

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

BENINGBROUGH HALL

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Name: BENINGBROUGH HALL

County: North Yorkshire

District: Hambleton (District Authority)

Parish: Beningbrough

County: North Yorkshire

District: Hambleton (District Authority)

Parish: Newton-on-Ouse

label.localisation: Latitude: 54.023072
Longitude: -1.2115445
National Grid Reference: SE 51753 58851
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1001057
Date first listed: 10-May-1984

Details

This list entry was subject to a Minor Amendment on 07/11/2011
(Formerly listed as BENINGBOROUGH HALL)

Gardens and park with C18 or earlier origins, alterations of c 1827 by William Sawrey Gilpin and additions of the late C19.
HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Beningbrough was owned by the Hospital of St Leonard in York during the C12 and C13. Following the Dissolution it was sold to John Banister who passed it to his nephew, Ralph Bouchier, in 1556. It remained in the Bouchier family until 1761 when it passed by marriage to the Earle family, and thence to the Dawnays, by marriage, in 1827. The estate was sold to Lord and Lady Chesterfield in 1917, and following the death of Lady Chesterfield in 1957 it was passed to the National Trust, in whose ownership it remains (1998).

DESCRIPTION LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Beningbrough lies immediately south and east of Newton upon Ouse, and immediately north and east of Nun Monkton in a setting which is otherwise rural and agricultural. The c 120ha site is on level land sited within a bend of the River Ouse, which forms the west and south boundary. New Road forms the north and east boundary, and a track leading south-east from New Road to the river bank at Warp Gate the south-east boundary.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES There are two entrances. At the south end of Newton upon Ouse, gates and a lodge (possibly by James Wyatt, late C18, listed grade II) at the south end of Cherry Tree Avenue lead to a drive which runs south as an avenue and then branches to the east, before turning to run south as an avenue to the Hall. The other entrance is from New Road where there is a lodge from which the drive runs westwards to join with the first drive at the point at which it

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turns southwards to the Hall. The approach from the east was subject of proposals made in c 1827 by William Sawrey Gilpin (1762-1843) which were probably partially executed and designed to improve views of the Hall from the park.

The drives were realigned and North Avenue replanted with broadleaved lime in the 1890s.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Beningbrough Hall (listed grade I), which is one of the finest Baroque houses in the region, was built for John Bouchier and was completed in 1716. William Thornton, an architect-carpenter from York, supervised the construction of the building but it is not known to what extent he influenced the design. It has been suggested (guidebook) that Bouchier himself, who had visited Italy as part of a two-year grand tour, could have had a hand in the design. A conservatory of c 1900 by Richardsons of Darlington is attached to the south-west corner of the building.

An earlier house, probably built by Ralph Bouchier in the C16, lay c 100m south-east of the present Hall, and C16 panelling in some of the rooms of the house probably came from this building.

Some 150m north-east of the Hall there is a complex of stables and ancillary buildings (C18 and C19, listed grade II) used as offices (1998) and a C20 cafe immediately north of the kitchen garden. Beyond this, c 300m north-west, there are various farm buildings.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS On the north side of the Hall the main approach leads to a walled forecourt with central gates (c 1900, listed grade II) flanked by pavilions called the Clock Tower (east side) and the Bell Tower (both towers listed grade I with the Hall). A painting of 1751 (guidebook) shows the forecourt with service blocks to the south of each of the pavilions, which, if they were ever built, were demolished at an unknown date, possibly to open up views of the Hall from the northern approaches. The forecourt is grassed and there is a turning circle; the walls date from improvements made by Lewis Payn Dawnay in the 1890s. On each side paths lead off through arches beneath the pavilions. To the west there is a courtyard (walls listed grade II) with a brew house (listed grade II) and a laundry (listed grade II). A doorway in the south wall leads into the gardens. The path from the east pavilion leads east to the kitchen garden and stables.

The gardens to the south and west of the Hall are enclosed by a ha-ha (listed grade II) which curves around a patch of woodland immediately north-west of the Hall, shown on an estate map of 1841, and continues around the south front and returns on the east side of the American Garden.

The south front is flanked by small formal gardens enclosed by low walls and clipped hedges which were laid out within the existing enclosures c 1977. To the south of the Hall there are lawns, terraced down in one stage, which slope gently to the south. The lawn was extended southwards and the ha-ha partially rebuilt in the years following 1891, when Lewis Payn Dawnay inherited and instituted changes to the grounds. A sketch by Samuel Buck of c 1720 shows a terrace and formal parterres in this position and a canal running east/west at the bottom of the garden, the presence of which has been confirmed by aerial photographs. It is not known when the gardens were removed and it seems unlikely they survived into the early C19 when William Sawrey Gilpin drew up a scheme (unexecuted) for building a terrace wall along the south front.

The eastern part of the garden, immediately east of the kitchen garden, is called the American Garden, and is marked American Ground on the 1st edition OS map surveyed 1848-52, though it is not shown on the 1841 estate map. It is informally planted with trees and shrubs including magnolias, rhododendrons and azaleas.

PARK Parkland consists largely of open pasture with scattered trees and clumps. Some 250m south-west of the Hall there is a partially infilled oval pond called the Skating Pond created in the late C19, and a similar pond (lining listed grade II) lies c 150m to the north-west. Belts of trees shelter the west and south edges of the park, and a bank alongside the river forms a flood defence. A belt of trees called Larch Walk follows the former park boundary c 500m north-east of the Hall, as shown on the 1852 OS map, which shows that there was a walk, marked Park Walk, through the perimeter tree belts of the park north of the Hall. Some 300m west of the Hall near the edge of the Ouse there is a late C19 castellated water tower and pump house (listed grade II).

A county map of 1771 shows a rectangular detached deer park c 1km north-east of the Hall in an area of agricultural land outside the registered area. Avenues running south, south-east and west from the Hall are shown, and C19 accounts mention ancient oaks and elms which were thought to be the 'remains of avenues' (quoted in guidebook). An account of 1768 mentions

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an 'alleé of oaks ... [and] irregular clumps of trees' (ibid). Much of the planting probably disappeared in 1778 when Giles Earle sold a large quantity of timber from the estate.

William Sawrey Gilpin made a number of proposals for the park in c 1827 which included planting to conceal farm buildings north-east of the Hall, extending the park to the north and planting to the south. It seems likely that some of the proposals were carried out, and the cedars, poplars and thorns in the south part of the park could be the remains of his planting scheme.

KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden lies c 100m east of the Hall. It is a rectangular brick-walled enclosure which is grassed. An entrance in the centre of the north wall leads to a walkway through a tunnel of espalier pears trained over cast-iron arches, probably of mid-late C19 date.

REFERENCES Samuel Buck's Yorkshire Sketchbook (1720), Wakefield Historical Society facsimile reprint (1979), p 234 N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire The North Riding* (1966), pp 78-80 J Harris, *The Artist and the Country House* (1979), p 317 Beningbrough Hall, guidebook, (National Trust 1992) S Piebenga, William Sawrey Gilpin, (English Heritage Designer theme study 1994)

Maps T Jefferys, County Map, 1771 Estate map, 1841 (reproduction at Beningbrough Hall)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1848-52 2nd edition published 1910 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1909

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.