

EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Sheriff Hutton quadrangular castle and early garden earthworks

PARISH: SHERIFF HUTTON

DISTRICT: RYEDALE

COUNTY: NORTH YORKSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 32704

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): SE65086619

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The monument includes the standing, buried and earthwork remains of a late 14th century quadrangular castle and associated features including the earthworks of a 16th century garden. It is prominently located on the southern side of Sheriff Hutton, overlooking the Vale of York.

John Lord Neville of Raby was granted a licence to build a stone castle in 1382 by Richard II. It is thought that this replaced the earlier earthen ringwork castle, which lies adjacent to the church 0.5km to the east, and is the subject of a separate scheduling. From the mid-15th century, Sheriff Hutton was held by Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, known as 'Warwick the Kingmaker'. He used Sheriff Hutton, along with Middleham castle, as his principal bases in the north of England. After his death in 1471 at the Battle of Barnet, Sheriff Hutton was seized by the crown and granted to Richard Duke of Gloucester who became Richard III in 1483. From circa 1489 the castle periodically hosted the Council of the North and in 1525 was granted by Henry VIII to his illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy, the Duke of Richmond and Warden-General of the Marches. Used as a seat of provincial government, at this time the castle had a staff of 142 in addition to the 100 servants in the Duke's retinue. A survey of the state of the castle found that extensive repairs were required, but by 1534 John Leyland wrote that there was 'no house in the North so like a princely lodgings'. These two documentary sources describe how the castle was formed by three courts or wards. The inner court included the hall, kitchen and the lord's stately lodgings including a chapel. The middle court was described as being protected by three great towers, the middle tower forming a gatehouse, but in 1525 this court required extensive repairs to its walls, a section of which over 20m long had collapsed. The outer court included a brewhouse, horse mills, stables and barns. A further series of repairs were made in 1537 when the castle was returned to Henry VIII following Fitzroy's death. Shortly afterwards, the Council of the North was moved to York and apart from a further campaign of repairs in 1573-75, the castle was allowed to decay, with the deliberate removal of roofing lead towards the end of the century. In 1618-19 James I sold the 'ruinous castle of Sheriff Hutton' to Thomas Lumsden. In 1621 it was bought by Sir Aurthur Ingram, in whose family it remained until the early 20th century, being used principally as a source of building materials. The castle is thought to have been too ruinous to have played any part in the English Civil War and was not included in the 1649 Parliamentarian survey of castles. There is a 1721 illustration of the north side of the castle and its layout is shown on plans

of the village dated 1765 and 1786. A discussion of the various documentary and pictorial records of the monument forms part of a 1997 survey report by Ed Dennison which also describes in detail the surviving standing and earthwork remains of the monument.

The monument is dominated by the four ruined towers of the castle's inner court, set at the western end of a natural ridge that stands over 9m above the land to the west and south. In design the inner court is very similar to Bolton Castle in Wensleydale which was built in 1379-1396. Parts of the curtain walls, which linked the four corner towers and include evidence of the integral building ranges and undercrofts inside them, also survive. Overall the inner court measures 66m by just over 52m externally, its long axis orientated NNW to SSE, although the castle is conventionally described as if it were aligned north-south. Adjacent to the south eastern tower, forming part of the eastern curtain wall, is the gatehouse which led out into the middle court. This is thought to have been an early 15th century addition to the castle and retains a frieze of four heraldic shields dated after 1402. This gatehouse is one of the features which suggests that the castle was designed as a high prestige residence with considerations of the display of wealth and power taking precedence over the needs of defence. The gatehouse has no provision for a portcullis and could be circumvented by a ground floor doorway through the southern curtain wall. The south western tower has the best views over the Vale of York and is thought to have included the high-status accommodation. It was divided into four floors with barrel-vaulted basement, ground floor rooms and well lit first and second floors approximately 6m and 5m high respectively. Each floor had windows in the southern and western walls, (the castle's external face), and where the moulding survives, appear to have been typically trefoil headed, often with twin lights. The other three corner towers are similar in design except that in place of the two high roofed upper floors there are three less lofty storeys. There is evidence that ground level chambers within the curtain walls also had windows facing out of the castle and it is possible that the doorway through the southern curtain wall was mirrored on the northern and western walls as well. On the 1765 map of Sheriff Hutton, the inner court was labelled Far Wards. Adjoining it to the east, there is a second walled enclosure depicted, which was labelled Fore Wards. This was also approximately quadrangular, but slightly larger than the inner court, occupying the same area as the farm buildings for the existing Castle Farm. This court is thought to have been for lower status accommodation, and probably included servants quarters and guard barracks as well as some auxiliary rooms such as stores. Buried evidence for these structures will survive beneath and around the existing buildings. The outer court is recorded as having a number of auxiliary buildings such as stables and a brewhouse, and is believed to have occupied the area between the middle court and the medieval market place to the east, which now survives as a village green. The area to the north and east of Castle Farm's farmhouse retains a number of low earthworks, some of which are interpreted as the buried remains of features in the outer court.

The castle is a Listed Building Grade II*

To the south and west of the castle there are extensive earthwork remains of an impressive landscaped garden which is believed to have been created for Henry Fitzroy in the early 16th century. Part of this is a long carriage way that approaches the castle from the south west, runs along a raised causeway between two long, parallel, water-filled ornamental canals past the south side of the castle, to finally approach the east side of the middle court via a curving trackway up the hillside from the south east. The central part of the northern canal is thought to have been adapted from an earlier moat ditch which extends around the western and northern sides of the inner court. Between the canal and the slope up to the middle court there are two depressions which are thought to be smaller ornamental ponds, and are possibly also adapted from the earlier moat.

To the west of the inner court, beyond the moat, there are low earthworks that

are interpreted as the remains of medieval properties fronting onto Finkle Street which would have been inhabited by villagers. These are thought to have been cleared for the construction of the castle. Immediately to the south there is an open area which retains faint ridge and furrow, left by the medieval system of ploughing, suggesting that the castle also took in part of the village's open field system. Further ridge and furrow extends to the south of the southern ornamental canal where it is much more pronounced. This well-preserved block of the medieval open field system is also included within the monument and lies in a much larger area which formed a deer park attached to the castle, using the southern canal as part of its boundary. The area represents a complete furlong with header banks at both the north and south ends of the field.

A number of features are excluded from the scheduling. These are: all buildings and outbuildings forming the modern Castle Farm, excepting any sections of medieval stonework, all modern fences, walls, stiles, gates, signposts, water and feeding troughs and the platforms that they stand on, telegraph poles and all road and path surfaces; however the ground beneath these features is included. Fence lines defining the boundaries of the monument lie immediately outside the area of protection.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

A quadrangular castle is a strongly fortified residence built of stone, or sometimes brick, around a square or rectangular courtyard. The outer walls formed a defensive line, frequently with towers sited on the corners and occasionally in intermediate positions as well. Some of the very strongly defended examples have additional external walls. Ditches, normally wet but sometimes dry, were also found outside the walls. Two main types of quadrangular castle have been identified. In the southern type, the angle and intermediate mural towers were most often round in plan and projected markedly from the enclosing wall. In the northern type, square angle towers, often of massive proportions, were constructed, these projecting only slightly from the main wall. Within the castle, accommodation was provided in the towers or in buildings set against the walls which opened onto the central courtyard. An important feature of quadrangular castles was that they were planned and built to an integrated, often symmetrical, design. Once built, therefore, they did not lend themselves easily to modification. The earliest and finest examples of this class of castle are found in Wales, dating from 1277, but they also began to appear in England at the same time. Most examples were built in the 14th century but the tradition extended into the 15th century. Later examples demonstrate an increasing emphasis on domestic comfort to the detriment of defence and, indeed, some late examples are virtually defenceless. They provided residences for the king or leading families and occur in both rural and urban situations. Quadrangular castles are widely dispersed throughout England with a slight concentration in Kent and Sussex protecting a vulnerable coastline and routes to London. Other concentrations are found in the north near the Scottish border and also in the west on the Welsh border. They are rare nationally with only 64 recorded examples of which 44 are of southern type and 20 are of northern type. Considerable diversity of form is exhibited with no two examples being exactly alike. With other types of castle, 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 of national importance.

Gardens have a long history in England. The earliest recognised examples are associated with Roman villas, while during the Anglo-Saxon and medieval

periods, herb gardens were planted, particularly in monasteries, for medicinal purposes. The major development in gardening took place in the late medieval and early post-medieval periods when the idea of the garden as a 'pleasure ground' developed. Gardens of medieval and early post-medieval date take a variety of forms. Some involved significant water-management works to create elaborate water gardens which could include a series of ponds and even ornamental canal systems. At other sites, flower gardens were favoured, with planting in elaborately shaped and often geometrically laid out beds. Planting arrangements were often complemented by urns, statues and other garden furniture. Such sites were often provided with raised walkways or prospect mounds which provided vantage points from which the garden design and layout could be seen and fully appreciated. Whilst gardens were probably a common accompaniment to high-status residences of 16th century and later date, continued occupation of houses and related use and re-modelling of gardens in response to changing fashions means that early remains rarely survive undisturbed. Gardens provide a valuable insight into contemporary aesthetics and views about how the landscape could be modified to enhance the surroundings of a residence and symbolise the social hierarchy. Their design often mirrors elements of the design of the associated residence, particularly following the symmetry of the buildings. Gardens were probably not uncommon in the medieval and post-medieval period, but the exact original number is unknown. Fewer than 500 surviving examples of all types have now been identified. In view of the rarity of surviving examples, great variety of form, and importance for understanding high-status residences and their occupants, all examples of early date retaining well-preserved earthworks or significant buried remains will be identified to be nationally important. Medieval villages were supported by a communal system of agriculture based on large, unenclosed open arable fields. These large fields were divided into strips which were allocated to individual tenants. The cultivation of these strips with heavy ploughs pulled by oxen-teams produced long wide ridges and the resultant 'ridge and furrow' where it survives, is the most obvious physical indication of the open field system. Individual strips were laid out in groups known as furlongs defined by terminal headlands at the plough turning points and lateral grass baulks. Furlongs were in turn grouped into large open fields. Well-preserved ridge and furrow, especially in its original context adjacent to village earthworks, is both an important source of information about medieval agrarian life and a distinctive contribution to the character of the historic landscape.

Sheriff Hutton Castle has an important place in English history with its associations with Warwick the Kingmaker and Richard III, and its use as a seat of provincial government via the Council of the North up until 1537. Its standing ruins still form a prominent landmark and the associated surrounding earthworks, especially those of the early gardens, add significantly to the monument's national importance.

SCHEDULING HISTORY

Monument included in the Schedule on 30th August 1922 as:

COUNTY/NUMBER: Yorkshire 26

NAME: Sheriff Hutton Castle

Scheduling amended on 1st April 1974 to:

COUNTY/NUMBER: North Yorkshire 26

NAME: Sheriff Hutton Castle

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

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NAME: Sheriff Hutton Castle

The reference of this monument is now:
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SCHEDULING REVISED ON 11th December 2001