

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

MIDDLETON LODGE

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| Name: | MIDDLETON LODGE |
| County: | North Yorkshire |
| District: | Richmondshire (District Authority) |
| Parish: | Middleton Tyas |
| label.localisation: | Latitude: 54.456242 Longitude: -1.6560496 National Grid Reference: NZ 22397 06816 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF) |
| label.overview: | Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001699 Date first listed: 05-Nov-2007 |

Details

A landscaped park, pleasure grounds and formal garden of the later C18 laid out around a contemporary house by John Carr of York.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT Middleton Lodge was founded in open agricultural land owned by the local Hartley family. The house, built between 1777 and 1780, was designed by John Carr of York for the barrister George Hartley (1726-80). The main (west) drive, its entrance gateway and its additional gateway are also thought to have been designed by Carr. A track from the north west led to the pre-existing farm occupying the northern part of the estate which remained largely agricultural in nature with commercial plantations screening the view from the Lodge. The grounds to the south of this were landscaped at the same time by an unknown designer; it is suggested that the presence of a semi-circular clump of trees on the boundary to the south east of the house (depicted on the 1838 'Plan of the Township of Middleton Tyas'), is characteristic of some of the designs produced by Adam Mickel II, (1747-1810), who completed numerous commissions in Yorkshire and is known to have worked with the architect John Foss at Swinton Park; however, the attribution of a designer at Middleton Lodge cannot be made with certainty on the present evidence. George Hartley died in 1780 before he took up residence at Middleton Lodge and subsequently, the stable block, by either John Carr or John Foss, and the walled garden were constructed.

From the 1830s, Leonard Lawrie Hartly owned the estate and work thought to have taken place at this time included planting in the woodland gardens, slight extensions to the formal gardens around the Lodge and the formalisation of the north west farm track (now used as a service track to the main house) by irregular planting along its length and the construction of a formal entrance (listed Grade II) and gate lodge. By the mid C19 the house was leased to tenants including the Backhouses, and Edmund Backhouse may have extended some of the plantations, added exotic specimen trees and constructed the dog kennels; by 1895 the area immediately south of the main drive had acquired a cricket ground. C20 additions included some mid C19 formal planting in the immediate vicinity of the house, the extension of the pleasure grounds into the plantation to the north and the construction of the Mill Farm buildings. The estate was purchased by the current owners in the 1980s.

DESCRIPTION LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Middleton Lodge is situated immediately north-west of the village of Middleton Tyas. The registered site covers an area of c. 41.4 ha and includes the core of the designed

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landscape. The register boundary is as follows: on the north, it follows field boundaries around the rear of the orchards and kennels and continues north eastwards around the north side of the wooded pleasure grounds and around the south sides of Acre Howden Plantation and Acre Howden Spring Plantations. On the east, it runs from the south east corner of Acre Howden Spring Plantation, around Rye Hill Plantation and south around field boundaries to the east end of Lodge Gill. The south side follows Lodge Gill incorporating Lodge Gill Wood and continues to a junction with Kneeton lane. On the west, it follows the estate boundary bordering Kneeton Lane. The site occupies level ground, although the Lodge is situated on a slight rise with an easterly aspect over sloping ground in a setting of open countryside. It was designed both to be a prominent landmark and to enjoy views of the surrounding landscape, and to the North York Moors.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES John Carr's west entrance of c.1780 off Kneeton Lane has curving walls with original iron gates (listed Grade II); a second set of original gates (listed Grade II) stands at the head of the drive where it crosses a ha-ha. The drive approaches the house through pastureland containing earthwork ridge and furrow and now, as originally, the house is screened from view by a belt of woodland. Today the drive is lined by lime trees which map evidence suggests were planted in the mid C19. The service drive from the north- west was either introduced or upgraded c.1838 (date of gate ironwork); the lodge at its end stands outside the registered area.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Middleton Lodge, by John Carr of York (listed Grade II*), stands at the centre of the site. It is a square, two-storey, house of sandstone ashlar with a five-bay façade incorporating a three bay pediment with a Doric portico. A three-storey service range is attached to the west.

The stable block (listed Grade II) situated north-west of the house was designed by John Carr or John Foss c.1780. Comprising stables, coach house and hayloft it is of sandstone with ashlar dressings and is arranged around three side of a courtyard with a central two-storey block and single-storey outer ranges.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS These fall into two separate areas, each with a distinct character: the formal gardens and the wooded gardens or pleasure grounds.

The east front of Middleton Lodge overlooks the principal grounds, which lie to the east and south. These include the earthwork remains of an earlier formal garden which are also visible on aerial photographs taken in c. 1960. There is a group of symmetrical parterres arranged around a central circular feature reached by an arrangement of paths. In the mid-C20, these areas were sub divided into a series of lawns separated by hedging with two island beds planted with conifers, one of which surrounds a modern pond inserted into the former central circular feature of the earlier formal garden. Also at this time, sections of balustrade were brought from Halnaby Hall and reconstructed at the south front of the house. A ha-ha divides the gardens from the surrounding pasture.

The wooded gardens were developed around the east and west sides of Middleton Lodge and the paths which linked the house to the walled garden and stables. Today, these contain a variety of trees and shrubs and retain a number of veteran trees from the C18. They were extended around the middle of the C19 when the house was tenanted by Edmund Blackhouse. In the early C20, the pleasure gardens were extended into woodland north of the house when an avenue of conifers was introduced leading to a clearing planted with a grove of birch trees. The earliest mapping also shows a path leading south from the house into what is later known as South Gill Wood; Lodge Gill Wood has a picturesque nature and the stream may have been manipulated to form cascades in the later C18.

PARKLAND The park, permanent pasture with a scattering of mature trees including foreign specimens, is believed to have been laid out when the house was built in 1780. It is in the English natural landscape style favoured in the later C18. The house overlooks parkland to the north-east and south-east bordered by a belt of trees, which served to frame views in the middle distance while more distant tree planting break longer views to the moors beyond. Views of the house could be gained across parkland from the lane to the south. Several of these original vistas are currently filtered by C20 planting near the house, but those to the east and south-east remain. Views of the park can also be enjoyed from the west drive.

KITCHEN GARDEN While the architect of the walled garden is unknown, both John Carr and John Foss are possible candidates. As well as being functional, the walled garden (listed Grade II) formed an integral part of the design of the pleasure grounds as, unusually, it was intended to be seen from the principal west carriage drive and could be glimpsed en route to the

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house. It is constructed of brick in stretcher bond with the front wall deliberately designed to be low to reveal a profusion of produce within. A pair of gothic-shaped windows and a blocked cart entrance pierce the rear wall. The interior is overgrown and little structure could be determined but some box hedging was identified and a ruined glasshouse survives against the north wall. Various single-storey lean-to structures including potting sheds and boiler house stand against its external north wall.

Immediately west of the walled garden are the remains of an orchard depicted on a plan of 1838 as a semi-circular enclosure with an opening in the north-east corner. The plan names 46 different fruit trees: apples, pears, plums, cherries and two nut trees. Today, although overgrown, productive fruit trees survive. A kennels, probably mid C19, stands between the walled garden and orchard; it is built of sandstone with ashlar dressings and has a central gabled entrance bay with short flanking ranges. Nearby there is a stone outdoor toilet.

REFERENCES Green, F, Appraisal of Designed Landscape at Middleton Lodge, North Yorkshire Draft (2006) Dixon Hunt, J and Willis, P, The Genius of the Place; The English Landscape Garden 1620-1820, (1988) Mowl, T, Gentlemen & Players: Gardeners of the English Landscape (2000) Pevsner, N, The Buildings of England: Yorkshire: the North Riding (1972), 255 Wardell Armstrong: Middleton Lodge Development Proposed Registered Park and Garden Final Report (December 2007) MAPS OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1849 OS 6" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1895 OS 6" to 1 mile: 3rd edition published 1915 Plan of the township of Middleton Tyas 1838

REASON FOR DESIGNATION This later C18 designed landscape is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * it is a good example of a small but complete later C18 park landscaped in the English natural style * sufficient original landscaping survives to reflect its original design * a number of first phase structures and planting survives with some later exotic species * it has strong Group Value with six listed buildings * it is contemporary with and provides the setting for an important Grade II* listed house designed by John Carr, one of the leading C18 architects in Yorkshire

Register entry amended: 2010

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.