

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

THORP PERROW

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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**THORP PERROW**

Name: THORP PERROW

County: North Yorkshire

District: Hambleton (District Authority)

Parish: Firby

County: North Yorkshire

District: Hambleton (District Authority)

Parish: Snape with Thorp

label.localisation: Latitude: 54.265723  
Longitude: -1.6032552  
National Grid Reference: SE2593985635  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1001075  
Date first listed: 10-May-1984

## Details

Pleasure grounds and lakes laid out c 1800 probably by Adam Mickle the second, a park with C17 origins enlarged in the first half of the C19, and an arboretum which was created by Colonel Sir Leonard Ropner (1895-1977) during the period 1931-77.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Snape Castle estate belonged to the Milbank family from the late C17. A crudely drawn estate map was prepared for Mark Milbank in 1802, possibly to show the rebuilt house and the garden layout. Snape was owned by Lord Latimer of Snape in the C15 and it was the home of Catherine Parr whilst she was married to the third Lord Latimer. The estate passed to the Cecil family through marriage. The Milbanks acquired Snape Castle and lands adjacent to it in the first half of the C19, when the area was incorporated into the park. The estate was bought by the Ropner family in 1925 and remains in private ownership (1998).

**DESCRIPTION LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Thorp Perrow lies c 3km south of Bedale and immediately north of Snape in a rural and agricultural setting. The c 230ha site is on rolling land which rises slightly to the north. The Bedale road forms most of the western boundary, with a finger of parkland stretching to the west of it as far as the B6268. The southern boundary is formed by The Avenue in Snape, which is a lime avenue and the main approach to the village from the Bedale road, and by fences separating the park from gardens. Lowfield Lane forms the south-east boundary and fences divide the remainder of the eastern side of the site from agricultural land. The northern boundary is fenced and on the north-east tip of the site the boundary is formed by the edges of a woodland belt on each side of the north drive.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The principal entrance is from the Bedale road where there is a lodge called West Lodge. An avenue of horse chestnuts runs eastwards to the gated entrance to the gardens from which point the drive continues north-east through woodland, over a bridge between two lakes, and on to the south front of the Hall. This approach is shown on the

1802 map, and an avenue and the lodge are shown on the 1914 OS map but not on that of 1892. An entrance from the hamlet of Firby, at the north-east tip of the site, is gated, and there is a lodge probably of early to mid C19 date from which a drive leads south over two stone bridges, the first dated 1810 and the second dated 1818. An early C20 lodge lies beside the drive c 450m south of the Firby gates and the drive continues south-west and divides, with one branch running west to the stables and the other running south-west to the south front of the Hall. On the south side of the site there is an entrance from The Avenue on the west side of Snape with a lodge called Snape Lodge, shown on the 1856 map and probably of early to mid C19 date, from which an avenue, composed largely of lime and oak, runs north and joins with the west drive.

A secondary entrance from the Bedale road c 500m north of West Lodge leads to a track which runs north-east before curving around to run south to the stables; this route is shown on the 1802 map marked Back Road. An entrance from the west side of the site, where a set of stone gate piers survives on the B6268, leads to the line of a drive which ran south-east to emerge on the Bedale road opposite West Lodge. The route is shown on the 1802 map and on the 1956 OS map, but it is no longer clearly discernible.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Thorp Perrow Hall (listed grade II\*) is an early C18 house which was remodelled by John Foss, c 1800. Walter Brierley made further alterations in the early C20. The south front of the Hall is pedimented and it has a single-storey Ionic entrance portico. It is in use as a private residence (1998). A stable block ranged around a courtyard lies immediately north-east of the Hall.

Snape Castle (listed grade I) lies c 1.1km south-west of the Hall. The building dates from c 1430 and it was remodelled in the C16 by Sir Thomas Cecil and altered in the C18. Walled paddocks attached to the north and west sides of the Castle could have originated as gardens. It is in use as two private residences (1998). Stables (early C17, listed grade II) which have been converted to stores lie c 30m east of the Castle and a dovecote (listed grade II) of similar date lies c 100m to the east.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The south side of the Hall overlooks lawns which are terraced down to the edge of an elongated lake which runs east/west along the bottom of the garden. A second lake running north/south, linked to the first by a weir running beneath the bridge carrying the west drive, encloses gardens on the west side of the Hall. A spur which runs west from the south end of the western lake has an island called Henry's Island, and the stream which feeds the lake from the spur has a number of small cascades within it. The lakes have stone edges surmounted by urns on the garden sides. They are shown on the 1802 map, including the spur with the island, and were probably laid out by Adam Mickle (1747 c 1815) c 1800. An area of woodland south of the west lake, through which the west drive runs, is part of Spring Wood, shown on the 1802 map and marked Old Wood.

On the west side of the Hall there is a path which is aligned with the centre of the bowed west elevation. The path is flanked by borders and aligned with a vista through the northern part of Spring Wood and the arboretum (see below) on the west side of the lake. An early C20 pavilion c 20m north-west of the Hall overlooks lawns with topiary which run to the edge of the lake. In the northern part of the garden there is a collection of exotic conifers called Milbank Pinetum which was planted between 1840 and 1870 by Lady Augusta Milbank. This area is marked Pleasure Grounds on the 1802 map. Paths through the pinetum lead westwards over a bridge crossing the northern tip of the lake into Spring Wood and the arboretum, and north-east to Angel's Walk which leads north-west to the northern part of the arboretum.

The arboretum stretches from a point c 400m north-west of the Hall to a point c 500 m to the south-west, covering an area of c 20ha. At the north end of the arboretum walks radiate from Jubilee Oak c 200m north-west of the Hall, planted to commemorate the Jubilee of King George V in 1935, with Angel Walk running south-east. The other walks running in an anticlockwise direction are: Birch Walk, to the east; White Walk; Rowan Avenue, to the north; Poplar Avenue, and running westwards, Broad Walk. This part of the arboretum occupies part of an area called Back Park shown as open grassland on the 1914 OS map. In the area to the south, immediately west of the western lake, Spring Wood is a block of woodland shown on the 1856 OS map, which also shows a vista in line with the path aligned with the west side of the Hall. The vista continues as Main Avenue through the arboretum and centres on the Monument, an open rotunda c 220m west of the Hall, which was erected in memory of Sir Leonard Ropner, the creator of the arboretum, who died in 1977.

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Paths lead from each side of Main Avenue through the arboretum which contains more than 2500 trees planted within a system of walks and glades. Sir Leonard Ropner, who was a Forestry Commissioner from 1936 to 1943, planted the arboretum during the period 1931-77 on an area of open parkland. It has been described as 'one of the finest arboreta in the north of England' (Lemmon 1978) which has an important collection of rare trees and incorporates national collections of ash, lime and walnuts.

The southern edge of the arboretum is defined by the stream which feeds the lakes and south of this there is a C20 cafe and visitors' centre beside the west drive.

**PARK** The park is sheltered on the north side by Syke's Plantation and Holbeck Plantation, which are shown on the 1802 map. The Stripe shelters the north-east boundary. The park is largely open grassland with scattered trees, with the area to the south on each side of the avenue from Snape being well covered with trees which are shown on the 1856 OS map on the lines of field boundaries. Snape Castle can be viewed from the west drive and southern parts of the park.

On the west side of the Bedale road there is an area of parkland called West Park which is sheltered on the south side by Banks Plantation. A drive leads through it from West Lodge to Park House c 800m west of the Hall. The latter building is a dower house of the C19 probably incorporating an earlier building. A building in approximately the same position is shown on the 1802 map while the 1856 map marks it 'Wet Ruin'. It is shown in approximately its present form on the 1892 OS map.

The 1802 map shows that the park occupied a limited area immediately around the Hall and gardens, extending c 500m south of the south lake and stretching west to the Bedale road. It ran c 600m east of the Hall extending from this point to the present northern boundary. The remaining area is shown divided into fields. The 1856 OS map shows the park covering its present area. The date of the two bridges on the northern approach from Firby and the character of the lodges in Firby and Snape suggests that the imparkment of the wider area took place in the early C19, possibly as a process which started not long after the completion of the lakes, gardens and Hall c 1800.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The walled kitchen garden lies c 150m north of the Hall. There is a range of dilapidated glasshouses along the north wall. The 1802 map shows the garden with a centrally positioned building against the north wall.

**REFERENCES** N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire The North Riding* (1966), p 163 K Lemmon, *The Gardens of Britain* 5, (1978), pp 125-30 *Country Life*, 169 (5 March 1981), pp 566-8 Thorp Perrow, guidebook, (c 1995)

Maps T Jenings, *Plan of Thorp Perrow an Estate belonging to Mark Milbank Esquire, 1802* (ZTZ M1), (North Yorkshire Record Office) [Jenings may have annotated it rather than surveyed it]

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1856 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1892 2nd edition published 1914

Information on Adam Mickle courtesy of private research by Simon Warwick

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.