

HAWARDEN CASTLE

Ref No PGW (C) 55

OS Map 117

Grid Ref SJ 322 655

Former County Clwyd

Unitary Authority Flintshire

Community Council Hawarden

Designations Listed building: Hawarden Castle Grade II
Scheduled Ancient Monument: Hawarden Castle (Fl6) Conservation Area:
Hawarden; part of site

Site Evaluation Grade I

Primary reasons for grading

Survival of early eighteenth-century turf amphitheatre; fine example of early nineteenth-century picturesque landscaping of both park and garden, including a ruined mediaeval castle as a focal point; involvement of William Sawrey Gilpin in the 1830 reorientation of the house; association with W.E. Gladstone.

Type of Site

Landscape park; semi-formal garden; informal garden with picturesque ruins; walled kitchen garden

Main Phases of Construction

Early eighteenth century; 1770s; early nineteenth century (1806; 1809-10; c. 1830); later nineteenth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Hawarden Castle is a large, mainly four-storey castellated mansion situated on the south-eastern edge of the village of Hawarden. The ruins of the mediaeval Hawarden Castle lie in the grounds to the west of the house. The approach is by a drive to the north front, which has a semi-basement and a projecting two-storey porch.

The original house on the site, Broadlane Hall, was built in 1750-57 by Sir John Glynne. It replaced an earlier house of the same name that had belonged to the Ravenscroft family from the mid sixteenth century. In the early 1730s Sir John inherited Hawarden Castle (the mediaeval castle and its property), and married the heiress to the Broadlane property, Honora Conwy, thus uniting the two estates. The earlier house was a three-storey gabled H-plan Tudor or Jacobean house on a site to the south-east of the present house. Until 1806 the main road from Chester ran through the present park immediately south of this house.

The builder of the new house, and possibly its architect, was the elder Samuel Turner of Whitchurch. Broadlane Hall was a three-storey Palladian brick house. In 1809-10 this house was entirely transformed into a romantic castellated mansion, rechristened Hawarden Castle, by the architect Thomas Cundy for Sir Stephen Richard Glynne, 8th baronet. The house was encased in stone, giving it an irregular, battlemented roofline, mullioned windows, false machicolations, and square and round turrets. It was also enlarged to the east and west. In 1830 the entrance

was moved to the north side on the advice of W.S. Gilpin. One of Sir Stephen's daughters, Catherine, married W.E. Gladstone, Prime Minister, in 1839, and he was instrumental in rescuing the estate for the Glynnnes. The Gladstones spent much of their time at Hawarden, and W.E. Gladstone's son inherited the estate. His main alterations to the house were the addition in 1866 (architect George Shaw) of his study (the 'Temple of Peace') with bedrooms over it in the north-west corner, an octagonal strongroom (architects Douglas and Fordham) on the north, built in 1887-88, and the north porch, built by the same architects in 1889 to celebrate Mr and Mrs Gladstone's golden wedding.

There are two groups of outbuildings; to the north-east of the house are 'Broadlane' and two cottages known as Diglane, and further away, to the north, is the stable block. 'Broadlane' is a small, two-storey, brick Georgian house with a clock in the central pediment, and a cupola on the roof. It owes its symmetrical front to remodelling in 1757 of an earlier Jacobean house (the internal arrangements are far from symmetrical). It was used as a laundry (which it remained until 1939), and also in the second half of the nineteenth century by Mrs Gladstone as an orphanage. The two cottages to its north, known as Diglane, are simple brick buildings, formerly the bakehouse and brewhouse. Between Broadlane and the house is an arched, castellated stone gateway into the park, flanked by circular turrets. It is thought to date to about 1830, and to be by John Buckler, who is also thought to have designed the gate at the north-west corner of the park.

The stable court lies to the west of the drive, and consists of two-storey rendered plain buildings on the north-east and north-west sides of a court.

Hawarden Park is situated on rolling ground to the south of the house and Hawarden village. The mediaeval castle, which lies in the grounds, forms a picturesque landmark and prominent focal point at the northern end. The highest part of the park is at the south-western end, to the north and east of which the ground drops down to the small valley of the Broughton brook, and then rises to the house and castle on the north. The flattest part is the eastern end, on the edge of the Dee valley. The main entrance to the park is off the B5125 road to the north of the house, with a drive skirting the stables and gardens to the west and leading to the north front of the house.

The park falls into two main sections: the northern half, to the north of the Broughton brook, and the higher southern half, known as the Top Park. These are separated by a nineteenth-century iron deer fence running north-west/south-east along the valley, bounding nineteenth-century woodland planting to its south. The northern half is open grassland, unfenced to the south and west of the house. This part has many isolated specimen trees, in particular oak, with beech along the western boundary. At the foot of the castle mound are oaks, beeches and limes, with the remains of a row of limes (c. 1730) continuing around the west side. A few wellingtonias testify to nineteenth-century planting, and there are early twentieth-century pines in four groups either side of the drive to the south-west of the house. The gateway to the east of the house leads to two former drives, now tracks, across the park: one runs for about one and three-quarter kilometres to Broughton Lodge on the B5125 to the south-east of the house, and the other curves westwards through the northern part of the park to the castellated gate entrance in the village, now only used for pedestrians. This is an elaborate romantic gateway with screens and flanking turrets, which forms a prominent landmark in the centre of the village. To the south of the castle a branch off the former drive leads southwards, crossing the Broughton brook over a single-arched stone bridge.

The southern part of the park is partly open grassland, with scattered isolated trees (mainly oak), and partly woodland of varying types and ages. The valley bottom is wooded, mainly with deciduous trees, but with some conifers mixed in in the eastern part, and with a conspicuous plantation of pines and other conifers on top of the hill towards the western boundary. To the east of the bridge is a silted up former millpond, and lower down is a small lake, with a concrete dam at its east end. Its western end was originally a small natural pond, enlarged to half its present size in the 1890s, and again in the 1920s.

The rising ground is mostly rolling grassland bounded on the east by Beeches Wood and on the south by a large area of plantation, with a small tongue of conifers protruding into the park in the middle. Near the south-west corner of the park is a disused gateway flanked by rusticated stone piers, side gates and ruined twin stone lodges (St John's Lodge on map, but in reality Sir John's Lodge). The western lodge at some time had an upper storey of brick added to it. A former drive, now track, leads south to the Old Hope Road, but within the park the drive was never constructed. The track which crosses the brook over the stone bridge winds southwards up a gentle defile to a simple entrance to the park flanked by octagonal stone piers. Near its southern end this crosses a hollow way, the 'old lane', leading down into the valley, and originally to Broadlane Hall, the bridge over the brook being submerged by the lake, to its east, and continuing south-westwards as a gentle depression in the field flanked by ancient oaks, and on to the Old Hope Road.

The park is bounded for much of its perimeter by stone walls, which run from the west end of the garden terrace around the foot of the castle and north to the village gate, south along the Old Hope Road, along the western half of the south boundary, and along the B5125. In the middle of the south boundary the wall is replaced by a stone ha-ha, running in two gentle curves either side of the present track up the Booberry Wood.

The park has a long and complex history. The outer earthworks of the castle, including the mound to the south-east of the castle are thought to be the remnants of a Norman motte and bailey castle. To the west is a small pond fed by a spring. This was probably the castle's main water supply, and to protect access to it two large banks were made flanking the route from the 'dungeon' or barbican to the pond. (To their west is the cutting for an eighteenth-century tramway.) The main earthworks and masonry of the mediaeval castle lie within the grounds of the house, and are dealt with below. There is no evidence for a mediaeval deer park; the castle was partly demolished in the 1660s, and there was no house with the property until it was united with the neighbouring Broadlane Hall in 1732. Between 1653 and the late 1720s the family had been absentee owners. There are no visible remains of the house, and the site is turfed over. The only hint of a park in the Badeslade drawing of 1740 is the deer shown grazing on the slopes of the castle mound and in the valley below, and a straight ride cut through the woodland south of the brook.

Sir Stephen, Sir John's son (died 1780) evidently intended to make a landscape park. A plan of 1777 'of the Intended Park at Broad Lane ... with some Alterations By William Emes' shows sweeping carriage drives, the public road removed to the north, a large lake to the south of the castle, and planting belts and clumps. This plan was almost certainly not carried out, as none of the features correspond to those on the next available plan, dated to the early nineteenth century, or to the present-day layout.

From the early nineteenth-century plan it appears that Sir Stephen began to make a park in the area to the south-west of the castle, the north boundary formed by the castle and the Hope road, which ran west from a

cross-roads west of the castle. The route of this road is now a hollow way across the western part of the park. The east boundary of landscaping appears to have been the hollow way to the mill. The main woodland in this area was in the valley bottom, south of the brook. Planting was carried out in 1747 on Booberry Hill to the south of the park, and an approach road was made from the old Hope road through the wood to the entrance called 'St' John's Lodge. The present track that runs north-south through the Top Park is not shown on the map, and must be nineteenth-century in date. This drive continued southwards through Booberry Wood to a lodge on the 'Old Warren Road' (the south end now sliced through by the A55). The present park boundary to the east of the hollow way, consisting of a stretch of about four hundred metres of ha-ha, and then park wall, is not shown on the map, and is therefore thought to be nineteenth-century in date.

Radical changes were made to the park in the early nineteenth century by Sir Stephen Richard Glynne (died 1815). The plan of that date shows the proposal to move the Chester road from the south to the north of the house, while still retaining the Old Hope Road to the west of the castle. Allied to this was the creation of a new drive from the old road south-east of the house to the south side of the house. Belts of new planting, with sinuous outlines, were to screen the new road from house and park, although it is not certain how much of this was carried out. Trees definitely of this date (c. 1806) include a cedar (one of six originally) to the north of the house, and two near the lake. The tenements and mill to the south-west of the house are still shown, along with some planting along the route of the old road.

At this stage the castle and much of the present grounds to the west of the house were part of the park. The castle mound was landscaped with tree planting on all but the side facing the house, and was reached from the house by a bridge built by Sir John over the old Chester road in 1771. (As these are both now in the grounds they are dealt with below.) The Chester road was moved to its present line (B 5125) in 1806, enabling a drive to be made to the south-east. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows that at least some of the screening planting took place, and that before that date the new drive was extended southwards. This may have been in about 1830, when further changes were made to garden and park. Almost all the screening planting has gone.

In 1830 Sir Stephen Glynne, Sir Stephen Richard's son, took the radical step of moving the main entrance from the south to the north of the house, a move recommended by the landscaper William Sawrey Gilpin. The house was now reached from the north by the present main drive, and from the south through the gateway built at that time by Buckler. A further drive was made from this gateway to the north-west corner of the park, now extended north-westwards by the closure of the Hope road west of the castle. Buckler designed the village gateway to terminate the drive. It is probably at this time that the park wall was built, and the deer fence erected. Thus by the 1830s the park had acquired its present outline and structure. Planting continued throughout the century, and although it was said that 'Mr Gladstone's tree-felling proclivities are well known', the park in his day was noted for its fine trees, particularly beech and oak. The area around the lake was planted with mixed woodland in the 1920s, with many exotic specimen trees. The conifer plantation protruding into the southern end of the park dates originally to about 1910. The present trees were planted in the 1950s.

The gardens of Hawarden Castle lie to the south, west and north of the house. They fall into three main sections: the formal terrace to the south, the informal slope between the house and mediaeval castle, and the castle itself; and the area of shrubbery to the north of the house. The drive enters the garden from the north, to the east of the shrubbery,

into a crescent-shaped gravel forecourt, with stone balls around the edge.

To the south of the house is a large level terrace bounded on its south side by a substantial revetment wall of uncoursed stone with a low parapet and flat top. Within this is a wide grass walk bounded by a small scarp to the terrace level below. From the house and terrace there are fine views southwards across the park. The terrace is largely lawn, with two gravel paths running next to the house and near the south side. Within these are rectangular and semi-circular island beds, and the central east-west axis is ornamented with a small sundial on a cylindrical pillar and a terracotta vase on a square plinth. At the east end of the terrace is a modern swimming pool. At the west end of the house the terrace continues westwards for about 50 metres, bounded by a raised grass walk and low wall, as on the south side. French doors and stone steps lead from the house into this garden. This area is also laid out formally, with straight gravel paths and a central circular fountain reached by narrow flagstone cross paths. The fountain is a simple jet (formerly a statue, which was stolen) in a pool with a moulded stone edge. In the south-west corner of this area is a small rectangular single-storey stone pavilion, or tea house, designed by Hal Goodhart-Rendel in c. 1920. It has round-headed windows, and central double doors on the east and west sides. On its west side are steps up to a raised platform with fine views out over the park. On the north side of this garden is a small circle of ancient lime trees known as Sir John Glynne's dressing-room.

Beyond the terrace, to the west, the character of the garden changes completely, to one of informality and picturesqueness. The ground rises to the west, while also sloping southwards, up to the ruined mediaeval castle on the top of the hill. A wide vista of lawn has been kept open between the house and castle, and this is flanked by banks of informally planted trees and shrubs, in particular rhododendrons on the north, mixed trees on both sides, and a large spreading oak at the foot of the slope on the south. At the foot of the slope, next to the terrace, is an informal pond. The stone wall along the south boundary continues for a short distance west of the tea house, stepping up to square piers topped with spherical finials flanking a small wooden gate into the park. Beyond, the garden is bounded by iron fencing and then a stone wall around the foot of the castle mound.

Below the castle is a deep cutting (the former road) crossed by a single arched dressed stone bridge with a low parapet ornamented with four pairs of square plinths. The castle itself forms a picturesque object on the skyline, with a ruined circular keep in the centre, towers and ramparts. It is integrated into the gardens with grass walks, steps, and a lawn in the inner ward. The stone castle stands on a steep-sided mound which has been ornamented with grass walks, wild flowers, and some tree planting. The row of limes planted in the 1730s was designed to hide the castle. Single beeches also adorn the bank on the west side of the inner ward and the bank to the west of the former road.

The wall at the foot of the castle mound continues around the north side, crossing the tramway cutting. At its north end is a wooden door in the wall, which is the entrance to W.E. Gladstone's walk (1853) across the park. Within the garden this grass path runs eastwards across the former road and through a cutting in the bank to its east, which is revetted with low dry-stone walling. Just to the north of the path, east of the former road, is an ice-house under a circular earthen mound. It has a wooden door set in a brick wall on its west side, and the entrance is flanked by stone walls. To the south of the Gladstone path, at the top of the slope east of the former road, is a small turf amphitheatre at the head of an axis running eastwards down the slope. This consists of a

central circle with a wellingtonia in the middle, above and below which are three narrow semi-circular tiers separated by steep scarps. Ramps run down either side of the upper part. Below is a grass walk across the slope and a grass slope on the east-west axis flanked by informal mixed tree and shrub planting, with a rock garden to the south. Planting on the north, including yew trees, helps to screen the kitchen garden wall which bounds the garden on this side. The grass slope leads down to a gravel circle bounded on the north and south sides by a low flat-topped stone wall. This is reached by wide stone steps on the east-west axis. To its south is a rectangular pool, and to its north a path to a door in the kitchen garden wall. The axis continues as a wide gravel path, flanked by lawns and informal tree and shrub planting, which leads to a stone paved area at the end of the vista, in the middle of which is an ornamental stone column with a small bronze ball on top (formerly an astrolabe, which was stolen). A cross path leads from here to the west end of the house and to the kitchen garden.

The third area of the garden is the informal shrubbery to the north of the house. Next to the forecourt is a lawn with informal beds, shrubs, trees, rhododendrons and yews. A grass path runs northwards into the shrubbery, which is mostly planted with evergreens, in particular yews and rhododendrons. It is bounded by the drive to the east and the kitchen garden to the west, and runs northwards as far as the stable court.

The present-day appearance of the gardens is the result of development from the early eighteenth century onwards. The earliest depiction of them is in the 1733 plan. This shows a formal enclosed garden, probably of Tudor or Jacobean date, to the north-east of the house and a later, more expansive, baroque layout of axial tree-lined walks, and focal points of circles, an apsidal walk and a pond to the west. The castle mound beyond the road is planted with trees, and laid out with radiating walks. Thomas Badeslade's view of 1740 shows more or less the same layout, but with some alterations by Sir John Glynne: the forecourt in front of the house is now circular, the garden has been simplified, and in the area east of the road the spaces between the walks have been filled in with trees, and a tiered and ramped amphitheatre has been added in the western corner. The castle mound, shown in some detail, is now shorn of trees, with a ring of alternating deciduous and coniferous trees around its base, deer grazing on its slopes, and a parapetted lookout on the top of the west side of the keep.

With the important exception of the amphitheatre, which survives in good condition, there is little left of this period. The limes at the foot of the castle are probably survivors of the circle of trees depicted by Badeslade. The garden was orientated differently from the present one (south-east/north-west), and the only trace of it is part of its north boundary, which followed the line of the south wall of the present kitchen garden (beyond, on the north and east sides of the garden, was a public road). It is of interest to note that where the plans both show ponds there is still a spring, and the ground is boggy.

The rebuilding of the house by Sir John Glynne in 1750-57, in a new position to the north-west of the old house, led to a complete transformation of the gardens. The old walled garden must have been swept away, as the new house is on a different orientation (north/south) in the middle of the former garden area. Sir John built the stone bridge over the road between garden and castle in 1771, and is likely to have landscaped the gardens at about this time, including the planting of the circle of limes known as 'Sir John Glynne's dressing room' (he died in 1777, his heir, Sir Stephen, died in 1780, and his heir was only born in 1780). An estate map of the early nineteenth century shows that Sir John or Sir Stephen had removed most formality. The kitchen garden had been made to the north-west of the house, a rectangular pond, with a circular

one to its east, stood where the earlier ponds had been, and the area to the west was open, with some informal planting in scattered clumps, and in a belt along the road. The castle mound was open towards the house, with informally planted trees on the other sides. The landscaping proposals shown in a plan of 1777, in part the work of William Emes, appear not to have been carried out.

The next phase of major change came in the early nineteenth century, when Sir Stephen Richard Glynne (died 1815) set about romanticising both the house and the grounds. It was at this time that the road was moved (1806), thus uniting the garden to the west of the house with the castle and its mound. Sir Stephen is also thought to have increased the picturesqueness of the castle by adding an irregular top of faced brickwork to the keep. Sir Stephen's son, also Stephen, was responsible, on the advice of William Sawrey Gilpin, for moving the entrance to the north of the house, and creating the garden terrace to its south and west. This was originally laid out with numerous island beds. It was simplified for economy in 1894, and has subsequently been further simplified to its present form.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, while W.E. Gladstone was in residence, many of the present trees and shrubs in the garden were planted, in particular the conifers and rhododendrons. These were remarked on by visitors in the 1880s (see Gardeners' Chronicle and Journal of Horticulture and Cottage Gardener). It was noted that most of the grounds were kept in a naturalistic way that would be 'spoiled by dressing and keeping'. W.E. Gladstone made the walk that begins in the north-west corner of the garden in 1853.

Thus by the end of the nineteenth century the gardens had largely taken on their present-day appearance. A number of features were added in the 1920s, including the tea-house, designed by H.S. Goodhart-Rendel in about 1920, and the gravel circle and pond to its south. The drive was moved westwards to approach the forecourt through the shrubbery, but this was removed and turned into a grass walk in 1975. The informal pond west of the terrace was made in 1970.

The kitchen garden is situated to the north-west of the house, its south wall forming the northern boundary of the ornamental garden. It is trapezoidal in shape, narrowing towards the north. It probably dates to the period of Sir John Glynne, in the second half of the eighteenth century. It does not appear on the Badeslade bird's-eye view of 1740, which shows the area as fields, with a public road running through it. It appears that the northern boundary of the garden of this period was followed by the southern wall of the kitchen garden, which is shown in its present shape on the early nineteenth-century estate plan. In the early 1880s the glass ranges were rebuilt by Boulton and Paul of Norwich, and included a large range 170 ft long across the northern end of the garden. This had a projecting central section which was a conservatory for camellias and palms. In 1881 the fruit trees in the garden were described as being very old (Journal of Horticulture and Cottage Gardener).

The ground within the garden is flat on the eastern side, and rises to the west and south on the western side. The garden is surrounded by brick walls, slightly wider at their bases, and topped with flat coping stones. These stand to their full height of about four to five metres. There are two gently arched doorways in the south wall, each with simple iron gates. On the outside of the south wall are three pairs of arched bee boles at ground level. The east wall has been patched and heightened, and has a door in it. The north wall is similar, lower at the west end, with a wide gate. The west wall is stepped up the slope, lower at the

north end, five to six metres in height at the south end. It has a wide gate near the north end.

The garden is largely turfed over, with the remnants of some paths visible, in particular a wide central path running from a gate in the south wall to the centre of the former conservatory. This is bounded by low dry-stone revetment walls on the east and west. The north end of the garden is taken up with modern buildings and glasshouses. The former main glasshouse range stands near the north end. The eastern end has been rebuilt in the twentieth century against the original back wall and on the original footings. All that is left of the rest are the backing brick wall (with rendered surface) and footings of the western end, and part of the floor of the central section. This has a semi-octagonal projection, with three steps up to it, and a slate path around the perimeter. Against the north side of the backing walls are lean-to bothies and stores.

Towards the north-west corner of the garden are some low stone revetment walling, a small rectangular basin, and stone and brick steps up the slope. By the central south gate is an oval stone-lined pool (dry), about 2.8 metres long, with two stone steps down into it at its northern end.

Sources

Primary

'Sir John Glynne's Seat at Broad Lane': map of 1733 (Clwyd Record Office, Hawarden, D/HA/599).

Bird's-eye view by Thomas Badeslade, 1740.

Map of the big and little park at Hawarden, with adjacent lands: n.d., 18th century (National Library of Wales, Glynne MSS, NT/M/5).

'A Plan of the Intended Park at Broad Lane the Seat of Sir Stephen Glynne Bart with some Alterations By William Emes. 1777' (Clwyd Record Office, Hawarden, D/HA/601).

Plan of Hawarden Castle belonging to Sir Stephen Richard Glynne showing improvements to be made: n.d., early 19th century (copy at Clwyd Record Office, Hawarden, NT/M/24).

Secondary

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