

Earth Energies Group – Visit to Miserden Castle Saturday 18th July 2026

Introduction

The Miserden Park motte and baily Norman castle is a scheduled monument and lies within the Grade 11 registered park. It has a history dating back to when it was built sometime before 1146.

History

The castle was built before 1146 by Robert Musard, after whose family the local village is named. Robert Musard was killed by forces loyal to King Stephen (1125 – 1154) during the years of the Anarchy and the castle was seized by Philip of Gloucester. Documented resources indicate that it ceased to be occupied between 1266 to 1289,.It was replaced by a manor in the 14th century on a new site. The castle was destroyed during the Wars of the Roses (1455 – 1487).

Motte and baily castles comprised a large conical mound of earth or rubble, known as the motte, which was surmounted by a palisade and a stone or timber tower. In most examples an embanked enclosure containing additional buildings, the baily, adjoined the motte. Immediately after the Norman Conquest, these earthwork and timber strongholds were rapidly built across England, in a variety of strategic positions, and proved to be very effective as a means of subjugation and control.

The Miserden Motte and Baily Castle

The Miserden motte and baily castle is well preserved and of considerable strength. It occupies the whole of a small, deep sided densely wooded rocky spur, formed by a meander of the river Frome, and is effectively sited to control any crossing. The motte survives as an oval mound of approximately 40m long, 34m wide and 10m high surrounded by a massive rock cut ditch of up to 10m wide and 6.1m deep. Excavations in 1907 and 1915 revealed a gatehouse at the foot of the motte, other masonry remains and finds of 13th century date including ridge crest tiles.

Dowsing at Miserden Castle

The Slimbridge Dowsing Group last visited the Miserden motte and baily castle in May 2013. As far as I know this visit was never written up. However, from memory I remember an energetic site with plenty to dowse. There was a central node or vortex with energy lines crossing in N – S, E – W, NW – SE, and NE – SW directions in a similar fashion to Cam Peak, and much more besides.

Location

Miserden Estate is located at GL6 7JA, and once there follow signs to the car park.