

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

BAGGRAVE HALL

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Name:	BAGGRAVE HALL
County:	Leicestershire
District:	Charnwood (District Authority)
Parish:	South Croxton
County:	Leicestershire
District:	Harborough (District Authority)
Parish:	Hungarton
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.672943 Longitude: -0.97017830 National Grid Reference: SK 69731 08857 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000482 Date first listed: 05-Mar-1986

Details

Gardens and a landscape park of the mid C18 and early C19 associated with a country house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Before the Dissolution Baggrave was one of the possessions of Leicester Abbey, which largely, even if not wholly, depopulated the village and enclosed its lands in the later C15. Subsequently it was sold to Francis Cave (d 1584), whose grandson, Sir Alexander Cave, sold Baggrave before 1625 to Edward Villiers (d 1626), half brother of the Duke of Buckingham. Soon after it was acquired by Sir John Coke, for twenty years secretary to Charles I. The Cokes retained it until 1748 when it was sold to John Edwyn, whose family had tenanted the property or had an interest in it since the 1620s. It was he who in the years before his death in 1761 rebuilt the Hall, which then took on its modern appearance. He also did work on its grounds, building the 'Chapel' summerhouse and at least some part of the kitchen garden. He was succeeded by his daughter Ann, who in 1770 married the Rev Andrew Burnaby, a widely travelled cleric with scholarly and antiquarian inclinations. Both died in 1812. They were succeeded by their son Edwin Andrew (d 1825), and he by his son Edwyn Sherard (d 1865). Their successors remained owners of Baggrave until 1941 when it was sold. It remains (1998) in private hands.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Baggrave Hall stands in its park in rolling clayland 10km east of Leicester. The park slopes down from the south-west, from a lodge on Hungarton Road, to the north-east, to the Queniborough Brook, which forms the north-east boundary of the park. The Hall stands above the Brook, looking south-west across its grounds to the hollow way which marks the main street of the deserted village of Baggrave (scheduled ancient monument). The area here registered is c 70ha.

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ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main approach is from Hungarton to the south-west, via a drive which begins at South Lodge, a single-storey brick building probably of the 1870s, next to which are the contemporary wooden, railway-style, Forty Pound Gates. From this the drive is straight for 300m, and lined with mature horse chestnuts. It then swings north-west, before turning north-east to run downhill for 700m, entering the Hall's pleasure grounds at the west end of the serpentine Fish Pond. From here there is access to either the south, gravelled, forecourt, or to the service and stables buildings to the west of the Hall. Also entering the grounds here is the approach from the north-east. To either side of this on the north side of the Queniborough Brook (outside the registered area) are two C20 bungalows. In 1752 a gatehouse stood close to the site of the more easterly of these.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING A stone tower on the north (rear) side of the Hall (listed grade II*) may be of the later C16, and is apparently slightly later than the two-storey, six-bay house with a return to the south at the west end which it adjoins. The greater part of the building represents a campaign of rebuilding undertaken 1748-61, which was responsible for producing the greater part of the Hall as it stands today (1998). To the west is a seven-bay ashlar front, the central three pedimented and slightly projecting, the other main front being that to the south, which has five plain bays. The roof is hipped, and of Swithland slate. The service wing on the north-east corner of the Hall was added by Goddard in 1859-60.

On the east side of the Hall, adjoining its service buildings, is a brick stables quadrangle (listed grade II), also added by Goddard 1859-60.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS To the west of the Hall is a 30m square, yew-hedged, gravel forecourt. Behind the Hall, to the north, and running up to the west front of the stables, a quartered, box-edged parterre was created in the later 1990s. West of this a narrow cobbled alley, confined by beech hedges, runs north from the C16 tower. This too was created in the later 1990s. East of the Hall is a lawn with hard tennis court on its east side.

The main garden lies south of the Hall, c 120m square, and separated from the park beyond by a stone ha-ha along its south-west side. The greater part of it is a lawn. A path, lined with mature pine trees, runs down the north-west edge of the garden to the Chapel, a stone, single-storey, turret-like crenellated gothick summerhouse (listed grade II) of 1757 (internal datestone), which stands at the south-west corner of the south garden. The interior of the Chapel was decorated with figurative murals in the 1990s. Thirty metres east of the Chapel is a rockery garden around a circular pool, the latter apparently present by 1814. On the south-east side of the south garden is an area of mature ornamental woodland, probably early C19.

The estate plan of 1625 suggests an area of formal gardens to the south of the Hall, while to the east lay an orchard. John Edwyn may well have given the south grounds their basic modern form in the 1750s and built the Chapel summerhouse in 1757. In the years before 1831 'American' plants were planted at Baggrave (O'Hagan 1990).

PARK Baggrave Hall lies close to the north end, its lowest part, of a roughly rectangular park 1.3km long from north to south and for the most part 500m wide. Some planting was undertaken, and some fences removed, in the later C18. It was only in the early C19 (pre 1838) however that a park was created. The north-eastern quarter of the park, running upwards from the ha-ha along the south-west edge of the grounds, is dominated by the earthworks of Baggrave village, which was largely depopulated before 1500 by Leicester Abbey for a sheep pasture. Desertion was complete by 1625 when the field within which the earthworks lay was called Township Close. Banks, ditches and house platforms lie to either side of a deeply scoured, 500m long, main hollow way, aligned on the Hall. To either side of the village earthworks is ridge and furrow. This part of the park is permanent pasture, with only a few mature parkland trees. There are considerably more mature trees, most probably of the mid C19 and including some in clumps, in the north-western quarter of the park and extending as far south-west as the track which leads west out of the park to Waterloo Lodge. South of this track the park is either arable or rotation grass, and devoid of parkland trees.

To the north of the Hall, immediately beyond the drive along the north side of the new parterre garden, the ground, well planted with shrubs and specimen trees, falls to the edge of the 450m long serpentine Fish Pond. Although its north-west end broadens at the point the drives enter the ground, the pond is no wider, for the most part, than c 15m. Its north bank is heavily planted with mature woodland and shrubs. From the east side of the stables a track lined with mature lime trees leads south-east, south of and roughly parallel with the pond, perhaps to give access to a footbridge across it.

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The date of the serpentine Fish Pond is not known. Created from an existing mill pool, it was certainly present by 1831, and a later C18 date would seem probable.

KITCHEN GARDEN Brick-walled kitchen gardens were laid out off the east side of the south garden in the mid to late C18. Some of the walls survived in 1998, although only a small part of the garden area remained in cultivation. The main feature of the former garden is the Potting Shed, which stands in the north-west corner of the former garden area. This is a two-storey brick building, perhaps part of John Edwyn's work of 1748 x 1761. An ornamental facade was added in 1989-90.

REFERENCES J Nichols, *History and Antiquities of Leicester* 3, pt i, pp 288-90 (4 vols, in 8 parts, 1795-1811, reprinted 1971) *Country Life*, 111 (20 June 1952), pp 1908-11 M O'Hagan, *An Architectural and Landscape History of Baggrave Hall, Leicestershire* (unpub dissertation 1990)

Maps Map of Hungarton, 1752 (Ma/153/6), (Leicestershire Record Office)

OS 6" to 1 mile: Leicestershire sheet 26 SE, 1st edition 1891 Leicestershire sheet 26 SE, 2nd edition 1904 Leicestershire sheet 26 SE, 1950 edition Leicestershire sheet 32 NE, 1st edition 1891 Leicestershire sheet 32 NE, 2nd edition 1904 Leicestershire sheet 32 NE, 1959 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: Leicestershire sheet 32.3, 2nd edition 1904

Description written: June 1998 Register Inspector: PAS Edited: June 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.