

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

SITE DOSSIER

SITE NAME Treowen

REF. NO. PGW (Gt) 23

OS MAP 161 GRID REF. SO 461110

FORMER COUNTY Gwent UNITARY AUTHORITY Monmouth B.C.
COMMUNITY COUNCIL Mitchel Troy

DESIGNATIONS Listed building: Treowen Grade I

National Park AONB SSSI NNR ESA GAM SAM CA

SITE EVALUATION Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Remains of Tudor garden

TYPE OF SITE

Tudor terraced garden

MAIN PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION

mid 16th century - early 17th century

VISITED BY/DATE Elisabeth Whittle/October 1990

HOUSE

Name Treowen

Grid ref SO 461111

Date/style mid 16th century/Tudor

Brief description: main building periods, architects, style, present state

Treowen is a well preserved three-storey Tudor house, probably dating from the middle of the 16th century. It is a double-pile house, with the main entrance on the S side. The builder was probably William ap John Thomas, Standard Bearer to Henry VIII and Sheriff of the county in 1556. His family took the name Jones, and Joneses continued to live here until after the Civil War, when William Jones moved to Llanarth Court. Thenceforward the house was tenanted and lived in as a farmhouse.

In the late 17th century the top storey was removed from the S side. The two-storey porch was added in 1627, and may have had a top storey removed at the same time.

The approach to the house is by a long drive from the Dingestow-Monmouth road to the S (no lodge). This formerly skirted the farm buildings to the E, arriving at the W end of the house. It now skirts them to the W and turns E into a gravel forecourt to the W of the house.

OUTBUILDINGS

Name Farm buildings

Grid ref SO 461111

Date/style, and brief description

Various utilitarian farm buildings, mostly stone, to the SW of the house.

THE PLEASURE GARDEN

Grid ref SO 461111

Date/style mid 16th century/formal

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND LAYOUT

The gardens lie to the N and S of the house, with the main Tudor garden area to the N. This is a roughly square levelled lawn slightly wider than the house, surrounded on its E, W and N sides by a raised flat-topped bank revetted on the outside with a stone and brick wall. The bank now has a clipped yew hedge on it, with an opening in the middle of the N side.

To the N is an area of orchard with earthwork features.

The garden on the S side is a levelled lawn bounded by a modern ha-ha, with a small pavilion in the SE corner (formerly outside loo). Bradney described this area as having the outlines of 'old-fashioned gardens', possibly referring to a parterre of some kind, no longer visible.

A garden was already in existence in 1563, when a divorce settlement of William ap John Thomas mentions both a garden and an orchard. It is likely that the garden to the N of the house, with its raised walk, was the garden referred to, and that it was made at the same time as the house was built.

There are fishponds, probably of medieval date, in the valleys to the E and W of the house.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

N garden

A large square levelled terrace surrounded by a low earth bank on the E, W and N sides, c. 0.3 m. high on the inside and 0.8 m. high on the outside. The outside is a steep grassy slope beneath which is a stone and brick revetment wall, visible in places in the turf. The top of the bank is level, c. 2 m. wide.

S garden

To the S of the house is a narrow level lawn bounded on the S by a modern drystone wall ha-ha. The entrance drive to the house formerly skirted the E side of the farm buildings and arrived at the W end of the house. This is visible as a slightly raised level area at the W end of the lawn.

Orchard

To the N of the N garden is a small area of former orchard in which there are a number of parallel shallow gently sloping ditches. It is likely that this area always was an orchard, and may be the orchard referred to in the divorce settlement of 1563.

BUILT COMPONENTS

Modern stone steps up the raised bank on the N side, in the middle of the N side.

Low stone wall and revetment wall along E edge of the garden to the E of the house, continuing along E side of S garden to small stone single-storey pavilion in the corner. (Not ornamental - a former loo.)

ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENTS

None

PLANTED COMPONENTS

The N garden is laid out as a lawn, with a clipped yew hedge on the raised bank. The S garden is a lawn with a border next to the house. Few fruit trees left in the orchard, but some large oaks on its boundary.

Reconstructions of original planted features

None

Special collections of garden plants

None

Documented living plants

None

Other (including elements of nature conservation interest)

None

ESSENTIAL SETTING AND VIEWS BEYOND THE SITE

Essential setting: open pasture fields and woodland around the house and garden.

The house and garden stand in the centre of Treowen's land - rolling pasture with woodland and isolated oaks which can have changed little since the 16th century. This whole landscape is important as the backdrop for one of the county's most historic houses.

ANY SPECIAL FEATURES

None

SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

Structural components: Most

Built components: some

Architectural ornaments: none (none known)

Planted components: none

SOURCES

(Primary and secondary. For primary, give location. Aerial photos (AP): ref. no and collection)

Primary

1563 divorce settlement of William John Thomas (Newport Reference Library: Treowen MSS (copy))

Secondary

J. Bradney, A History of Monmouthshire, Part 1, p. 42

R. Wheelock, History of Treowen and its architecture (guide sheets in house)