

9.0

Appendices

Appendix 1: General References

General References

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Appendix 2: Historical Development

Appendix to Historical Landscape Design Appraisal

A2.1 Additional Castle Park Site History

This historical summary is largely taken from research by Howard Brooks in his report 'An Historical Survey of Castle Park' (1997). This summary sets out the main events that shaped development and the use of the area now occupied by Castle Park.

The Roman Period

Shortly after the Roman conquest of AD43, a fortress was built at Colchester (Camulodunum) as a base from which the Roman armies advanced west and north. Within six years, the conquest of lowland Britain being substantially complete, the fort was converted into a colony (colonial) and veteran soldiers were retired there, as advocates for the peace and stability of the Roman Empire, and to act as a backup force in times of emergency. As Camulodunum was the original capital city of the Roman province of Britain, a Temple dedicated to the Emperor Claudius was also erected, east of the old fortress, but in the area included within the later colony. After the town was sacked by Boudica in AD60/61, London became the provincial capital, and Camulodunum dropped out of mainstream political and military history.

Castle Park lies over a very substantial part of the north-east part of the colony and later town, and includes the site of the Roman Temple (now under the Norman Castle). It also includes 10% of the Roman town comprising insulae (housing blocks) 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 22 and 23, part of the Roman Town Wall with an original gateway (Duncan's Gate), drains, and the Roman streets which divided up the insulae. Excavations carried out in the Park over the last 200 years have revealed a great deal of information on the Roman Archaeology within the Park. Much of it is buried, but in places Roman remains sit above ground and provide a hint of what else lies beneath. These are indicated on Figure A1 and are discussed in detail in section 3.0. The majority of Roman remains lie within the Town Wall and thus in Upper Castle Park.

Saxon Period

The Saxon period is the least well represented period in the Park. As for many places in Britain the Saxon Period is not rich in material remains and it is therefore more difficult to interpret occupation and activity.

There are two sets of data that provide some information about the occupation of Colchester and use of Castle Park in this period - the archaeological record and historical sources.

The archaeology within the Park is limited to a few scraps of hand-made pottery, a group of objects including two broaches, a finger ring and several beads. A number of Saxon Burials have also been found within Upper and Lower Castle Park. Burials are not randomly placed - in a Christian tradition they are associated with a church, and there are three churches close to Castle Park that could have been in use in Saxon times. If these churches were in use then there must have been a local population in Colchester. Exactly where the centre of activity was is not known, however, from the scrappy pieces of pottery found in the Park it would suggest that there was no more than squatter occupation of Roman ruins in the Park. However, there is a suggestion that the south front of the Roman Temple was rebuilt to include an apsidal east end (by implication a church) and that this church building formed the nucleus of a Saxon Royal Villa (villa regalis) laid out among the ruins of the Roman town. The only other structure which could be considered part of the site is (the early phase of) the bailey chapel still visible in front of the Castle today. We know from historical sources that there were a number of royal visits to Colchester in the Saxon period, and although we do not know precisely where the councils were held, the temple/ Castle site is as likely a location as anywhere.

Medieval Period

Colchester remained the largest and principle town of Essex throughout the middle ages. The Castle was the seat of the Sheriff of Essex, and it contained the County Gaol, until the 17th century. In the course of the 14th Century the town increased in wealth and size, but was losing its administrative functions to Chelmsford. The Castle was allowed to fall into disrepair, and seems to have only been used as a prison. Royal visits were infrequent and usually only for a single visit.

11th and 12th centuries

The later 11th and 12th centuries were marked in Colchester, as in many other towns, by a spate of building work. The construction of the first phase of the Castle c.1076 changed the physical appearance of the town without changing its layout. The course of the High Street was diverted south by the building of the south wall of the bailey c.1100. The Norman Castle was built for William I (The Conqueror) on the massive ruins of the Temple of Claudius. Work was probably begun in the 1070s under threat of Danish or Flemish invasion, or perhaps spurred on by the Danish attack on the town in 1071.

The Castle was built in at least two major stages. In the first, marked by battlements whose outline is still visible on the face of the Castle Wall, the keep was raised to one story. Shortly afterwards, the corner towers were raised. The first stage, which was almost certainly intended to be temporary, has been associated with the threatened invasion of Cnut of Denmark in 1085. Surviving walls may have served as outer defences in the Castle's earliest years, but by c. 1100 a bailey formed by an earth bank probably topped by a palisade had been built. Building work was resumed after the threat of invasion had passed. The single story keep was levelled up to the height of the corner towers and then raised to three storeys with corner towers. Late Saxon buildings, including a chapel, seem to have survived south of the keep. Before or during the early stages of the construction of the keep, in the 1070s or 1080', a stone hall with adjoining chambers was built south-east of the bailey chapel and aligned with it. In the earlier 12th century the chapel was rebuilt and a fireplace was inserted into the west wall of the hall.

Eudes the Sewer was probably constable of the Castle throughout the reign of William I and William II (1066-87 and 1087-1100 respectively), overseeing the completion of the Keep and the construction of the bailey, and putting the partly built Castle into a state of defence to withstand the threatened invasion of Cnut of Denmark in 1085.

The building of the Castle and in particular the construction of the ditch and rampart represent the second massive change in ground level in the Park since the levelling of ground for the construction of the Temple to Claudius in the Roman Period. If the surviving scale of the ditch and rampart on the north side

of the bailey are anything to go by, then the ditch and rampart to the south side of the castle (now no longer visible) must have been enormously imposing.

Associated with the Castle was the construction of a corn mill recorded in 1101. The site of this mill can still be seen today just outside Lower Castle Park on the River Colne. The mill was repaired in 1300 and many times after this date and was used as both a fuller and corn mill.

Throughout the 12th century and early 13th century documentary evidence also records phases of repair work to the Castle, and indicates the existence of buildings against the Castle wall within the bailey. There is also evidence for the strengthening work possibly including the replacement of the earlier forebuilding by a barbican, and (if it had not been done earlier) the construction of the lower bailey.

The gateway into the bailey is thought to be represented by the alignment of Museum Street. In common with the fabric of the Keep and bailey, there are references to repairs to this gate, in 1256 and 1300.

Henry III visited the town in 1242 and stayed in the Castle where his 'houses' or apartments had been repaired for him. These apartments could have been in the Castle itself or in the bailey hall building, the foundations of which lie buried under the rose bed south of the Castle.

In the later 13th century the Castle served as the office for the Sheriff of Essex.

14th and 15th Centuries

In 1333-4 the Constable 'removed the house in the bailey where the justices used to sit', and also the portcullis and possibly other parts of the entrance to the keep. This would indicate that the Castle was declining as a military installation (but there were further repairs in 1350 and 1422). Those keepers who had more than a financial interest in it were concerned with the gaol and its prisoners.

The gaol was apparently still in the bailey in 1455, but it was by then so old and weak that prisoners were able to escape through the roof. As some houses had been removed in 1333-4, there must clearly have been several distinct sets of buildings in the bailey.

16th and 17th Centuries

The Castle was allowed to fall into decay in the 15th and 16th centuries. All the bailey buildings, with the exception of part of one of them in the south-east corner, had disappeared by 1622. John Speed's map of 1610 (Figure HLD1) gives no indication of the nature of the terrain surrounding the Castle.

A distance away from the Castle a path crosses Sheepshead Meadow close to the line of a modern path. A path also runs north from the area where Hollytrees was later built. A break is not shown in the Town Wall although it seems likely the paths would have converged at a gate, perhaps Duncan's Gate? The 1622 survey prepared for Lord Stanhope reveals no further detail regarding the nature of the landscape (not illustrated).

Between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries the Castle fell deeper into dereliction. The building was left to Charles Chamberlain Rebow in 1726 by his grandfather Sir Isaac Rebow. Mary Webster purchased the Castle the following year from him and in 1727 she also purchased the bailey grounds. All the land was conferred to her daughter Sarah, who by then had married her second husband Charles Gray. A newspaper article (EC 8.6.1987) was illustrated with a sketch of the interior of the Castle dated 1847 and shows a number of trees. This area was roofed when the museum was built.

A2.2 Further information on Backhouse Nurseries

When the renowned Telford nursery in York came up for sale in 1815 it was purchased by James Backhouse. James was joined by his brother Thomas and by 1821 the nursery was prospering. A diverse range of plants were sold and the variety was likely to have been influenced by the strong interest in botany throughout the numerous members of the Backhouse family. James Backhouse travelled extensively to Australia between 1831 and 1841 the main purpose of his travels being to introduce Quakerism and report on the penal colonies, however, he also found time to collect plants.

Perhaps inspired by his botanising trips to Teesdale and Scotland, James Backhouse built an enormous rock garden at the new premises he acquired at Holgate, Acomb, York in 1853. The garden was constructed with 1,500 tons of rock and he also built an underground fernery. The Backhouse plant collections were frequently used to illustrate botanical transactions by authors such as E.J. Lowe and D. Wooster and they were acknowledged experts on alpine plants. James II succeeded to the business in 1869 and on his death in 1890 his son continued the business until it began to flounder and was sold in 1921. The Backhouse Nurseries were responsible for Stockton Park and Clarence Park at Wakefield.

A.2.3 Sources

Abbreviations

CBC Colchester Borough Council Minutes
CG/1725 Charles Gray's diary 1725 - Acc. 15 Essex Record Office
EADT East Anglian Daily Times.
ECS Essex County Standard - newspaper
ERO Essex Record Office
ILN Illustrated London News
NMR National Monuments Record.

Archival sources

Charles Gray's diary 1725 - 1760 (ERO D/DR6 Acc.15)
Charles Gray's notebook 11 sheets 1730 - 60 (ERO D/DR6 Acc.15)
Estimate, rough plan, and bills for laying out grounds of Colchester Castle 1728 - 29 (ERO D/DR6 F6)
Bills for work on grounds including list of trees planted (ERO D/DR6 F7)

Maps

1610 map by John Speed
1622 survey for Lord Stanhope (not illustrated)
1697 Meheux's prospect
1724 Prior's prospect
1740 Deane's prospect
1748 map by Morant
1767 plan of Colchester Thomas Sparrow
1848 map of Colchester Monson (not illustrated)

Plans

Unmarked garden plan with estimate and bills for laying out grounds 1728 - 29 ERO/DR6 F6
Hollytrees August 1883 ERO D/DR6 F15. Rough plan of western corner of Hollytrees grounds adjacent to house.

OS Maps

1876 Scale 1:500
1876 Scale 1:2500
1897 Scale 1:2500
1923 Scale 1:2500
1953 Scale 1:1250
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Drawings and Paintings

Box A 18 Mid C19 pencil drawing. Initialled AHC. View to rear of Hollytrees.
AC 37.1994 1840 watercolour of castle and mounds.
Acc 60A 1969 sketch showing Watts Stone and Marble works on later site of War Memorial.
Acc 69.1967/2 Baile. pen and ink wash sketch. View of lower park showing grassland.

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Appendix 3: Archaeological Appraisal

Appendix to Archaeological Appraisal

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Appendix 4: Restoration and Development
Plan (A2, not to scale)