

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

ARUNDEL CASTLE

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Name: ARUNDEL CASTLE

County: West Sussex

District: Arun (District Authority)

Parish: Arundel

County: West Sussex

District: Arun (District Authority)

Parish: Houghton

County: West Sussex

District: Arun (District Authority)

Parish: South Stoke

National park: SOUTH DOWNS

label.localisation: Latitude: 50.871914
Longitude: -0.56028926
National Grid Reference: TQ 01399 09033
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II*
List Entry Number: 1000170
Date first listed: 01-Jun-1984

Details

Early and mid C19 partly walled pleasure grounds developed from former medieval earthworks and with surviving C16 and C17 features, laid out within and around a castle of C11 origin and with, on its north side, an extensive late C18 to early C19 walled park.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

On being created Earl of Arundel in 1067, Roger de Montgomery was given extensive lands in Sussex, including the site now occupied by the Castle, the motte and two baileys of which probably date from his ownership. After a short period in the hands of the crown, the Castle, lands and title of Earl of Arundel were given to the d'Aubigny family. On Hugh d'Aubigny's death the estates were divided and the Castle and Honor of Arundel were inherited by John Fitzalan. With a few short interruptions, Arundel was held by the Fitzalans until 1556 when the last descendent, Mary Fitzalan, married Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, in whose family it remains today (1998). A charitable trust was established, through an Act of Parliament in the

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1960s, to preserve the Castle, its surrounding gardens and the Little Park for public benefit. The Great or New Park, to the north, remains in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Arundel Castle is situated on the northern edge of the town of Arundel, on the east side of the A284. The c 478ha registered site, comprising c 24ha of ornamental gardens and grounds and c 454ha of parkland and woodland, occupies a high, north-to-south-running crest of the South Downs which is cut north to south through the centre by a deep valley and a series of south-east-facing dry combs. On its eastern side, the crest drops in a steep escarpment to the level plain of the River Arun valley. Except for a stretch in the south-east corner (southward from Swanbourne Lake) the park is enclosed by a flint wall erected in the 1790s (Banks Assocs 1989). The west boundary wall abuts the A284 road (separated from it by a varying width fringe of trees) beyond which, and also to the north, lies further wooded downland. To the east, the wall abuts the river at the northern end and open farmland further south, the park enjoying extensive views over the valley landscape of hedge-lined meadows and ditches to the Downs east of the gap. At its southern end, the site abuts Mill Road to the east (built in 1894 to replace Mill Lane which ran c 100m further west, close under the Castle escarpment) and the town buildings of Arundel.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main entrance to the Castle is at the extreme south-east corner off Mill Road, a drive entering through the carriage arch of Lower Lodge (built c 1896 to a design by Buckler (VCH 1997), listed grade II) and following a serpentine course around the south and west fronts of the Castle to reach the main entrance at the barbican. The approach to the Castle before the late C18 appears to have been from the north, through the Little Park (gates shown on OS 1st edition of 1875-6 and field evidence) but by 1785, a gate from the town on the west side had been established (VCH 1997). The present entrance and its drive, laid out in c 1894-6, replaced one from the High Street at the present Main or Town Gate which was established in that location in the early C19. Following the realignment, completed by 1841, of the northern end of the High Street to the line of the present London Road and the enclosure of its former course into the Castle grounds, William Burn (1789-1870) designed and built the Town Gate (with a pointed arch and rock-faced rustication), its flanking High Street Lodge to the north and high wall with crenellated parapets to the south (ensemble completed 1850-1, listed grade II). The former drive which ran eastwards from this gate to the Castle (and which was given embattled parapets in 1851, VCH 1997) was landscaped into the grounds with the construction of the new drive in 1894.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Arundel Castle stands at the south end of the site overlooking the Arun valley, on a natural chalk escarpment which falls sharply to the east. Its 30m high motte and two baileys (north-west and south-east of the motte) were built by Roger de Montgomery in the C11 while the flint-built barbican, the gatehouse, curtain wall around the north bailey and the Bevis tower, survive from the C12 and C13. The motte in the centre is dominated by the c 9m high, Caen stone Keep, built from 1070 to 1090, while the domestic buildings, in ashlar, are arranged around a quadrangle on the site of the south or lower bailey. As part of the great remodelling carried out from 1877 to 1904 by Charles Alban Buckler (1824-1904) for the fifteenth Duke, those forming the west range, with their twin cylindrical towers, were rebuilt from foundation upwards, and the south and east ranges rebuilt within refaced outer facades. Earlier domestic buildings on the west and south sides were destroyed in the Civil War siege of 1644. By the C18 the Castle was being used as a shooting lodge until it was restored as the family's principal seat by the tenth Duke in 1777 and a programme of reconstruction was begun by his son from 1786. Of this rebuilding, completed in 1815, only the gothic library (finished in c 1800) survives. Buckler's remodelling included the clearance of ivy from, and restoration of, the walls of the Keep, a full restoration following in 1905-6. The Castle was again extensively restored in 1975-8.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens and pleasure grounds lie within the Castle walls and in the Castle precincts which extend to the south and west and northwards to the boundary with the New Park. Inside the Castle, the domestic ranges at the southern end enclose the Quadrangle or Inner Court, which is laid to lawn, its present asymmetrical form altered from its former complete oval in the late C19. The steep, grassed slopes of the motte rise from the north end of the Quadrangle, the slopes being cleared of their tree cover by the end of the C19. Beyond the motte a path climbs northwards into the Upper Court which is enclosed by high walls and laid to a central, square lawn edged with shrubbery and with a yew hedge (planted

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mid 1990s) along the south side. Probably the site of the medieval castle garden, a garden is known to have existed here in 1635 which, between 1702 and 1708, was laid out as a formal garden with box plants, its northern slope cut into the present, surviving series of grassed terraces (Banks Assocs 1989). Used later as a kitchen garden, it was referred to as laid out in ornamental parterres in 1835 although a formal garden set out for the visit by Queen Victoria in 1845 may have been by W A Nesfield (1793-1881; *The Connoisseur* 1978). The complex parterres shown in photographs of the early 1880s were simplified in c 1884 and had gone by 1914. The proposals for flower garden planting by Gertrude Jekyll in 1902 were not carried out.

Below the Castle, the steep slopes of its defensive earthworks are laid to open grass on the south and south-west sides while the west- and north-facing slopes and the northern ditch have a dense tree cover of mixed species (including evergreens) which survives from a similar cover on all the defences in the C19 before clearance and which was much damaged in the storm of 1987. Westwards, the Castle precincts are open in character and laid out to an informal series of both level and sloping lawns threaded by the main and other linking drives and dotted with a light cover of trees of mixed ages and species. The northern part, from the Town Gate northwards to St Mary's Gate (of dressed flint, with a crenellated parapet, listed grade II), is laid out on its north side with two east to west levels of grassed terraces dotted with a few trees and with, along the north side, a narrow, deep, tree- and shrub-planted ditch (the former medieval town ditch). The terraces were created in the early 1800s on the site of upcast from the ditch and by 1820(30, these and the land occupied by the former route of the High Street through St Mary's Gate (closed by Act of Parliament in 1803) which was incorporated into the grounds by 1807, had been planted with trees as a pleasure ground (Tierney 1834). The main drive runs along the south side of the terraces, against the north wall of the walled, former kitchen garden, laid out in 1803 and since 1963 containing a public car park at the east end and, in the central section, a restored but relocated mid C19 greenhouse (listed grade II). The southern part of the pleasure grounds was laid out in the mid C19 (shown on a plan of 1855), following the demolition of houses on land south of the Town Gate which was enclosed in the 1850s. On the lawn 60m north-west of the Town Gate, two magnolia trees mark the position of a fountain and conservatory (built 1845 and 1851), gone by 1896 (VCH 1997).

On a mound some 50m south of the Castle is a square, grassed bowling green, shown on a plan of the grounds in 1531 (Banks Assocs 1989). It was cleared of trees, restored and enclosed with yew hedges in the mid 1990s. South-east of the Castle, the Lower Lawns, formerly laid out with a tennis court, are enclosed along their eastern edge by a fringe of evergreen shrubbery (planted 1990s). The former Mill Road now forms a track, marked by a line of yews, along the east side of the Lawns while to their north, three rectangular ponds surrounded by trees and undergrowth form the Water Garden. Shown as fishponds on a survey of 1635, by the C18 a pond garden was laid out around them which survived as a fruit and vegetable garden in 1874 (now, 1998, gone). Above the ponds, the steep, wooded escarpment of the Castle Hanger, shown as tree-covered throughout the C18 but damaged in the storm of 1987, contained a walk up its slope, first noted in 1874 and known as the zig-zag walk by 1885 (now gone). Some 400m north along Mill Road, on the west side, is the flint-built Home Farm with an octagonal dairy (listed, with adjacent farm buildings, pump house and walls to pools, grade II), which was built in 1845-6 for the visit of Queen Victoria. North-west of the pleasure grounds is the Castle Park, its large, central, open space terraced to form a cricket pitch which is enclosed to the north (from the New Park) and north-west by an extensive, tree-covered earthwork, originally medieval defences but probably enlarged prior to the Civil War siege in 1644. Known as the Castle Park following its enclosure into the pleasure grounds c 1815, the Little Park appears always to have been open. It was in use as a kitchen garden in 1875 and was planted around the perimeter with exotic evergreens in the late C19, the cricket pitch being laid out by 1896 (OS 2nd edition). Along the west side, the former route of the London road, now a tarmac drive, has a domed icehouse built into the earthwork terrace on its east side.

PARK The New or Great Park extends 3.2km northwards from the Castle grounds and is principally laid to open pasture interspersed with woodland on steep slopes such as Mill Hanger (on the west slope above Swanbourne Lake) and Offham Hanger (along the eastern site boundary) and blocks and belts of plantations on the hilltops and along the crests, the latter almost completely replanted (largely with beech) following destruction in the storm of 1987. Although two medieval deer parks existed in Arundel parish, of which the Home Park became the Little or Castle Park, the present New Park was created in the late C18, from former arable and warren land, as a setting for the Castle as rebuilt by the eleventh Duke. Considerable land

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adjacent to the Little Park was already imparked by 1789; the area was greatly increased, to something near its present size, in 1793 and was enclosed by a wall by the 1810s, the warren being destroyed and an extensive programme of planting, notably of beech, begun (VCH 1997). The present pattern of planting is shown established on the 1st edition OS.

Northwards from the Castle Park, broad ribbons of open grass, flanked on their west side by linear plantations, are laid out with mid C20 training gallops with, some 800m north-west from the Castle, a triangular folly of flint and stone chequerwork with octagonal corner turrets named the Hiorne Tower (after its architect, Francis Hiorne and built in 1796, listed grade II*). Nearby is a stone Greek altar (listed grade II). Eastwards from the Tower, steep, wooded slopes descend to a north-to-south-running valley containing Swanbourne Lake, enlarged from a former mill pond in 1797 (Banks Assocs 1989) and with Swanbourne Lodge (listed grade II) built in 1852 by William Burn standing at its eastern end. A further lodge by Burn stands at the Offham Gate, c 1km to the north-east (listed grade II). Northwards from the Lake, on the slopes rising to the Dry Lodge Plantation, are a number of tree clumps, of C19 origin but with late C20 additions. North-west of Hiorne's Tower, some 80m back from the main A284, stands the flint-built Green Doors Lodge (listed grade II), built on the line of the new London (A284) road in 1793 but brought into the park by a second realignment in 1803. At the north-west corner is a further entrance to the park, at Whiteways Lodge (listed grade II), built in 1796 possibly to a design by the eleventh Duke (Banks Assocs 1989).

REFERENCES

M A Tierney, *The History and Antiquities of the Castle and Town of Arundel* (1834) *Country Life*, 36 (5 December 1914), pp 746-54; (12 December 1914), pp 782-90; (19 December 1914), pp 814-22; no 21 (23 May 1991), pp 98-100; no 22 (30 May 1991), pp 130-4 I Nairn and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Sussex* (1965), pp 91-5 B Jones, *Follies and Grottoes* (1974), p 400 *The Connoisseur* 197, no 793 (March 1978), pp 172-85 *Arundel Castle, Restoration Master Plan for the Gardens and Grounds*, (E Banks Associates 1989) *Arundel Castle, guidebook*, (Arundel Castle, nd) *Victoria History of the County of Sussex VI pt I*, (1997), pp 38-55

Maps *Arundel Castle and Lands adjoining, 1778* (Arundel Castle MS RL5) *A Plan of Arundel Castle with the Grounds, Buildings and Estate immediately adjoining, 1855* (Arundel Castle Archive) W Yeakell and W Gardner, *An Actual Topographical Survey ... of the County of Sussex, 1" to 1 mile*, published 1778 W Gardner and T Gream, *A Topographical Map of the County of Sussex ..., 1" to 1 mile*, surveyed 1795

OS Old Series, sheet 9, published 1813 OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1875-6, published 1879 2nd edition published 1898 3rd edition published 1914

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1874-5 3rd edition surveyed 1912

Archival items Album of photographs, c 1880 (Arundel Castle MS MD799)

Description written: February 1998 Register Inspector: VCH Edited: June 2000

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.