

## EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Peveril Castle eleventh to fourteenth century tower keep castle

PARISH: CASTLETON

DISTRICT: HIGH PEAK

COUNTY: DERBYSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 13268

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): SK14948266  
SK14848254

### DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

Peveril Castle is a tower keep castle situated above the north bank of Cave Dale to the south of Castleton. The monument comprises two constraint areas, divided by a narrow ravine, the first incorporating the standing remains of the castle along with the terraced hillside leading to the north-east gate, and the second containing the site of the outer bailey and access to the main south-west gate.

The standing remains of the monument consist primarily of the square keep and a curtain wall enclosing a roughly triangular inner bailey measuring c.100m x 60m. The north wall, although much repaired and altered, still contains eleventh century sections, though the remainder of the curtain is twelfth century. The keep, which stands almost to its original height and is also twelfth century, was originally entered at the first floor. It was a primarily defensive feature and, as the castle had fallen into disuse by the fifteenth century, was not adapted to domestic use. It therefore remained a simple structure with only one floor above the entrance level and a basement floor below. Its main function was to guard the south-west gate into the inner bailey. This was reached from the outer bailey via a bridge which, during the Middle Ages, spanned the intervening gorge. A masonry abutment for the bridge can be seen in the ditch below the keep.

The outer bailey lies to the south-west where a bank and ditch forms the western boundary of a triangular enclosure, measuring c.80m x 60m, where cattle, horses and people would have been housed. The bank contains the remains of a defensive wall and a gap approximately midway along it shows where the 'Earl's road' entered the castle from the south-west at its main point of access.

The steep path up the hillside from the north, which entered the inner bailey via the north-east gate, was a consequence of the town's foundation in the late twelfth century and was largely for pedestrian use, being too steep for vehicles. The castle itself was founded in 1086 and remained in the hands of the Peveril family until 1155 when it was taken over by the Crown. It was granted to John of Gaunt by Edward III in the fourteenth century, thus becoming part of the Duchy of Lancaster, and remained in use until some time after 1400. The standing remains and the northern approach have been in State care since 1932 and the standing remains are a Grade I Listed Building. There are a number of features which are excluded from the scheduling. These are the sales office, the surface of the modern path leading to the inner bailey

and all English Heritage fixtures such as railings, safety grilles and notices.

The ground beneath all these features is included in the scheduling.

#### ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

A tower keep castle is a strongly fortified residence in which the keep is the principal defensive feature. The keep may be free-standing or surrounded by a defensive enclosure; they are normally square in shape, although other shapes are known. Internally they have several floors providing accommodation of various types. If the keep has an attached enclosure this will normally be defined by a defensive wall, frequently with an external ditch. Access into the enclosure was provided by a bridge across the ditch, allowing entry via a gatehouse. Additional buildings, including stabling for animals and workshops, may be found within the enclosure. Tower keep castles were built throughout the medieval period, from immediately after the Norman Conquest to the mid-15th century, with a peak in the middle of the 12th century. A few were constructed on the sites of earlier earthwork castle types but most were new creations. They provided strongly fortified residences for the king or leading families and occur in both urban or rural situations. Tower keep castles are widely dispersed throughout England with a major concentration on the Welsh border. They are rare nationally with only 104 recorded examples. Considerable diversity of form is exhibited with no two examples being exactly alike. With other castle types, they are major medieval monument types which, belonging to the highest levels of society, frequently acted as major administrative centres and formed the foci for developing settlement patterns. Castles generally provide an emotive and evocative link to the past and can provide a valuable educational resource, both with respect to medieval warfare and defence, and to wider aspects of medieval society. All examples retaining significant remains of medieval date are considered to be nationally important.

Peveril Castle is an important and well-documented example of a tower keep castle and is one of a very small number nationally to be built of stone immediately after the Conquest. As a result, substantial sections of eleventh century masonry survive. In addition, considerable archaeological deposits survive both in the inner bailey and along the approach from the north, and also, in particular, in the outer bailey which has never been excavated.

#### SCHEDULING HISTORY

Monument placed in Guardianship on 25th February 1932 as:

COUNTY/NUMBER: Derbyshire 79

NAME: Peveril Castle

Monument's inclusion in the Schedule was confirmed on 9th October 1981.

Monument included as:

COUNTY/NUMBER: Derbyshire 79

NAME: Peveril Castle

The reference of this monument is now:

NATIONAL MONUMENT NUMBER: 13268

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SCHEDULING REVISED ON 06th April 1992