

DODDINGTON HALL



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by Lucy Williams

With its exterior withstanding zero remarkable change for more than 400 years, Doddington Hall is an Elizabethan country house located just on the outskirts of Lincoln, 40 minutes from Grantham.

The Hall stands as a direct example of late Elizabethan architecture and its resistance against the tides of time. It has a distinctive H-shaped plan and impressive gatehouse, reflecting the changing style of English country houses seen at the end of the Tudor period. The estate was initially built between 1593 and 1600 by renowned architect Robert Smythson, under the commission of Thomas Tailor, lawyer and registrar to the Bishop of Lincoln. It was built in the direct eye-line of Lincoln Cathedral, and made a grand fortune for Tailor during the Elizabethan property boom, also recognised by scholars as the 'Great Rebuilding', which lasted roughly from the late 16th century up until the mid-17th.

This was a period of architectural renovation emerging across England, in which English architecture shifted from fortified castles into more comfortable and visually striking designs, also known as 'prodigy houses'. Similar to that of Burghley House, Doddington Hall was similarly built with an interest in lavish exterior and family wealth in mind. This renders it similar to many country houses found across Lincolnshire, a representation of both England's architectural, economic and cultural history. The gardens are also another important feature of Doddington, covering around five acres across the estate. The surrounding parkland is also rendered historically significant, and is listed by Historic England as a Grade II* registered park and garden. Doddington Hall first opened

to the public in 1954, and is currently maintained by the Birch family and the Doddington Hall Conservation charity. As of today, the Hall publicly combines historic preservation with the activities of a working estate. Visitors are welcome to explore the Hall and gardens, and take part in numerous events and seasonal activities. Notable upcoming events being the month-long pumpkin-picking held throughout October, alongside the Fairytale Scarecrow Display visible closer to the Halloween period. Doddington Hall is therefore much more than a historic building, but rather a preserved statue of the country's architectural and economic past, and a symbol of the sustainability and preservation of notable country estates for the future.