

**CADW/ICOMOS REGISTER OF LANDSCAPES, PARKS AND GARDENS**  
**OF SPECIAL HISTORIC INTEREST IN WALES**

**REGISTER ENTRY**

**TYTHEGSTON COURT**

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|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Ref number</b>        | <b>PGW (Gm) 15 (BRI)</b>  |
| <b>OS Map</b>            | 170   |
| <b>Grid ref</b>          | SS 857 789  |
| <b>Former county</b>     | Mid Glamorgan   |
| <b>Unitary authority</b> | Bridgend  |
| <b>Community council</b> | Merthyr Mawr  |
| <b>Designations</b>      | Listed building: Tythegston Court Grade II; Gate piers at Tythegston Court Grade II |
| <b>Site evaluation</b>   | <b>Grade II</b>   |

**Primary reasons for grading** A small landscape park and garden contemporary with the rebuilding of the house in the late eighteenth century, with some additional planting and alterations to the garden in the Edwardian period

**Type of site** Small landscape park; informal and compartmented garden; walled kitchen garden

**Main phases of construction** Late eighteenth century to early nineteenth century; c. 1900

**Site description**

Tythegston Court is a large two- and three-storey mansion situated on level ground on the northern edge of the hamlet of Tythegston, to the north-east of Porthcawl. The A4106 Bridgend to Porthcawl road skirts the southern boundary of the park and garden. The house is arranged around an internal courtyard, with the main block on the southern side. This is a two-storey rendered Georgian building with regularly spaced sash windows and a hipped slate roof. The main entrance on the south side has a glazed single-storey classical porch supported on four plain columns. At the west end of the south front is a taller, three-storey block with windows and roof matching the two-storey block. The east wing is set back from the main front and is lower, with a covered walkway along the east side. The west wing is also lower and stone built.

Tythegston Court has a history stretching back to the mediaeval period. The three-storey block at the west end incorporates part of a mediaeval tower, and the main block a mediaeval hall and parlour. The west wing of the house dates to the

seventeenth century or earlier. The house was owned by the Turbervill family until the early sixteenth century, when it passed by marriage to the Loughers of Sker. It subsequently passed through marriage first to the Turbervills of Sutton and then, by the early eighteenth century, to the Knight family from Somerset, in whose possession it remains.

The earlier mediaeval, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century house was remodelled by Henry Knight (1737-71), a soldier with an interest in architecture, from soon after 1765, when his father died. He directed the building works himself and the house was unfinished when he died. It was finished by his son, who came of age in 1784. The entrance was moved to its present position, and the house given a regular, Georgian exterior. The tower was partly rebuilt and was originally to have had a balancing tower added to the east end. In the mid to late 1790s the east front was added, and a new east wing built to the north to match the west one. The courtyard was enclosed at the same time.

To the north of the house is a small rear court with a few utilitarian outbuildings on its north side. At the west end is a Victorian game safe.

The small park occupies a triangular area of rolling ground to the north of the house, between the A4106 road on the east and lane leading to the kitchen garden on the west. The north boundary of the park is formed by a narrow belt of deciduous trees, the Long Belt. The ground dips in the middle to a shallow dry valley, near the west end of which is a well. The park has few internal boundaries and is ornamented with a few isolated ash trees and a young clump of beeches that was planted in 1962 to replace an original beech clump. The Long Belt is planted with beeches dating to the late eighteenth century, and many of these have died and been felled in recent years. The west end of the park is bounded by Home Wood, a largely deciduous woodland. Along the south-west side of the park, between the house and the kitchen garden, is an area of recently planted trees formerly a woodland of large beech trees and a few limes. These dated to the late eighteenth century and in 1994 were felled as dying and unsafe. A footpath runs straight across the park from the north boundary of the garden to the kitchen garden. Although grassed over this is visible and hard under foot.

The park is contemporary with the remodelling of the house in the 1760s to early nineteenth century. It was simply laid out with belts of beech trees on the boundaries and a few isolated trees and clumps. Most of the beeches have now been felled and replaced, but the general configuration of the park remains as it was.

The garden lies to the west, south and east of the house, bounded on the west by a small lane, on the south by the A4106 road, and on the east by iron fencing on the boundary with the park. The present entrance is in the north-west corner, off the lane. The tarmac drive leads eastwards to the court at the rear of the house, with a gravel branch curving off south-eastwards through the garden to a rectangular gravel forecourt on the south side of the house. A further short stretch of gravel drive runs parallel with the west wing linking the two drives. This drive crosses an east-west stone wall on the north boundary of the main part of the garden, with a simple pair of iron gates between square gate piers topped by ball finials at the entrance.

The garden can be divided into three main areas. At the west end is an informal shrubbery, with the drive winding through it. This area is planted with ornamental trees and shrubs including magnolias, cypresses, a large tulip tree and a ginkgo, camellias and rhododendrons. A laurel hedge bounds the garden along the lane and yew hedges along the road on the south side and along the east side. To the

east is a small lawn with two pairs of Irish yews flanking a former drive, now under the lawn.

In the centre of the garden, to the south of the house, is a forecourt running the full length of the house. This is bounded by yew hedges with taller blocks in the corners and flanking the openings in the middle of the east and west sides. To the south is a narrow strip of ground up to the boundary, planted with ornamental flowering cherries and two large copper beech trees planted in about 1900. Along the boundary is a stone wall, with a blocked entrance on the axis of the north-south stretch of drive to the west of the house. The tall gate piers remain just inside the line of the present wall. These are substantial and highly ornamented, with rusticated bases, classical panels on the plinths above and sphinxes on top. They were supplied by Parsons of Bath.

To the east of the house is a large lawn reached by a flight of stone steps from the forecourt. The lawn is divided into an upper and lower section by a slight east-west scarp, the lower part levelled for former tennis courts. The garden is bounded on the east by iron fencing and by a stone wall at the north end. A wellingtonia is planted in a semi-circular projection in the middle of the boundary. Beyond is an orchard planted in the 1950s. At the north end of the lawn is a large, ancient mulberry tree. To the north is a small rectangular compartment surrounded by yew hedging. This is a rose garden, created in the late 1950s, with a central paved path running north-south, aligned on the mulberry tree, leading to an alcove in the hedge at the north end. On either side are small lawns and rose beds. A cross path runs along the north side. To the north is a more informal area with a large sycamore, a small rustic summerhouse and a grass path to an iron gate on the east boundary leading to the park. The summerhouse has a pitched stone slate roof, weatherboard sides and an open south side. There was formerly a rockery in this area.

The garden was developed in two main phases - the late eighteenth century, and c. 1890-1900, with further features added in the 1950s. A drawing of the house as it was in 1765, before the alterations began, shows a small walled garden to the south of the house, with a row of trees around the outside. This was swept away as part of the improvements from that date on. The first phase, shown on the 1877 Ordnance Survey map, created the present-day boundaries. The layout was informal, with the west end more heavily planted, as now, and with a lawn planted with a few ornamental trees to the east. The drive from the lane was in existence, but the winding drive through the shrubbery was not. In addition, there was a further entrance from the main road on the south boundary, just to the south-east of the house. A drive led from here to an informal forecourt and then along the west wing to the drive to the north. The forecourt, subsequently given a rectangular shape, and the western section of this drive remain. This southern drive was moved to a new position to the west in about 1900. The imposing gate piers mark the position of this entrance, on a line with the drive to the north. The Irish yews in the lawn to the south-west of the house flank this former drive, which was closed in 1948.

In the Edwardian phase of development the garden was formalised with the planting of yew hedging, the two copper beeches, and probably much of the shrubbery planting at the west end. The iron fencing and wellingtonia on the east boundary also date from this phase. The last main phase came in the late 1950s when the yew-hedged rose garden was created.

The kitchen garden is situated at some distance to the north-west of the house, on the western edge of the park next to a small lane leading to the Keeper's Lodge.

The garden consists of two adjacent four-sided compartments, that to the east only half the north-south length of that to the west. Between the eastern compartment and the road are the gardens of two cottages, that to the east being Gardener's Cottage. The east garden is surrounded by rubble stone walls *c.* 3.5-4 m high and is in full productive use. It retains its original layout, shown on the 1877 Ordnance Survey map, of a central north-south path and perimeter paths of gravel. In the centre is a circular pool with stone lining topped with a brick surround protruding just above ground level. The path around the east side of the pool has been removed, and to the north is a modern glasshouse. Behind this is a lean-to glasshouse against the north wall. This is probably Edwardian, with a low brick base and long sloping roof. A vinery that formerly stood to its east against the north wall was taken down in 1950, and only its brick footings and the whitewashing of the back wall remain. To the west is a free-standing modern shed. A door in the north wall leads through into an enclosure bounded on the north by a low stone wall. This area contains some stone outbuildings and lean-to bothies against the garden wall. A small brick-lined furnace with a stone slab top is situated against the wall behind the former vinery.

The compartment to the west is larger and its surrounding stone walls, of the same height as those of the east compartment, are brick-lined. There is a door in the west wall and a wider one in the north wall. The interior is overgrown with sycamore seedlings and no original layout can be made out. The 1877 map shows an east-west central path and perimeter paths.

## **Sources**

### **Secondary**

*Archaeologia Cambrensis* (1853), pp. 239-52.

Cornforth, J., 'Tythegston Court', *Country Life* CLXII (13 October 1977), pp. 1006-09.