

SOUGHTON HALL

Ref No PGW (C) 25
OS Map 117
Grid Ref SJ 248 674
Former County Clwyd
Unitary Authority Flintshire
Community Council Northop
Designations Listed building: Soughton Hall Grade II*
Site Evaluation Grade II*

Primary reasons for grading

A very fine and nearly complete early eighteenth-century lime avenue flanking the approach; well preserved eighteenth-century parkland planting.

Type of Site

Landscape park; formal garden

Main Phases of Construction

Eighteenth and nineteenth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Soughton is situated on gently rolling ground to the east of the A5119 Mold-Northop road. The structure of the present house is eighteenth-century, it is thought of 1714 or 1727, or both. More work was carried out in 1732 when the house was bought by John Wynne, Bishop of Bath and Wells and previously St Asaph. The estate came to the Bankes family when his daughter married Henry Bankes of Kingston Lacy in Dorset.

The two major remodellings were carried out in the nineteenth century in the Spanish style for William John Bankes, a collector and traveller and friend of Byron. The architect was Sir Charles Barry, although Bankes was also responsible. It is thought that Sir Charles Barry's work dates from post 1820. He was working on Bankes's other house Kingston Lacey from 1835. Pavilions were added to the two outer bays, with steeply sloping pitched roofs and an arcaded top storey. The north front was to be the main entrance and to that end a canted porch was added rising the full height of the house surmounted by a turret. A pitched roof with cupola was also added to the central portion of the house. This remodelling did retain some eighteenth-century features but these were obscured by a further remodelling by Bankes's nephew in 1867-69, almost certainly designed by Douglas. The building was faced with hard red brick and the early nineteenth-century work was extended including the Romanesque arch on the south front.

The entrance courtyard on the south side appears to relate to the early eighteenth-century house, as do the stone gatepiers and urns. It is thought that the wrought iron gates are part of the same scheme. The corner stone turrets with rock bases were added by Sir Charles Barry. Similar are also to be found at the rear of the house.

The stables and coach house are situated to the south-west of the house and are mid eighteenth-century in date. Originally they were two separate blocks but a joining block was added at a later date. The stable block is brick built with stone quoins and the lower windows have Gibbs surrounds. A lead cupola incorporates a clock on the roof. The coach house is also of brick with stone detailing and has a brick and stone pediment. A pitched roof with a lantern looks as if it is a later addition.

The buildings are surrounded by an earth bank faced with stone and planted with trees providing a screen for vehicles approaching on the main drive. To the west and forming part of the ensemble is a semi-circular area of raised ground faced on the outer side with stone. The top of the wall is planted with yew trees, and until recent years holm oaks were also part of the scheme, forming a complete screen. This area was probably a garden or a drying green for the coachman and his family. Four medieval statues were recently unearthed from this site. They represented the Civic Virtues, and came from the Guildhall in London having been acquired by William Bankes in the early part of the nineteenth century. They are now in the Museum of London.

Situated to the north-west of the house is a brick nogged octagonal game larder with steeply pitched roof surmounted by a tiled cupola incorporating air vents. The building stands on a sandstone legged plinth. It was designed by Douglas.

The park is a medium sized landscape park lying on all sides of Soughton Hall and surrounding Lower Soughton Hall to the north. It lies on the east side of the A5119 road to Mold, and to the south of the old A55. An old track forms part of the boundary to the east. The park is bisected by a small watercourse called the Quigley. The village of Northop lies to the north. The ground is gently undulating.

Most of the park dates from the eighteenth century although certain tree specimens indicate much earlier planting. There is internal evidence in the house of a building dating from 1714. Much of the present planting dates from the 1730s, when the estate was bought by John Wynne, Bishop of St Asaph. Thick planting is concentrated on the west side of the park shielding the property from the A5119.

The park is much cut up by drives and trackways. The two lodges, north and south, are a later nineteenth-century addition, but the drives were probably public roads prior to the lodge building. The lodges are half-timbered, the north one, Lower Lodge, being designed by Douglas (1868). A stone wall bounds the park on the west and south sides.

The most impressive tree plantings are the limes. Stately lime avenues planted circa 1732 by John Wynne flank two drives. The first, about a quarter of a mile long, is now the main drive leading to the south front of the house. An estate map of 1805 shows a double line of trees here, and there is in fact a lone lime behind the avenue which would suggest that this was indeed the case. At this time, 1805, this avenue was not in service as a drive, but appears to be a purely decorative element. Another lime avenue, equally impressive, approached the house from the west and was the main approach with an entrance yard where the present nineteenth-century formal garden now stands. An avenue is illustrated here on a 1718 survey, in fact it is half an avenue. The main road is now a track in the park (SJ 246675) running alongside the Quigley stream; this was as far as the avenue went. When the main road was moved westwards sometime around 1805 the avenue was extended. The first part of the avenue has now succumbed to the ravages of time and is being re-planted. The remains of a lime avenue leads from the hall north towards Lower Soughton. This led to a road which is now an estate

track. The 1805 plan also shows a Little Park and a Big Park adjacent to each other, to the west of the south avenue (SJ 248670).

The main garden is situated to the west of the house on raised ground overlooking the forecourt, with a steep bank on the houseward side. It is reached from the forecourt by a door in the wall. This area was the entrance court until at least 1805. The garden lay to the north of the present garden .

The layout is simple, being a quartered square with a brick sided pool as a central focal point. Currently the quarters are grassed over and yew trees have been planted around the outsides of the quarters. There is a perimeter path around the outside. A small formal garden has been constructed on the site of an old glasshouse. A tennis court is sited to the west of the formal garden.

The forecourt has a central circle of grass and grass in each corner. There are narrow flower beds under the walls and plum puddings of yew are also planted in the grass.

The walled kitchen garden is sited to the west of the hall just inside the service drive. It is a five sided garden of irregular shape, with well preserved walls. There are the remains of fruit trees but it is no longer in use as a productive garden. The south-facing wall is stepped with overhanging coping slabs of terracotta. The entrance is on a short eastern wall with a potting shed on one side and the remains of a glasshouse on the other.

Sources

Primary

A platforme of the admeasurement and survey of the demesne and other adjacent lands of Soughton Hall, belonging to Edward Conwy Esq, 1718. Clwyd Record Office: D/SH/834.

1805 book of estate maps with schedule showing gardens and avenues. Clwyd Record Office: D/SH/826.

Secondary

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 408-10.

TREVALYN HALL

Ref No PGW (C) 26
OS Map 117
Grid Ref SJ 366 567
Former County Clwyd
Unitary Authority Wrexham Maelor BC
Community Council Rossett
Designations Listed building: Trevalyn Hall, N.E. and S.W. section
Grade I; Service Wing Grade II

Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Remains of sixteenth- or seventeenth-century deer parks, embanked orchard, and walled garden. Well preserved nineteenth-century topiary.

Type of Site

Deer park; orchard; formal garden

Main Phases of Construction

Sixteenth-seventeenth century; nineteenth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Trevalyn Hall is one of the most important Elizabethan houses in the county. The house is approached from the A483 to the west: a short drive meanders across a bit of 'park' planted with lime and beech trees. On the north-eastern side is a boggy bit of woodland which is the remnant of the Rossett mill pond. In the eighteenth century the drive entrance was further to the north adjacent to the mill pond, and in a straight line to the Porter's Lodge.

Trevalyn Hall was built for John Trevor in 1576. His great-grandfather a Trevor of Brynkinalt, had married the Trevalyn heiress. John Trevor's younger son, Sir John Trevor built Plas Teg near Mold. The house is rendered, with exposed stone quoins, and has a five bay front, two of which are recessed. The house is three storeys in height, and has mullioned and transomed windows with stone pediments. The central bay which contains the front door has a storeyed porch. Three sets of armorial bearings are to be found on the protruding bays.

Running parallel to the rear of the main wing is a service wing which is very similar to the main building. The two wings are joined by a corridor incorporating the porter's lodge which originally stood further back, to the north-east, joining the ends of the two buildings together. To the north-east of the porter's lodge are the remains of a small garden which had a tiered topiary figure, now gone, in the middle of a gravel sweep. The two parts of the house were still joined, still with the gatehouse in the centre but probably with walls either side instead of a corridor. In the nineteenth century (1836-8) Thomas and Elizabeth Griffith moved the lodge to its present position and joined the two parts of the house with linking corridors, putting the kitchens in the rear block.

Across the fields to the north-east a building called Mill House, now rendered, has similar pedimented windows to Trevalyn Hall. It appears to be aligned with the Porter's Lodge and it is thought it could have been a gate house.

The picturesque village of Marford, to the south-west, was built in about 1813-14 by the Trevalyn estate. The village contains about a dozen Gothic cottages or neoclassical residences, and it is thought that the estate's agent, John Boydell, may have had a hand in the design.

Although there are no deer left at Trevalyn the deer parks remain, now as arable farmland. These are probably contemporary with the house, dating to c. 1576. Big Park and Pine Tree Park lie to the south-west of Trevalyn Hall, bordering on the village of Marford. To the north-east of Pine Tree Park is Walnut Tree Park. Separating an old orchard, now an empty paddock, from these parks are large earthwork embankments about 1.5m in height. These embankments are still very distinct on the south-west and south-east sides but rather indistinct on the north-west side of the orchard. Park Bychan which is to the south-east of the orchard has been incorporated into the grounds of nearby Trevalyn House. The small pond at SJ 368568 now forms part of the entrance drive to Trevalyn Woods. All the component parts are listed on a mid eighteenth-century map of the estate.

There is now no tree cover to speak of. However, if the eighteenth-century plan is accurate then there wasn't much tree cover at that time either. Some eighteenth-century lime trees are standing near Trevalyn Woods at SJ 366567 forming a boundary between what was the meadow and Walnut Tree Park. In what is now the grounds of Trevalyn House, but was part of Park Bychan, is an enormous lime tree, and an old sweet chestnut coppice.

The pleasure garden lies to the south-west of the house in the same place as illustrated on the 1787 plan of the estate. Now that the house is divided parts lie in different ownership but the majority of it goes with the north-west section of the house. The garden has changed little in shape except for the addition of a shrubbery to the north-west. It is enclosed on all sides, with the wall of the walled garden to the south-east, a belt of trees to the south-west, and the shrubbery enclosing part of the north-west side.

Nothing is known of the early layout of the garden, but it took on its present form in the nineteenth century, although the wall to the south-east is probably the same date as the house. It has dummy applied doorways which are pedimented in a similar manner to the house. Close to the north-eastern doorway and at right angles to it is part of a brick wall with a scooped end. This continued to the corner of the house with a central hand gate. A similar structure though rebuilt is in the adjacent walled garden.

The topiary work in the garden was carried out between 1836-38 by Thomas and Elizabeth Griffith. A line of topiary figures forms a main axis aligned on the door of the lodge. The topiary figures include a dog, rabbit and variously tiered shapes. Four box balls are situated either side of the path in the small area outside the Porter's lodge. A Country Life photograph of 1962 shows narrow borders in the small garden formed by the main parts of the house and the Porter's lodge. An iron fence with brick rendered pillars and paved apron terminates the south-west axis of this topiary walk. A small box garden is situated on the north-west corner of the garden. To the south-west of the box garden is a small shrubbery which forms part of the garden boundary. The remains of a rather overgrown rockery lies within it. This was built by Trevor Giffiths-Boscawen (1860-41). A recently planted, but mature, hedge of Leyland cypress divides this garden from the neighbouring one belonging

to the service wing to the north-east. A small formal box garden lies just to the north-east of the rockery. This probably dates from 1836-38 when the topiary was implemented.

The largest area of lawn to the south-west of the house contained circular rose beds, and standard roses were also planted between the clipped yew figures on the central path.

The old orchard, now a field, lies to the north-west and south-west of the garden. This still has an impressive earthen bank to keep the deer out. In some places the bank is about 1.5m in height. It is very prominent to the south-west and south-east, although it has become rather denuded on the north-west. In the north-east corner is a small pond, which is also shown on the eighteenth-century map and is marked 'spring'. It forms part of the entrance drive to Trevalyn Woods.

The kitchen garden is only part walled, on the north-west and north-east sides, though it is thought it was originally completely walled. It is situated to the south of the service wing. There was a nineteenth-century conservatory in the north-eastern corner, which has collapsed. It is more or less replaced by a recent extension to the Coach House. The garden is divided in two. The division wall between the two gardens has higher ends, and the central area is considerably lower. This was in order to maximise the amount of sunlight coming into the garden. On the southern side of the wall some blocked up arches are visible.

Sources

Primary

Estate map of Trevalyn and other Trevor lands in Rossett area, 1787. National Library of Wales: MS Maps 47. Copy: Clwyd Record Office: NT/M/100.
Book of Trevor Estate Maps found at solicitors Birch Cullimore, Wrexham, c. 1787. (The plan appears to be a tidier version of above and the schedule is the same as for above).

Secondary

Jones, Lady, The Trevors of Trevalyn (privately printed, 1955).
Girouard, M., 'Trevalyn Hall, Denbighshire', Country Life, 12 July 1962, pp. 78-81.
Earnshaw, B., and T. Mowl, 'Mysterious and unlucky, the village of Marford', Country Life, 22 February 1979, pp. 454-56.
Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 287-89.

BACHYMBYD

Ref No PGW (C) 27
OS Map 116
Grid Ref SJ 094 611
Former County Clwyd
Unitary Authority Glyndwr DC
Community Council Llanynys
Designations Listed building: Bachymbyd Grade II*
Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Remains of seventeenth-century walled garden

Type of Site

Walled garden, with bee boles

Main Phases of Construction

Seventeenth and twentieth centuries

SITE DESCRIPTION

Bachymbyd is situated on the western edge of the Vale of Clwyd, on ground rising to the west. Just to its east are the A525 Ruthin to Denbigh road and the river Clywedog. Bachymbyd is an ancient foundation, the house of a branch of the Salusbury family founded in the fifteenth century by John, fourth son of Thomas Salusbury who was killed in 1471. The most famous member of the house was William Salusbury, known as 'hen Hosanau Gleision', 'Old Blue Stocking', who defended Denbigh for the king during the Civil War, from 1643 to 1646. His younger son Charles received Bachymbyd and it was he who built the present house in 1666 as recorded in the datestone over the front door.

The house is of brick, with stone dressings. It has two storeys with an attic level, and a nine-bay front and stone string coursing. The windows are stone mullioned and transomed. There is a separate staircase wing at the rear. Presumably the house was meant to have had two projecting wings as illustrated in William Williams's map of Clwyd of c. 1720. The south-east wing is missing. The house has had much work done on it, including a remodelling of the end, where the wing should be, in 1960. The original door case has been lost. It was round headed with columns. As a result the date stone was reset in about 1900. The porch and dormer windows which have a strong Arts and Crafts flavour were added at the same time. The line of the roof has been slightly altered as well: originally there was a stone parapet with an internal gutter. This resulted in serious timber rot, and consequently the roof was lengthened and an ordinary gutter installed. The result is a rather fanciful roof line most obvious when viewed from the south-west end.

A barn near the house has two cruck beams and some remains of a brick nogged wall.

A short drive leads off the Ruthin-Denbigh road and then turns into a forecourt by the house with a stone pond and fountain of recent date.

The garden surrounds the house and is built up with a drop to a pond on the north-east side. The ground is retained on this side by a stone wall which incorporates a well house, with the wall doubling up as a bee garth. There are the remains of an orchard at the rear, and another part walled garden to the north-west of the house. Much of the structure of the garden, and its perimeter walls are thought to be seventeenth-century in origin, and contemporary with the rebuilding of the house in 1666.

There is a raised terrace on the north-east front of the house which drops down to lawn, and half-way down the lawn there is a steep bank which could be part of the original seventeenth-century garden boundary, or perhaps the remains of a terrace. Stone footings are to be found under the lawn above the bank. There is a tennis court and twentieth-century summerhouse at the north-west end of this bank. There is a swimming pool below the bank which is surrounded by a Leyland cypress hedge on the north-east and south-west sides. A shrub border, on a slightly higher level, bounds the north-west side of the pool, with the tennis court above. There are shallow terraces on the south-east side of the garden backed with a bee garth. Much of the stonework is of twentieth-century origin.

Below the north-east wall is a pond, and a piece of informal ground continues alongside the drive to a much larger rectangular pond which is concrete lined. This pond is probably a fish pond in origin, dating from the same period as the rest of the garden. Beyond the pond and adjacent to the road are the remains of a group of noteworthy sweet chestnuts planted in the late seventeenth century by the three daughters of Sir William Salusbury as a token of their affection for each other, known locally as The Three Sisters. The occasion was the marriage of one of the sisters to Sir Walter Bagot of Blythefield in Staffordshire.

Sources

Secondary

- Roscoe, T., Wanderings and Excursions in North Wales (1838).
Howell, P., 'Country houses in the Vale of Clwyd', Country Life, 29 December 1977, pp. 1966-69.
Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 247-48.