).

Immediately north of the Castle there is a range of c 1930 around a courtyard which incorporates former stables and a clock tower (listed grade II) of mid C18 date.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The Castle is set on a grassed platform with parapet walls around all sides but the west. On the west side there is a forecourt between the projecting north and south wings, otherwise grassland runs up to the west front. Immediately south of the south-west corner of the Castle there is a grassed platform which projects to the south and is supported by a stone retaining wall with a parapet. There are views over falling land and terraced gardens to the south and east, and over rising parkland beyond. There is a patch of woodland to the west, and steps running down from the south-east corner of the Castle lead to a walk around the base of the retaining wall of the viewing platform. Immediately south of this walk the land falls steeply and the contours suggest there may have been more terraced walks around it.

Immediately south of the Castle and east of the viewing platform steeply falling ground is terraced down, each terrace being supported by a brick retaining wall with a low parapet. The first terrace has a formal layout with a stone-edged flower bed, shown on a photograph of 1908 (CL). Stone steps lead down to the second terrace, which is narrower than the first, and is planted with borders. At the east end of this terrace there is a doorway in a stepped brick archway. The third terrace has a range of glasshouses against the eastern half of the retaining wall, corresponding with the position of a glasshouse marked on the 1856 OS map. Land slopes gently down to the south from a grassed terrace and the garden is divided from the park by a ha-ha. The terraces appear much as shown in photographs of 1908 (CL). The brickwork shows signs of successive repair and rebuilding, while some of the stone steps have pecked masonry sides similar to the masonry of the west front of the Castle, suggesting that they may have been built or repaired in the early C18.

On the east side of the Castle the grassed platform is terraced down to the east on a line running south from the south-east corner of the building. On the corresponding north-east side there is a terrace with a concrete balustrade and steps, probably of early to mid C20 date. Long-distance views to the east are partially obscured by mature trees, and there are views over the terraced gardens to the south with rising parkland and woods beyond. To the east there are wooded pleasure grounds with paths leading through them which stretch eastwards on land which falls to the south and east alongside the main entrance drive and is separated from the park by a continuation of the ha-ha.

PARK The park lies to the south and west of the Castle. To the south the land falls before rising again to Temple Hill which is planted on its north flank with woodland called The Rookery. A building shown on the hill on the 1771 county map could be an ornamental temple. The area between the Castle gardens and The Rookery is in use as a golf course (1998).

Immediately west of the Castle the land rises slightly and grassed platforms c 100m west of the building are in use as playing fields (1998). Linear earthwork banks on the north side of the playing fields may represent the spoil from levelling. A band of (replanted) trees is ranged to the north and south of The Avenue along the western edge of the playing fields and c 400m west of the Castle. This planting is shown on both the 1856 OS and C18 estate map. Land on each side of The Avenue is in use as arable and pasture land. The park boundary is sheltered to the north by North Side Plantation and to the south by Lenny Plantation.

The whole of the western side of the site is covered by plantations through which there is an extensive system of drives and paths. A building shown near the west end of The Avenue on the 1771 county map may be identifiable with one marked 'Temple' which appears on the C18 estate map c 1.5km south-west of the Castle. Mature broadleaved trees line the paths in some areas, otherwise the woodland is largely coniferous. Some 1.7km south-west of the Castle there are two stretches of water called Higher Fish Ponds. A path leads north-west from them, and the drained sites of two more ponds can be seen alongside it. The path leads north and reaches Lower Fish Pond, which lies c 1.9km west of the Castle and is the largest of the ponds

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being c 300m in length. It is shown in approximately its present form on the C18 estate map, which shows only the easternmost of the other ponds.

REFERENCES Country Life, 24 (26 September 1908), pp 416-26 N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire The North Riding* (1966), pp 166-9 K Lemmon, *The Gardens of Britain* 5, (1978), pp 73-4

Maps T Jefferys, *County Map, 1771 Estate Map*, nd (late C18) (ZM143), (North Yorkshire Archive Service)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1856

Description written: October 1998 Amended: March 1999 Register Inspector: CEH Edited: October 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.