

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

ANNESLEY HALL

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**ANNESLEY HALL**

Name: ANNESLEY HALL

County: Nottinghamshire

District: Ashfield (District Authority)

Parish: Annesley

label.localisation: Latitude: 53.060628  
Longitude: -1.2435031  
National Grid Reference: SK 50796 51754  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: II\*  
List Entry Number: 1001077  
Date first listed: 01-Jan-1986

## Details

A C13 park with remains of C13 motte and bailey castle. C17 terraces abut the Hall with late C19 garden, pleasure grounds, and walled garden.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Anesley is recorded in the Domesday Book as held by Richard, a Breton, from Ralph Fitz-Herbert. By the early C13, his descendant, Ralph de Annesley, one of the barons who forced Magna Carta on King John, owned the Hall. During his ownership Reginald Marc, brother of the Sheriff of Nottingham, built a motte and bailey castle from which to spy on Ralph de Annesley, in the area of the present (1999) park which was then part of Sherwood Forest. The right of free warren for ever on his demesne lands was given to Annesley by Edward I in 1280. An aisled hall was built by Sir Reginald Annesley or his son John in the mid to late C13. In 1327 a deer park of 60 acres (25ha) was created north-west of the present Hall. The Hall and its estate passed by marriage into the Chaworth family in c 1442. By 1610 Annesley Hall had been rebuilt by George, first Viscount Chaworth, who probably laid out the terraces and orchard shown on Thoroton's engraving of 1677 (Throsby 1790). When Patricius, the third Viscount inherited in 1644 further additions were made and the Hall became the main seat of the Chaworths in 1647. In 1805, Mary Ann Chaworth of Annesley, her father's heir, married John (Jack) Musters (d 1849) of Colwick Hall. He assumed the name of Chaworth-Musters but dropped it before his death. Alterations, including new south gables, were made in the 1830s prior to his moving back to the Hall. John Chaworth-Musters, Jack Musters' grandson, inherited Annesley while still a minor and further alterations, including removing the rest of the old village and improving the grounds, were carried out by his uncle and guardian, Philip Hamond. John came of age and married in 1859 and in the late 1860s a new wing was built. Gardens, pleasure grounds, and a large kitchen garden were also laid out and an icehouse was constructed. John's great great-grandson Major Robert P Chaworth-Musters sold Annesley Hall in 1973 to the Football Association who, in turn, sold it to property developers in whose hands it remains (1999). The area to the north of the A608 including the Old Park is now (1999) part of an industrial estate.

### DESCRIPTION

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**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Annesley Hall is situated between Mansfield and Nottingham, 1.25km south of the village of Annesley Woodhouse and 3.75km south of Kirkby-in-Ashfield. It is 4km south-east of Newstead Abbey (qv). The c 260ha site lies east of junction 27 of the M1, abutting the A611 feeder road. The northern boundary is formed by the northern edge of Osierbed wood, the A608, and Annesley Forest; the eastern boundary follows the line of a path in the Forest and midway abuts the A611. The south-east boundary also follows a woodland path before turning north-west through Park Forest. The western boundary then follows the line of Kennel Lane and part of the A608, before taking the line of a track north to Osierbed wood. The Hall is set on a hill with views south over the parkland. Annesley Park is in the centre of the site with Annesley Forest to the north-east and Park Forest to the south-west.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The site is entered off the A608, which cuts across the north-west corner of the registered area, by a lodge (listed grade II) situated 200 north-east of Annesley Hall. Built in the 1850s with late C19 and late C20 additions, the lodge is of coursed and squared rubble and brick with a tiled roof. From here the drive, which is part of the Dog and Bear Lane, leads south-east for 120m and then turns south-west for 50m continuing under the stable arch to the east front of the Hall. The courtyard to the north of the service quarters of the Hall is entered from wooden gates immediately off the A608.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Annesley Hall (listed grade II) sits towards the northern end of the site on a platform cut into the hillside and is built of coursed and squared rubble, stone, and brick with slate roofs. The centre is the two-storey Great Hall with three-storey double gables on the south end and a roofless wing to the north. The Hall was built as a C13 aisled hall and rebuilt c 1610. The Hall and gardens are illustrated in Thoroton's History first published in 1677 (Throsby 1790). In 1691, the extension which abuts the terrace and a smaller extension (on which a sundial dated 1691 is mounted) was built. Venetian windows were inserted on the east front in the C18. The north wing was added in the 1860s, possibly by Anthony Salvin (1799-1881) (Pearson 1995).

All Saints' church (C12 and later, listed grade I, scheduled ancient monument) is located to the north of Annesley Hall and is surrounded by a walled churchyard. In 1875 it was replaced as the parish church by the church in Annesley Woodhouse and in the late C20 it became unsafe and was partially demolished. The main entrance to the churchyard is off the A608. Steps immediately north-east of the Hall lead to a now (1999) disused entrance to the churchyard, 30m north-east from the Hall. There are views from the churchyard to the south over the parkland.

The gatehouse range (listed grade II) stands 70m north-east of the Hall and was built in the 1850s with two storeys and twelve bays, replacing an earlier courtyard. The range includes stables, dairy, and coach houses and is built of coursed and squared rubble. The brew and bake house stands adjacent. In the years since the property was sold in 1973 further alterations have been made to the buildings to adapt them for institutional or other use.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens and pleasure grounds at Annesley Hall comprise terraces extending south-west of the Hall, further gardens north-west of the terraces, and pleasure grounds further to the south-west. The pleasure grounds including the terraces (c 5.6ha in 1876, JHCG) now cover 4.25ha. The terraces (C17, listed grade II) lie immediately south-west of the Hall and are now (1999) very much overgrown. The upper terrace is of brick with ashlar dressings, with brick walls to the north, to the south stone balustrades, and in the centre, balustraded steps descending west and east. A path at the base of the steps to the lower terrace is grassed. Beneath the upper terrace is a barrel-vaulted chamber. It is said that, in the early C19, the lower terrace was used by Lord Byron for pistol shooting (Pearson 1995); in 1876 it was used as a bowling green (JHCG). At either end of this terrace are stone steps which lead to a grassed area and a path which connects the east front of the Hall with the pleasure grounds. From the terraces there are views south over the parkland. An orchard is shown south of the Hall on William Senior's map of 1629. A late C17 illustration by Thoroton (Throsby 1790) shows the upper terrace as balustraded with the central steps and a parterre on the lower terrace. From this parterre, further central steps descended to a rectangular area with low wall through which a path led to an enclosed orchard. All were surrounded by a brick wall. The upper terrace walls are now (1999) festooned with ivy, and to the north of them is a grassed area with a summerhouse or pavilion made of split poles, topped by a segmented roof of shingles and surmounted by a finial. The entrance to this area is through ornamental gates. In the late 1860s, the eastern part was used as a garden for the children who inhabited the nursery in the north wing of the Hall; to the west lay a cut flower garden (Pearson 1995). By 1876 the pavilion was described as having 'Once served as a shelter

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and refreshment room for the players on the nearby bowling green' (JHCG). Beyond through a stone arch is a small overgrown (1999) garden, set above the road, used first by the children in the 1860s and then by John Nevile Musters as a quiet garden. Steps from the terraces lead south-west to the pleasure grounds laid out in the C19. The path continues through rhododendrons and specimen trees past a pond to an enclosure surrounded by a yew hedge containing an open summerhouse with a shingle roof heavily overgrown (1999) with ivy. The enclosure is entered through a half-gate constructed of split wooden palings. In 1876 (ibid) this area was a spring garden with a 4m wide border all around with rockwork at the back for alpine plants. The yew hedge was 1.2m high with pyramid-shaped yews at twenty foot (c 6m) intervals. This spring flower garden was turned into a rose garden with a summerhouse in the late C19. Other paths lead through the overgrown (1999) pleasure grounds still with their unusual trees and shrubs which were described thus in 1876: 'Annesley Hall grounds has a choice selection of flowers, shrubs and plants set amongst and around an arboretum with a small lake fed by a cascade' (ibid).

**PARK** Within the boundaries of the registered site the park is made up of two unequal halves, one to west of the A608 known as Old Park and that to the south of the Hall and pleasure grounds, known as Annesley Park. The smaller parkland is now (1999) a triangular piece of land with Osierbed wood to the north and Old Park Hill and Icehouse Wood to the south. This was the site of the 25ha medieval deer park created from the forest in 1327. On the present (1999) southern boundary of Icehouse Wood, north-west of the Hall, is the icehouse, which was moved and completely rebuilt in the late 1980s. Its previous location is now (1999) the middle of the widened A608.

Annesley Park, south of the Hall, is very open to the west, allowing a view back to Annesley Hall from the centre of the park. Immediately south of the Hall is a rectangular pool in an area now (1999) divided into grazed fields. To the south-west lies the northern part of Park Forest. To the east the two carriageways of the A611 cut through the park separated by part of Annesley Park, entering the park 1.6km south-east of the Hall and leaving it c 650m north-east of the Hall. The west carriageway, as Annesley Road, curves north-west for 950m then turns north for 800m at the junction with Dog and Bear Lane. The west carriageway forms the south-west boundary of Annesley Forest and is fenced on the east side. This was a deer fence c 1920 which separated the red deer from the fallow deer (Pearson 1995). The east carriageway runs north-west through the Forest, cutting across Byron's Walk which leads south to Diadem Hill, an eminence which lies 100m south-east of the Hall. George Gordon, the sixth Lord Byron who lived at Newstead Abbey (qv), the neighbouring estate, fell in love with Mary Chaworth of Annesley in the summer of 1803. They rode together in the parkland along the avenue which later became Byron's Walk. In 1816, Byron wrote a poem, *The Dream*, about his unrequited love.

South of the west carriageway of the A611 and c 1.35km south-east of Annesley Hall, formerly stood Yew Tree Stand (OS 1915). This feature is shown on Thoroton's engraving of 1677 (Throsby 1790) as one of the viewpoints of the twelve rides radiating out from a rondpoint in the woodland. This woodland is shown on the engraving as enclosed with ornamental gates at the boundary with Newstead Abbey to the east and wooden gates blocking the ends of some of the other rides.

The woodland within the park was deciduous until the 1920s and 1930s when it was replaced with conifers (Pearson 1995). To the east of the northbound carriageway and 700m south-east of Annesley Hall are the remains of the motte and bailey castle (scheduled ancient monument). In 1661 Patricius, Lord Chaworth was given the right to enclose 1200 acres (500ha) in the manor of Annesley. Archaeological evidence has revealed the site of some of the houses of the old village of Annesley, south-west of the Hall (ibid). After the Annesley Enclosure Act of 1808 when many local roads were reorganised, Jack Musters built farmsteads in the fields for his tenants. The demolition of the remaining houses was completed by the mid 1850s.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The walled kitchen garden lies west of the pleasure grounds, immediately adjacent to and to the south of the A608, and east of Home Farm (outside the area here registered). Gates from the pleasure grounds, set into low brick walls topped with metal railings, lead into the kitchen garden which is now (1999) disused. The garden was formed on the site of part of the old village which was finally removed between 1835 and 1859 (ibid).

#### REFERENCES

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Illustrations Watercolours of Annesley Hall, C19 (DDCM 1/26(31), (Nottinghamshire Archives) Samuel Carter, The Deer Park and Annesley Hall, C19 (DDCM 1/32), (Nottinghamshire Archives)

Description written: September 1999 Amended: February 2000 Register Inspector: CEB Edited: January 2002

## 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.