

= Cholmondeley Castle =

Cholmondeley Castle (/ ʧɒlmɒndiːleɪ / CHUM @-@ lee) is a country house in the civil parish of Cholmondeley , Cheshire , England . Together with its adjacent formal gardens it is surrounded by parkland . The site of the house has been a seat of the Cholmondeley family since the 12th century . The present house replaced a timber @-@ framed hall nearby . It was built at the start of the 19th century for George Cholmondeley , 1st Marquess of Cholmondeley , who designed most of it himself in the form of a battlemented castle . After the death of the Marquess , the house was extended to designs by Robert Smirke to produce the building in its present form . The house is designated by English Heritage as a Grade II * listed building .

The first formal garden was designed in the 17th century by George London . Following neglect in the 18th century , the garden was re @-@ ordered by William Emes , who also created the landscape park . During the 20th century the garden was further developed under the care of Lavinia , widow of the late 6th Marquess . The park and gardens are listed at Grade II in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens . In the park and gardens are a number of other listed buildings . The most important of these is St Nicholas ' Chapel , which dates back to the 13th century , contains much 17th @-@ century furniture , and is listed in the National Heritage List for England at Grade I. Standing across the main drive is a wrought iron screen and gateway made by Robert Bakewell in 1722 for the Old Hall , and moved here in the early 19th century ; this is listed at Grade II * . The buildings listed at Grade II include the altered remains of the Old Hall , five of the lodges in and around the estate , and a variety of structures in the gardens .

During the Second World War , the house and grounds were used for a variety of military purposes , including acting as a hospital . Until her death in November 2015 , the house was occupied by Lavinia , Marchioness of Cholmondeley , mother of the present Marquess of Cholmondeley , who lives in the other family seat , Houghton Hall in Norfolk . The house is not open to the public , but the park and gardens are open during the summer season . A variety of events are organised in the grounds , and one of the lodges can be used as a holiday cottage .

= = History = =

= = = Old Hall = = =

The site of the house has been a family seat of the Cholmondeley family since the 12th century . In the 16th century the house was a timber @-@ framed hall standing on a moated platform . The house and its separate chapel were damaged by the Parliamentarians the following century , during the English Civil War , and were subsequently repaired by Robert Cholmondeley , 1st Earl of Leinster . In 1701 Hugh Cholmondeley , 1st Earl of Cholmondeley commissioned William Smith of Warwick to encase the house with brick and to add features such as giant columns and balustraded parapets with urns and statues . By 1712 the earl had lost patience with Smith and asked John Vanbrugh to prepare a new design , but it was never executed . In 1722 wrought iron gates and railings made by Robert Bakewell were used to enclose the forecourt of the house . During the 18th century the house became neglected . In 1770 it was inherited by George Cholmondeley , the 4th Earl of Cholmondeley , who decided to replace it with a new building and demolished most of the Old Hall .

= = = Present house = = =

Building of the new house in the style of a castle began in 1801 . It was designed mainly by the Earl in collaboration with the architect William Turner of Whitchurch . The design was symmetrical ; the entrance front facing west and consisting of two castellated blocks , between which was a single @-@ storey loggia . Behind the loggia was the full @-@ height entrance hall . Facing the park on the east side of the house were the three main state rooms . This phase of building the house was

completed in 1805 . Much of the construction material was recycled from the old house , including bricks , glass , windows , woodwork and chimneypieces . Bakewell 's railings , without the gates , were moved to form a screen on the main drive . In 1817 George Cholmondeley (now the 1st Marquess) started a series of enlargements to the house , beginning with a new dining room . Two years later a family wing with a tall rectangular tower was added to the south of the house ; both of these additions were designed by the Marquess . They were followed by the addition of two octagonal angle turrets . The Marquess died in 1828 , and soon after that Robert Smirke was commissioned to make further additions and alterations . The main addition was a round tower on the southeast corner of the family wing . Smirke also brought forward the central tower of the east front by adding a canted bay , giving the house its present appearance . This work was completed in 1829 .

= = = Later history = = =

In common with many other country estates and stately homes , special roles were allocated to Cholmondeley during the Second World War . Between July and October 1940 the grounds were the home of troops serving the Czechoslovak government @-@ in @-@ exile . Later they were used in the preparations for Operation Anthropoid , an assassination attempt on Reinhard Heydrich . Cholmondeley was also used as a Royal Navy Auxiliary Hospital , which treated serving men suffering from nervous breakdowns .

The house was designated a Grade II * listed building on 10 June 1952 . The current Marquess , David Cholmondeley , 7th Marquess , does not live at Cholmondeley but at the other family seat , Houghton Hall in Norfolk . As of 2014 Cholmondeley Castle is occupied by his mother , Lavinia .

= = Architecture = =

= = = Exterior = = =

The house is constructed in sandstone with roofs of slate and lead . It is mainly in two storeys with a basement , and has towers rising to a greater height . The entire building has a battlemented parapet . The entrance front faces west and consists of two three @-@ storey wings in three bays with a single @-@ storey three @-@ bay loggia between them . The windows in the lateral blocks have Gothic @-@ style arches and contain Y @-@ tracery . In the loggia the windows each have two lights under almost circular heads . Above and behind the loggia the upper storeys of the entrance hall also contain Y @-@ tracery . On the right side of the entrance front is a square five @-@ storey tower , which is linked to an octagonal turret containing arrow slits . The garden front , facing east , has octagonal corner turrets between which is a large canted bay window which rises up to form a half @-@ tower . The section to the left of this faces south , and is in two storeys with three bays . It contains French windows , and windows with trefoil heads containing Y @-@ tracery . There is then a two @-@ storey two @-@ bay section , and finally Smirke 's service wing with its large round tower containing arrow slits .

= = = Interior = = =

The loggia leads into the double @-@ height entrance hall . This has blind arcades on the side walls . Opposite the entrance is an open arcade leading to a north @-@ south passage , Beyond this is the ante @-@ room with its large canted bay window . This room has a simple dentil cornice . To the north of it is the dining room , with a marble mantelpiece , a cornice decorated with gilded flowers and leaves and , in the ceiling , rosettes and a large central rose with a chandelier . To the south of the ante @-@ room is the drawing room . Here the cornice is decorated with arrows pointing downward , and there is a central rose with a chandelier . Leading from the drawing room is the staircase hall , with an open @-@ well staircase . The hall is top @-@ lit from a timber lantern .

The stairs are in black marble , the wrought iron balustrade on the stairs and landing was made by Robert Bakewell and moved from the Old Hall , and the handrail is in rosewood . To the south of the staircase hall is the nursery suite and the library . The Bird Room , between the staircase and the drawing room , contains a collection of muniments . The arrangement of rooms and corridors in the upper rooms is complex . The kitchens and domestic offices are in the basement .

= = Grounds = =

= = = Chapel = = =

The Grade I listed chapel originated as a timber @-@ framed structure in the 13th century . It was encased in brick and extended in 1717 , and further additions were made in 1829 and 1840 . It has a slate roof , and is in a cruciform plan . Much of its furniture dates from the 17th century . The Cholmondeley family pew is at the west end , in an elevated position .

= = = Gardens and park = = =

The first formal gardens were established in the 17th century by Hugh Cholmondeley , 1st Earl of Cholmondeley . These were in the French style , containing canals and alleés . The gardens were designed by George London , and included gates and railings by Jean Tijou , and statues by Jan van Nost . Following neglect in the 18th century , the 4th Earl employed William Emes to re @-@ model the garden . Emes converted the formal garden into a landscape park , planting large numbers of trees and creating lakes . Further development of the gardens was carried out by John Webb , a student of Emes , who probably designed the terrace immediately around the house . Since the middle of the 20th century the gardens have been under the care of Lavinia , the widow of the late 6th Marquess , who has tidied and improved them , and added new features .

The house is surrounded by a terrace to the south of which are three interlinked gardens : the Silver Garden , the Lily Pool Garden , and an area containing a swimming pool . Beyond are lawns , groups of specimen trees and shrubs , gravelled paths , and a walled garden . A major feature is the Temple Garden , which contains an irregular pool within which are two small islands . On one of the islands is a structure in the form of a temple . At the west end of the garden is a rotunda . To the northwest of the Temple Garden is the Rose Garden . Beyond the gardens is a park , which is mainly grassland with some trees . Features in the park include a ha @-@ ha and two lakes , Chapel Mere and Deer Park Mere . Since 10 June 1985 the gardens and park have been listed at Grade II in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens . The area covered by the designation amounts to about 240 ha .

= = Listed buildings = =

In addition to the house being listed at Grade II * and the chapel at Grade I , there are other listed structures associated with the house . Richard Bakewell 's screen , standing across the main drive is listed at Grade II * . All the other listed buildings are designated at Grade II . Five are associated with the Temple Garden : the temple itself , the rotunda , the bridge over the pond , with its parapets consisting of stone dolphins , a sculpture in lead by van Nost depicting three cherubs , and the gated entrance , possibly by Jean Tijou . The north and south gates of the chapel enclosure , made by Bakewell in 1722 and installed in 1829 , are both listed . Five of the lodges associated with the castle , three of them within the grounds , are listed : Dee Park Lodge , on the southeast approach to the castle ; Park House Lodge , on the north approach ; and Somerset Lodge , a gatehouse on the east approach , designed by S. S. Teulon . The other two are at the entrances to the grounds : Nantwich Lodge , at the original south entrance , and Beeston Lodge , a lodge and gateway at the east approach . The other listed buildings are the reduced and altered remains of the Old Hall , The Mews , adapted from the former stables , Park House , and Scotch Farm , developed from the

original stables . A bridge on the east approach to the house is also listed .

= = Present day = =

The house is not open to visitors , but during the summer season the gardens can be visited . Available facilities include tea rooms , picnic and play areas , and a nature trail . Visitors can see a variety of farm animals in the stables and paddocks . During the summer season a programme of events is organised , including an annual Pageant of Power . Somerset Lodge is available for use as a holiday cottage .