

= Ludlow Castle =

Ludlow Castle is a ruined medieval fortification in the town of the same name in the English county of Shropshire , standing on a promontory overlooking the River Teme . The castle was probably founded by Walter de Lacy after the Norman conquest and was one of the first stone castles to be built in England . During the civil war of the 12th century the castle changed hands several times between the de Lacy 's and rival claimants , and was further fortified with a Great Tower and a large outer bailey . In the mid @-@ 13th century , Ludlow was passed on to Geoffrey de Geneville who rebuilt part of the inner bailey , and the castle played a part in the Second Barons ' War . Roger Mortimer acquired the castle in 1301 , further extending the internal complex of buildings , and the Mortimer family went on to hold Ludlow for over a century .

Richard , the Duke of York , inherited the castle in 1425 , and it became an important symbol of Yorkist authority during the Wars of the Roses . When Richard 's son , Edward IV , seized the throne in 1461 it passed into the ownership of the Crown . Ludlow Castle was chosen as the seat of the Council in the Marches of Wales , effectively acting as the capital of Wales , and it was extensively renovated during throughout the 16th century . By the 17th century the castle was luxuriously appointed , hosting cultural events such as the first performance of John Milton 's masque Comus . Ludlow Castle was held by the Royalists during the English Civil War of the 1640s , until it was besieged and taken by a Parliamentarian army in 1646 . The contents of the castle were sold off and a garrison was retained there for much of the interregnum .

With the Restoration of 1660 , the Council was reestablished and the castle repaired , but Ludlow never recovered from the civil war years and when the Council was finally abolished in 1689 it fell into neglect . Henry Herbert , the Earl of Powis , leased the property from the Crown in 1772 , extensively landscaping the ruins , and his brother @-@ in @-@ law , Edward Clive , bought the castle outright in 1811 . A mansion was constructed in the outer bailey but the remainder of the castle was left largely untouched , attracting an increasing number of visitors and becoming a popular location for artists . After 1900 , Ludlow Castle was cleared of vegetation and over the course of the century it was extensively repaired by the Powis Estate and government bodies . In the 21st century it is still owned by the Earl of Powis and operated as a tourist attraction .

The architecture of Ludlow reflects its long history , retaining a blend of several styles of building . The castle is approximately 500 by 435 feet ( 152 by 133 m ) in size , covering almost 5 acres ( 2 @. @ 0 ha ) . The outer bailey includes the Castle House building , now used by the Powis Estate as offices and accommodation , while the inner bailey , separated by a trench cut out of the stone , houses the Great Tower , Solar block , Great Hall and Great Chamber block , along with later 16th century additions , as well as a rare , circular chapel , modelled on the shrine in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre . English Heritage notes that the ruins represent " a remarkably complete multi @-@ phase complex " and considers Ludlow to be " one of England 's finest castle sites " .

= = History = =

= = 11th century = =

Ludlow Castle was probably founded by Walter de Lacy around 1075 . Walter had arrived in England in 1066 as part of William fitzOsbern 's household during the Norman conquest of England . FitzOsbern was made the Earl of Hereford and tasked with settling the area ; at the same time , several castles were founded in the west of the county , securing its border with Wales . Walter de Lacy was the earl 's second in command , and was rewarded with 163 manors spread across seven counties , with 91 in Herefordshire alone .

Walter began building a castle within the manor of Stanton Lacy ; the fortification was originally called Dinham Castle , before it acquired its later name of Ludlow . Ludlow was the most important of Walter 's castles : as well as being at the heart of his new estates , the site also lay at a strategic crossroads over the Teme River , on a strong defensive promontory . Walter died in a construction

accident at Hereford in 1085 and was succeeded by his son , Roger de Lacy .

The castle 's Norman stone fortifications were added possibly as early as the 1080s onwards , and were finished before 1115 , based around what is now the inner bailey of the castle , forming a stone version of a ringwork . It had four towers and a gatehouse tower along the walls , with a ditch dug out of the rock along two sides , the excavated stone being reused for the building works , and would have been one of the very first masonry castles in England . With its circular design and grand entrance tower , it has been likened to the earlier Anglo -@ Saxon burghat designs . In 1096 , Roger was stripped of his lands after rebelling against William II and they were reassigned to Roger 's brother , Hugh .

= = = 12th century = = =

Hugh de Lacy died childless around 1115 , and Henry I gave Ludlow Castle and most of the surrounding estates to Hugh 's niece , Sybil , marrying her to Pain fitzJohn , one of his household staff . Pain used Ludlow as his caput , the main castle in his estates , using the surrounding estates and knight 's fees to support the castle and its defences . Pain died in 1137 fighting the Welsh , triggering a struggle for the inheritance of the castle . Robert fitzMiles , who had been planning to marry Pain 's daughter , laid claim to it , as did Gilbert de Lacy , Roger de Lacy 's son . By now , King Stephen had seized the English throne , but his position was insecure and he therefore gave Ludlow to fitzMiles in 1137 , in exchange for promises of future political support .

A civil war between Stephen and the Empress Matilda soon broke out and Gilbert took his chance to rise up against Stephen , seizing Ludlow Castle . Stephen responded by taking an army into the Welsh Marches , where he attempted to garner local support by marrying one of his knights , Joce de Dinan , to Sybil and granting the future ownership of the castle to them . Stephen took the castle after several attempts in 1139 , famously rescuing his ally Prince Henry of Scotland when the latter was caught on a hook thrown over the walls by the garrison . Gilbert still maintained that he was the rightful owner of Ludlow , however , and a private war ensued between Joce and himself . Gilbert was ultimately successful and retook the castle around a few years before the end of the civil war in 1153 . He ultimately left for the Levant , leaving Ludlow in the hands of firstly , his eldest son , Robert , and then , after Robert 's death , his younger son , Hugh de Lacy .

During this period , the Great Tower , a form of keep , was constructed by converting the entrance tower , probably either around the time of the siege of 1139 , or during the war between Gilbert and Joce . The old Norman castle had also begun to become too small for a growing household and , probably between 1140 and 1177 , an outer bailey was built to the south and east of the original castle , creating a large open space . In the process , the entrance to the castle shifted from the south to the east , to face the growing town of Ludlow . Gilbert probably built the circular chapel in the inner bailey , resembling the churches of the Templar order which he later joined .

Hugh took part in the Norman invasion of Ireland and in 1172 was made Lord of Meath ; he spent much time away from Ludlow , and Henry II confiscated the castle in his absence , probably to ensure that Hugh stayed loyal while in Ireland . Hugh died in Ireland in 1186 and the castle passed to his son , Walter , who was a minor and did not take charge of the property until 1194 . During Prince John 's rebellion against Richard I in 1194 , Walter joined in the attacks against the prince ; Richard did not approve of this and confiscated Ludlow and Walter 's other properties . Walter de Lacy offered to buy back his land for 1 @, @ 000 marks , but the offer was rejected until in 1198 the vast sum of 3 @, @ 100 marks was finally agreed .

= = = 13th century = = =

Walter de Lacy travelled to Ireland in 1201 and the following year his properties , including Ludlow Castle , were once again confiscated to ensure his loyalty and placed under the control of William de Braose , his father @-@ in @-@ law . Walter 's lands were returned to him , subject to the payment of a fine of 400 marks , but in 1207 his disagreements with royal officials in Ireland led to King John seizing the castle and putting it under the control of William again . Walter reconciled himself with

John the following year , but meanwhile William himself had fallen out with the King ; violence broke out and both Walter and William took refuge in Ireland , with John taking control of Ludlow yet again . It was not until 1215 that their relationship recovered and John agreed to give Ludlow back to Walter . At some point during the early 13th century , the innermost bailey was constructed in the castle , creating an additional private space within the inner bailey .

In 1223 , King Henry III met with the Welsh prince Llywelyn ab Iorwerth at Ludlow Castle for peace talks , but the negotiations were unsuccessful . The same year Henry became suspicious of Walter 's activities in Ireland and , among other measures to secure his loyalty , Ludlow Castle was taken over by the Crown for a period of two years . This was cut short in May 1225 when Walter carried out a campaign against Henry 's enemies in Ireland and paid the King 3 @, @ 000 marks for the return of his castles and lands . During the 1230s , however , Walter had accumulated a thousand pounds of debt to Henry and private moneylenders which he was unable to repay . As a result , in 1238 he gave Ludlow Castle as collateral to the King , although the fortification was returned to him sometime before his death in 1241 .

Walter 's granddaughters Maud and Margaret were due to inherit Walter 's remaining estates on his death , but they were still unmarried , making it hard for them to hold property in their own right . Henry informally divided the lands up between them , giving Ludlow to Maud and marrying her to one of his royal favourites , Peter de Geneva , cancelling many of the debts they had inherited from Walter at the same time . Peter died in 1249 and Maud married a second time , this time to Geoffrey de Geneville , a friend of the Prince Edward , the future king . In 1260 , Henry officially split up Walter 's estate , allowing Geoffrey to retain the castle .

Henry lost control of power in the 1260s , resulting in the Second Barons ' War across England . Following the Royalist defeat in 1264 , the rebel leader Simon de Montfort seized Ludlow Castle , but it was recaptured shortly afterwards by Henry 's supporters , probably led by Geoffrey de Geneville . Prince Edward escaped from captivity in 1265 and met up with his supporters at the castle , before commencing his campaign to retake the throne , culminating in de Montfort 's defeat at Evesham later that year . Geoffrey continued to occupy the castle for the rest of the century under Edward I 's rule , prospering until his death in 1314 . Geoffrey built the Great Hall and the Solar block during his tenure of the castle , either between 1250 and 1280 , or later , in the 1280s and 1290s . The town walls of Ludlow also began to be constructed in the 13th century , probably from 1260 onwards , and these were linked to the castle to form a continuous ring of defences around the town .

== 14th century ==

Geoffrey and Maud 's oldest granddaughter , Joan , married Roger Mortimer in 1301 , giving Mortimer control of Ludlow Castle . Around 1320 , Roger built the Great Chamber block alongside the existing Great Hall and Solar complex , copying what was becoming a popular tripartite design for domestic castle buildings in the 14th century ; an additional building was also constructed by Roger on the location of the later Tudor Lodgings , and the Guardrobe Tower was added to the curtain wall . Between 1321 and 1322 Mortimer found himself on the losing side of the Despenser War and , after being imprisoned by Edward II , he escaped from the Tower of London in 1323 into exile .

While in France , Mortimer formed an alliance with Queen Isabella , Edward 's estranged wife , and together in 1327 they seized power in England . Mortimer was made the Earl of March and became extremely wealthy , possibly entertaining Edward III at the castle in 1329 . The earl built a new chapel in the Outer Bailey , named after Saint Peter , honouring the saint 's day on which he had escaped from the Tower . Mortimer 's work at Ludlow was probably intended to produce what the historian David Whitehead has termed a " show castle " with chivalric and Arthurian overtones , echoing the now archaic Norman styles of building . Mortimer fell from power the following year but his widow Joan was permitted to retain Ludlow .

Ludlow Castle gradually became the Mortimer family 's most important property , but for much of the rest of the century its owners were too young to control the castle personally . The castle was

first briefly inherited by Mortimer 's son , Edmund , and then in 1331 Mortimer 's young grandson , Roger , who eventually became a prominent soldier in the Hundred Years War . Roger 's young son , Edmund , inherited the castle in 1358 , and also grew up to become involved in the war with France . Both Roger and Edmund used a legal device called " the use " , effectively giving Ludlow Castle to trustees during their lifetimes in exchange for annual payments ; this reduced their tax liabilities and gave them more control over the distribution of the estates on their deaths . Edmund 's son , another Roger , inherited the castle in 1381 , but King Richard II took the opportunity of Roger 's minority to exploit the Mortimer estates until they were put into the control of a committee of major nobles . When Roger died in 1398 , Richard again took wardship of the castle on behalf of the young heir , Edmund , until he was deposed from power in 1399 .

= = = 15th century = = =

Ludlow Castle was in the wardship of King Henry IV , when the Owain Glyndŵr revolt broke out across Wales . Military captains were appointed to the castle to protect it from the rebel threat , in the first instance John Lovel and then Henry 's half @-@ brother , Sir Thomas Beaufort . Roger Mortimer 's younger brother , Edmund , set out from the castle with an army against the rebels in 1402 , but was captured at the Battle of Bryn Glas . Henry refused to ransom him , and he eventually married one of Glyndŵr 's daughters , before dying during the siege of Harlech Castle in 1409 .

Henry placed the young heir to Ludlow , another Edmund Mortimer , under house arrest in the south of England , and kept a firm grip on Ludlow Castle himself . This persisted until Henry V finally granted Edmund his estates in 1413 , with Edmund going on to serve the Crown overseas . As a result , the Mortimers rarely visited the castle during the first part of the century , despite the surrounding town having become prosperous in the wool and cloth trades . Edmund fell heavily into debt and having sold his rights to his Welsh estates to a consortium of nobles , before dying childless in 1425 .

The castle was inherited by Edmund 's sister 's young son , Richard the Duke of York , who took possession in 1432 . Richard took a keen interest in the castle , which formed the administrative base for his estates around the region , possibly living there in the late 1440s and definitely residing there for much of the 1450s . Richard also established his sons , including the future Edward IV , and their household at the castle in the 1450s , and was possibly responsible for rebuilding the northern part of the Great Tower during this period .

The Wars of the Roses broke out between the Lancastrians and Richard 's Yorkist faction in the 1450s . Ludlow Castle did not find itself in the front @-@ line of most of the conflict , instead acting as a safe retreat away from the main fighting . An exception to this was the Battle of Ludford Bridge which took place just outside the town of Ludlow in 1459 , resulting in a largely bloodless victory for the Lancastrian Henry VI . After the battle , in a bid to break Richard 's power over the region , Edmund de la Mare was placed in charge of the castle as constable , with John Talbot , the Earl of Shrewsbury , being given the wider lordship . Richard was killed in battle in 1460 , and his son Edward seized the throne the following year , retaking control of Ludlow Castle and merging it with the property of the Crown .

The new Edward IV visited the castle regularly and established a council there to govern his estates in Wales . He probably conducted only modest work on the property , although he may could have been responsible for the remodelling of the Great Tower . In 1473 , possibly influenced by his own childhood experiences at Ludlow , Edward sent his eldest son , the future Edward V , and his brother Prince Richard to live at the castle , which was also made the seat of the newly created Council in the Marches of Wales . By now Ludlow had become primarily residential , rather than military , but was still rich in chivalric connotations and a valuable symbol of the Yorkist authority and their claim to the throne . Edward died in 1483 , but after Henry VII took the throne in 1485 he continued to use Ludlow Castle as a regional base , granting it to his son , Prince Arthur , in 1493 , and reestablishing the dormant Council in the Marches at the property .

== 16th century ==

In 1501 , Prince Arthur arrived in Ludlow for his honeymoon with his bride Catherine of Aragon , before dying the following year . The Council in the Marches of Wales continued to operate , however , under the guidance of its president , Bishop William Smyth . The council evolved into a combination of a governmental body and a court of law , settling a range of disputes across Wales and charged with maintaining general order , and Ludlow Castle became effectively the capital of Wales .

Mary Tudor , daughter of Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII , spent 19 months at Ludlow overseeing the Council of the Marches between 1525 and 1528 , along with her entourage of servants , advisors , and guardians . The relatively small sum of £ 5 was spent restoring the castle before her arrival . The council 's wide ranging role was reinforced in legislation in 1534 , and its purpose was further elaborated in the Act of Union of 1543 ; some presidents , such as Bishop Rowland Lee , used its harsher powers extensively to execute local criminals , but later presidents typically preferred to punish with the pillory , whipping or imprisonment in the castle . The Great Chamber itself was used as the council 's meeting room .

The establishment of the Council in Ludlow Castle gave it a new lease of life , during a period in which many similar fortifications were falling into decay . By the 1530s , the castle needed considerable renovation ; Lee began work in 1534 , borrowing money to do so , but Sir Thomas Engleford complained the following year that the castle was still unfit for habitation . Lee repaired the castle roofs , probably using lead from the Carmelite friary in the town , and using the fines imposed and the goods confiscated by the court . He later claimed that the work on the castle would have cost around £ 500 , had the Crown had to pay for it all directly . The porter 's lodge and prison were built in the outer bailey around 1552 . The woods around the castle were gradually cut down during the 16th century .

Elizabeth I , influenced by her royal favourite Robert Dudley , appointed Sir Henry Sidney as President of the Council in 1560 , and he took up residence at Ludlow Castle . Henry was a keen antiquarian with an interest in chivalry , and used his post to restore much of the castle in a late @-@ perpendicular style . He extended the castle by building family apartments between the Great Hall and Mortimer 's Tower , and used the former royal apartments as a guest wing , starting a tradition of decorating the Great Hall with the coats of arms of council officers . The larger windows in the castle were glazed , a clock installed and water piped into the castle . The judicial facilities were improved with a new courthouse converted out of the 14th @-@ century chapel , facilities for prisoners and storage facilities for the court records , Mortimer 's Tower in the outer bailey being turned into a record depository . The restoration was generally sympathetic and , although it included a fountain , a real tennis court , walks and viewing platform , it was less ephemeral a make @-@ over than seen in other castle restorations of the period .

== 17th century ==

The castle was luxuriously appointed by the 17th century , with an expensive , but grand , household based around the Council of the Marches . The future Charles I was declared Prince of Wales in the castle by James I in 1616 , and Ludlow was made his principal castle in Wales . A company called the " Queen 's Players " entertained the Council in the 1610s , and in 1634 John Milton 's masque Comus was performed in the Great Hall for John Egerton , Earl of Bridgewater . The Council faced increased criticism over its legal practices , however , and in 1641 an Act of Parliament stripped it of its judicial powers .

When the English Civil War broke out in 1642 between the supporters of King Charles and those of Parliament , Ludlow and the surrounding region supported the Royalists . A Royalist garrison was put in place in the town , under the command of Sir Michael Woodhouse , and the defences were strengthened , with artillery being brought from nearby Bringwood Forge for the castle . As the war turned against the King in 1644 , the garrison was drawn down to provide reinforcements for the field army . The military situation deteriorated and in 1645 the remaining outlying garrisons were

drawn in to protect Ludlow itself . In April 1646 Sir William Brereton and Colonel John Birch led a Parliamentary army from Hereford to take Ludlow ; after a short siege , Woodhouse surrendered the castle and town on good terms on 26 May .

During the years of the interregnum , Ludlow Castle continued to be run by Parliamentary governors , the first being the military commander Samuel More . There was a Royalist plot to retake the castle in 1648 , but no other military activity took place . The most valuable items in the castle were removed shortly after the siege , and the remainder of the luxurious furnishings were sold off in the town in 1650 . The castle was initially kept garrisoned , but in 1653 , most of the weapons in the castle were removed on the grounds of security and sent to Hereford , then in 1655 the garrison was disbanded altogether . In 1659 , the political instability in the Commonwealth government led to the castle being regarrisoned by 100 men under the command of William Botterell .

Charles II returned to the throne in 1660 and reinstated the Council of the Marches in 1661 , but the castle never recovered from the war . Richard Vaughan , the Earl of Carberry , was appointed president and given £ 2 @, @ 000 to renovate the castle , and between 1663 and 1665 , a company of infantry soldiers was garrisoned there , overseen by the earl , with the task of safeguard the money and contents of the castle as well as the ammunition for the local Welsh militia . The Council of the Marches failed to reestablish itself and was finally disbanded in 1689 , bringing an end to Ludlow Castle 's role in government . Uncared for , the condition of the castle rapidly deteriorated .

= = = 18th century = = =

The castle remained in disrepair , and in 1704 its governor , William Gower , proposed dismantling the castle and building a residential square on the site instead , in a more contemporary style . His proposal was not adopted but , by 1708 , only three rooms were still in use in the hall range , many of the other buildings in the inner bailey had fallen into disuse , and much of the remaining furniture was rotten or broken . Shortly after 1714 , the roofs were stripped of their lead and the wooden floors began to collapse ; the writer Daniel Defoe visited in 1722 , and noted that the castle " is in the very Perfection of Decay " . Nonetheless , some rooms remained usable for many years afterwards , possibly as late as the 1760s and 1770s , when drawings show the entrance block to the inner bailey to still be intact , and visitors remarked on the good condition of the round chapel . The stonework became overgrown with ivy , trees and shrubs , and by 1800 the chapel of Saint Mary Magdalene had finally degenerated into ruin .

Alexander Stuart , an Army captain who served as the last governor of the castle , stripped down what remained of the fortification in the mid @-@ 1700s . Some of the stone was reused to build the Bowling Green House ? later renamed the Castle Inn ? on the north end of the tennis courts , while the north side of the outer bailey was used to make the bowling green itself . Stuart lived in a house in Ludlow itself , but decorated the Great Hall with the remains of the castle armoury , and may have charged visitors for admittance .

It became fashionable to restore castles as private homes , and the future George II may have considered making Ludlow habitable again , but was deterred by the estimated costs of £ 30 @, @ 000 . Henry Herbert , the Earl of Powis , later became interested in acquiring the castle and in 1771 approached the Crown about leasing it . It is uncertain if he intended to further strip the castle of its materials or , more likely , if he intended to turn it into a private home , but the castle was , according to Powis ' surveyor 's report later that year , already " extremely ruinous " , the walls " mostly rubble and the battlements greatly decayed " . The Crown offered a 31 @-@ year lease at £ 20 a year , which Powis accepted in 1772 , only to die shortly afterwards .

Henry 's son , George Herbert , maintained the lease and his wife , Henrietta , constructed gravel @-@ laid public walks around the castle , dug into the surrounding cliffs , and planted trees around the grounds to improve the castle 's appearance . The castle walls and towers were given superficial repairs and tidied up , usually when parts threatened to collapse , and the interior of the inner bailey levelled , costing considerable sums of money . The landscape also required expensive maintenance and repairs .

The town of Ludlow was increasingly fashionable and frequented by tourists , with the castle

forming a particularly popular attraction . Thomas Warton published an edition of Milton 's poems in 1785 , describing Ludlow Castle and popularising the links to Comus , reinforcing the castle 's reputation as a picturesque and sublime location . The castle became a topic for painters interested in these themes : J. M. W. Turner , Francis Towne , Thomas Hearne , Julius Ibbetson , Peter de Wint and William Marlowe all produced depictions of the castle during the late 18th and early 19th centuries , usually taking some artistic licence with the details in order to produce atmospheric works .

= = = 19th century = = =

Lord Clive , George 's brother @-@ in @-@ law and heir , attempted to acquire the lease after 1803 , citing the efforts that the family had put in to restoring the castle . He faced competition for the lease from the government 's Barrack Office , who were considering using the castle as a French prisoner @-@ of @-@ war camp for up to 4 @,@ 000 inmates from the Napoleonic wars . After some extensive discussions the prisoner @-@ of @-@ war plan was finally dropped , and Lord Clive , by now declared the Earl of Powis , was offered the chance to buy the castle outright for £ 1 @,@ 560 , which he accepted in 1811 .

Between 1820 and 1828 the earl had converted the abandoned tennis court and the Castle Inn ? which he closed in 1812 after buying the castle ? into a new , grand building , called Castle House , overlooking the north side of the outer bailey . By the 1840s the house had been leased out , first to George Hodges and his family , and then to William Urwick and to Robert Marston , all important members of the local landowning classes . The mansion included a drawing room , dining room , study , servants ' quarters , a conservatory and grapevines , and in 1887 was worth £ 50 a year in rent .

During the 19th century , vegetation continued to grow over the castle 's stonework , although after a survey by Arthur Blomfield in 1883 , which highlighted the damage being caused by the ivy , attempts were made to control the plants , cleaning them off many of the walls . Ludlow Castle was held in high esteem by Victorian antiquarians , George Clark referring to it as " the glory of the middle marches of Wales " and as being " probably without rival in Britain " for its woodland setting . When Ludlow became connected to the growing railway network in 1852 , the numbers of tourists to the castle increased , with admission costing six pence in 1887 . The castle was put to a wide range of uses . The grassy areas of the bailey were kept cropped by grazing sheep and goats , and used for fox hunting meetings , sporting events and agricultural shows ; parts of the outer bailey was used as a timber yard , and , by the turn of the century , the old prison was used as an ammunition store by the local volunteer militia .

= = = 20th century = = =

W. H. St John Hope and Harold Brakspear began a sequence of archaeological investigations at Ludlow Castle in 1903 , publishing their conclusions in 1909 in an account which continues to be held in regard by modern academics . Christian Herbert , the Earl of Powis , cleared away much of the ivy and vegetation from the castle stonework . In 1915 the castle was declared an ancient monument by the state , but it continued to be owned and maintained by the earl and trustees of the Powis estate .

The castle was increasingly rigorously maintained , and during the 1910s and 1920s the larger trees around the castle were cut down , and the animals were cleared from the inner and outer baileys on the basis that they posed a health and safety risk to visitors . The 1930s saw a major effort to clear the remaining vegetation from the castle , the cellars were cleared of debris by the government 's Office of Works and the stable block was converted into a museum . Tourists continued to visit the castle , with the 1920s and 1930s seeing many day @-@ trips by teams of workers in the region encouraged by the growth in motor transport . The open spaces inside the castle were used by the local townsfolk for football matches and similar events , and in 1934 Milton 's Comus was restaged in the castle to mark the 300th anniversary of the first such event .

Castle House in the outer bailey was leased to the diplomat Sir Alexander Stephen in 1901 , who carried out extensive work on the property in 1904 , extending and modernising the north end of the house , including constructing a billiard room and a library ; he estimated the cost of the work to be around £ 800 . Castle House continued to be leased out by the Powis estate to wealthy individuals up until the Second World War . One such lessee , Richard Henderson observed that he had spent around £ 4 @, @ 000 maintaining and upgrading the property , and the rentable value of the property rose from £ 76 to £ 150 over the period .

During the Second World War the castle was used by the Allied military . The Great Tower was used as a look @-@ out post and United States ' forces used the castle gardens for baseball games . Castle House fell empty after the death of its final lessee , James Geenway ; the house was then briefly requisitioned in 1942 by the Royal Air Force and turned into flats for key war workers , causing extensive damage later estimated at £ 2 @, @ 000 . In 1956 , Castle House was de @-@ requisitioned and sold by the Earl of Powis the following year to Ludlow Borough Council for £ 4 @, @ 000 , which rented out the flats .

During the 1970s and early 1980s the Department of the Environment assisted the Powis estate by lending government staff to repair the castle . Visitor numbers were falling , however , in part due the dilapidated condition of the property , and the estate became increasingly unable to afford to maintain the castle . After 1984 , when the function of the department was taken over by English Heritage , a more systematic approach was put into place . This based around a partnership in which the Powis Estate would retain ownership of the castle and develop visitor access , in exchange for a £ 500 @, @ 000 contribution from English Heritage for a jointly @-@ funded programme of repairs and maintenance , delivered through specialist contractors . This included repairs to the parts of the curtain wall , which collapsed in 1990 , and the redevelopment of the visitor 's centre . Limited archaeological excavation was carried out in the outer bailey between 1992 and 1993 by the City of Hereford Archaeology Unit .

= = = 21st century = = =

In the 21st century , Ludlow Castle is owned by John Herbert , the current Earl of Powis , but is held and managed by the Trustees of the Powis Castle Estate as a tourist attraction . The castle was receiving over 100 @, @ 000 visitors a year by 2005 , more than in previous decades . The castle traditionally hosts a Shakespearean play as part of the annual cultural Ludlow Festival in the town , and is at the centre of the Ludlow Food and Drink Festival each September .

English Heritage considers Ludlow to be " one of England 's finest castle sites " , with the ruins representing " a remarkably complete multi @-@ phase complex " . It is protected under UK law as a Scheduled Monument and a Grade I listed building . By the 21st century , however , Castle House had become dilapidated and English Heritage placed it on its " at risk " register . In 2002 , the Powis Estate repurchased the property from the South Shropshire District Council for £ 500 @, @ 000 , renovating it and converting it for use as offices and rental apartments , reopening the building in 2005 .

= = Architecture = =

Ludlow Castle sits on a rocky promontory , overlooking the modern town of Ludlow on lower ground to the east , while the ground slopes steeply from the castle to the rivers Corve and Teme to the south and west , about 100 feet ( 30 m ) below . The castle is broadly rectangular in shape , and approximately 500 by 435 feet ( 152 by 133 m ) in size , covering almost 5 acres ( 2 @. @ 0 ha ) in total . The interior is divided into two main parts : an inner bailey which occupies the north @-@ west corner and a much larger outer bailey . A third enclosure , known as the innermost bailey , was created in the early 13th century when walls were built to enclose the south @-@ west corner of the inner ward . The castle 's walls are linked to Ludlow 's medieval town wall circuit on the south and east sides . The castle is built from a range of different types of stone ; the Norman stone work is constructed from greenish @-@ grey siltstone rubble , with the ashlar and quoin features carved



from red sandstone , with the later work primarily using local red sandstone .

### == Outer bailey ==

The outer bailey is entered through a gatehouse ; inside , the space within the curtain walls is divided into two . On the north side of the outer bailey is Castle House and its gardens ; the house is a two @-@ storeyed property , based around the old walls of the tennis court and the Castle Inn , and the curtain wall . The north end of Castle House butts onto Beacon Tower , overlooking the town .

The other half of the outer bailey houses the 16th @-@ century porter 's lodge , prison and stable block which run along its eastern edge . The porter 's lodge and prison comprise two buildings , 40 feet ( 12 m ) and 58 by 23 feet ( 17 @.@ 7 by 7 @.@ 0 m ) across , both two @-@ storeyed and well built in ashlar stone , with a stable block on the far end , more crudely built in stone and 66 by 21 feet ( 20 @.@ 1 by 6 @.@ 4 m ) in size . The exterior of the prison was originally decorated with the coats of arms of Henry , the Earl of Pembroke , and Queen Elizabeth I , but these have since been destroyed , as have the barred windows which once protected the property .

Along the south of the bailey are the remains of St Peter 's , a former 14th @-@ century chapel , approximately 21 by 52 feet ( 6 @.@ 4 by 15 @.@ 8 m ) in size , later converted to a courthouse by the addition of an extension reaching up to the western curtain wall . The courtroom occupied the whole of the combined first floor with records kept in the rooms underneath . The south @-@ west corner of the outer bailey is cut off by a modern wall from the rest of the bailey .

The western curtain wall is approximately 6 @-@ foot @-@ 5 @-@ inch ( 1 @.@ 96 m ) thick , and guarded by the 13th @-@ century Mortimer 's Tower , 18 feet ( 5 @.@ 5 m ) across externally , with a ground floor vaulted chamber inside , 12 @-@ foot ( 3 @.@ 7 m ) large . When first built , Mortimer 's Tower was a three storey gateway with an unusual D @-@ shaped design , possibly similar to those at Trim Castle in Ireland , but in the 15th century the entrance way was blocked up to turn it into a conventional mural tower , and in the 16th century an additional internal floor was inserted . The tower is now roofless , although it was roofed as late as the end of the 19th century .

### == Inner bailey ==

The inner bailey represents the extent of the original Norman castle and is protected by a curtain wall between 5 @-@ foot ( 1 @.@ 5 m ) and 6 @-@ foot ( 1 @.@ 8 m ) thick . On the south and west sides the wall is protected by a ditch , originally up to 80 @-@ foot ( 24 m ) deep , cut out of the rock and navigated by a bridge which still contains part of the ashlar stone of its 16th century predecessor . Within the inner bailey , a separate area , called the innermost bailey , was created by the addition of a 5 @-@ foot ( 1 @.@ 5 m ) thick stone wall around the south @-@ west corner in the early 13th century .

The gatehouse to the inner bailey has the coats of arms of Sir Henry Sidney and Queen Elizabeth I displayed over it , dating to 1581 , and was originally a three @-@ storeyed building with transomed windows and fireplaces , probably used as the lodgings for the judges . There were probably additional heraldic supporters displayed alongside the arms , since lost . A porter 's lodge would have been on the right hand side of the entrance to control access , with the rooms accessed by a spiral staircase in a protruding tower , with prominent triple chimneys , since lost . Alongside the gatehouse was originally a half @-@ timbered building , possibly a laundry , approximately 48 by 15 feet ( 14 @.@ 6 by 4 @.@ 6 m ) , which has since been lost .

On the east side of the bailey is the 12th @-@ century chapel of Saint Mary Magdalene . The circular , Romanesque design of the chapel is unusual , with only three similar examples existing in England , at Castle Rising , Hereford and Pevensey . Built from sandstone , the circular design imitates the shrine at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre . Originally the chapel had a nave , a square presbytery , 3 @.@ 8 by 3 @.@ 8 metres ( 12 by 12 ft ) in size , and a chancel , but this design was heavily altered in the 16th century and only the nave survives . Although roofless , the nave survives to its full height and is 26 feet 3 inches ( 8 @.@ 00 m ) in diameter , visibly divided into two sections

by different bands of stonework , and with some plaster surviving on the lower level . Around the inside of the nave are 14 arcaded bays in the walls .

The north end of the bailey is occupied by a range of buildings , the Solar block , the Great Hall and the Great Chamber block , with the Tudor Lodgings in the north @-@ east corner . The Tudor Lodgings take the form of two rhomboids to fit into the space provided by the curtain wall , divided by a cross @-@ wall , the west side being approximately 33 by 15 feet ( 10 @.@ 1 by 4 @.@ 6 m ) , and the east side 33 by 21 feet ( 10 @.@ 1 by 6 @.@ 4 m ) . They were entered by a shared spiral staircase , a design used in various episcopal palaces in the 16th century , and originally provided sets of individual offices and personal rooms for the court officials , later being converted into two distinct apartments .

The Great Chamber block adjoining the Tudor Lodgings dates from around 1320 . Another rhomboid design , approximately 53 by 34 feet ( 16 by 10 m ) across , this originally had its main chamber on the first floor , but has been much altered over the subsequent years . The carved corbel heads that survive on the first floor may represent Edward II and Queen Isabella . Behind the Great Chamber block is the Guardrobe Tower , a four storeyed construction , providing a combination of bed chambers and guardrobes .

In the 13th @-@ century Great Hall , the hall itself was also positioned on the first floor , originally fitted with a wooden floor supported by stone pillars in the basement , and a massive wooden roof . It was 60 by 30 feet ( 18 @.@ 3 by 9 @.@ 1 m ) across : this 2 : 1 ratio between length and width was typical for castle halls of this period . The hall was reached by a flight of stone steps at the west end , and lit by three tall , trefoiled windows , each originally with its own window seat and south @-@ facing to receive the sunlight . Originally the hall had an open fire in the centre , which was normal for the 13th century , but the middle window was turned into a more modern fireplace around 1580 .

To the west of the Great Hall is the three @-@ storeyed Solar block , an irregular oblong measuring up to 26 by 39 feet ( 7 @.@ 9 by 11 @.@ 9 m ) in size . The first floor chamber would probably have been used as a solar , with the cellar being used as a service area . The Great Hall and Solar block were built at the same time in the 13th century , the builders carving out the inside of the old Norman tower behind them in the process . They were probably built in two phases and were originally intended to be smaller , less grand buildings , only for the design to be changed about halfway through construction ; they were finished in a rushed manner , the traces of which can still be seen , along with other changes made in the 16th and 17th centuries .

The North @-@ West and North @-@ East towers behind the northern range are Norman in origin , from the 11th and early 12th century . When first built , they were created by pushing or folding the line of the curtain wall outwards to create the desired external shape , and then adding timber floors and a timber wall at the back , rather than being designed as individual buildings . The timber parts of the towers were later replaced in stone , and incorporated into the later range of buildings . The North @-@ East Tower , also known as the Pendover Tower , was originally two @-@ storeys high , with a third floor added on in the 14th century , followed by an extensive remodelling of the inside in the 16th century . It has chamfered angles on the external corners to make it harder to attack the stonework , although this has weakened the structural strength of the tower as a whole . The North @-@ West Tower had similar chamfered corners , but the Closet Tower was built alongside it in the 13th century , altering the external appearance . Two more Norman towers survive in the innermost bailey , the West Tower , also known as the Postern Tower , because it contained a postern gate , and the South @-@ West tower , also called the Oven Tower , on account of its cooking facilities . The Norman towers looked out towards Wales , probably to make a symbolic statement .

A range , now lost , once stretched from the innermost bailey towards the Great Hall , including a large stone house running along the curtain wall , 54 by 20 feet ( 16 @.@ 5 by 6 @.@ 1 m ) in size , and on the other side of the innermost bailey , the Great Kitchen , 31 by 23 feet ( 9 @.@ 4 by 7 @.@ 0 m ) in size , built around the same time as the Great Hall , and an oven building , since lost , 21 by 27 feet ( 6 @.@ 4 by 8 @.@ 2 m ) .

The Great Tower , or keep , is on the south side of the innermost bailey . A roughly square building , four storeys tall , most of its walls are 8 @-@ foot @-@ 6 @-@ inch ( 2 @.@ 59 m ) thick , with the

exception of its newer northern facing wall , only 7 @-@ foot @-@ 6 @-@ inch ( 2 @.@ 29 m ) thick . The Great Tower was constructed in several stages . Originally it was a relatively large gatehouse in the original Norman castle , probably with accommodation over the gateway , before being extended to form the Great Tower in the mid @-@ 12th century , although still being used as a gatehouse for the inner bailey . When the innermost bailey was created in the early 13th century , the gateway was then filled in and a new gateway cut into the inner bailey wall just to the east of the Great Tower . Finally , the north side of the tower was rebuilt in the mid @-@ 15th century to produce the Great Tower that appears today . The keep has a vaulted basement , 20 @-@ foot ( 6 @.@ 1 m ) high , with Norman wall arcading , and a row of windows along the first floor , since mostly blocked . The arcading echoes that in the chapel , and probably dates from around 1080 . The windows and large entrance @-@ way would have looked impressive , but would also have been very hard to defend ; this form of tower probably reflected earlier Anglo @-@ Saxon high @-@ status towers and was intended to display lordship . The first floor originally formed a tall hall , 29 by 17 feet ( 8 @.@ 8 by 5 @.@ 2 m ) across , which was subsequently subdivided into two separate floors .

= = = = Early 12th century chapel = = = =