

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

SITE DOSSIER

Trewyn

Ref no. PGW (Gt) 28

OS map 161

Grid ref SO 328228

Unitary authority Monmouthshire

Community council Crucorney

Designations Listed building: Trewyn House and gateposts (Grade II), Dovecot (Grade II)
National Park (Brecon Beacons)

Site evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

17th-century terracing and steps; survival of part of 17th-century Scots pine axial avenue; well preserved 17th-century dovecot

Type of site

Formal terraced garden; small landscape park with axial avenue

Main phases of construction

Late 17th century

Visited by/date Elisabeth Whittle/March 1991

HOUSE

Trewyn

Grid ref SO 328228

Date/style Late 17th century/Restoration

Brief description

Trewyn is situated in the Monnow valley, on the western side of its small landscape park, which it overlooks, just to the E of the Black Mountains. It is a two-storey stone Restoration period house (with attic dormer windows added in the 19th century) with a hipped stone tile roof. It is roughly square, of modest size, and the main front faces east, with a central front door.

There has been a house here since the medieval period, when the Wynstons/Winstons lived here. They continued in occupation until sometime in the 17th century. By the mid 18th century the Shaw family owned Trewyn, and in 1772 the owner was Jeremiah Rosher. Rosher's owned Trewyn until 1895, when it was sold to Philip B. Barneby. Few structural changes were made to the house after the 17th century: the addition of the dormer windows in the attic in the 19th century was the main one.

OUTBUILDINGS

Various

Grid ref SO 328228

Date/style, and brief description

To the W of the house are various outbuildings, some of them ruinous. The former stables are now a private house on the other side of the road which runs past the N side of the house. Immediately to the W of the house is a small square timbered building, formerly standing on stone piers (now blocked in), which was probably a game or meat larder.

To the NE of the house, standing near a small stream, is a tall octagonal brick dovecot, with a stone tile roof and a wooden lantern with lead roof and weathervane at the top. The sides are relieved by blank round-headed shallow recesses. The entrance is on the NW side. It is complete and in good condition (except part of the roof), with 831 nesting niches inside.

THE PARK

Central grid ref SO 332228

Date/style 17th-19th century/formal

GENERAL DESCRIPTION, HISTORY AND LAYOUT

The park lies to the E of the house, on ground that slopes down to the river Monnow. It is not of any great extent, running as far as the Pandy-Oldcastle road to the E. It consists largely of pasture fields: the only landscaping being a short stretch of pine avenue running NE on an axial line from the main front of the house, a lime avenue running NW-SE from the road E of the Trewyn to the Pandy-Oldcastle road, and pines planted along the same road. There is also a large clump and a number of isolated deciduous and coniferous trees in the park.

A map of Trewyn dated 1726 shows an avenue on the line of the present pine avenue stretching right the way to the river at Alltyrynys. By the 1880s (OS 6" map) it only reached as far as the Pandy-Oldcastle road. Both maps show it cutting right across a pre-existing pond. The original tree species of this avenue is not known, but it may have been oak, as there are one or two ancient oaks on the line of the avenue near the house.

The lime avenue does not appear on the 1726 map but does on the 1880s OS map, and from the size of the trees it is thought that it was planted in the second half of the 19th century. The pines along the Pandy-Oldcastle road and the clump are also first shown on the 1880s map, and probably date from the same period.

A clump of pines on top of the Hatterall Hill ridge, at the Pen-twyn Iron Age hillfort, is probably part of the 19th-century landscaping, as it is prominently visible from the park.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

The former drive up the lime avenue, dating from the second half of the 19th century, no longer exists: it is reduced to pasture field.

WATER FEATURES

SO 331230: the pond shown on early maps, including the 1880s OS map, is now dry, and is part of a permanent pasture field.

BUILT FEATURES

There is a small lodge on the Pandy-Oldcastle road, at the SE end of the lime avenue (SO 333227). It is a small stone two-storey house.

At the SE end of the lime avenue is a simple iron gate (another one at the NW end) flanked by square stone gate piers, either side of which are short stretches of curving stone walls.

The straight stretch of public road to the NE of the house is flanked by iron fencing.

Dovecot: see outbuildings

PLANTED COMPONENTS

The park is largely permanent pasture, with isolated trees, a large clump, and two avenues.

To the NE of the house are the remnants of a long pine avenue. The original avenue on this axis dates from the late 17th-early 18th century, and it originally stretched as far as the Monnow river at Alltyrynys. This is aligned on the main, NE front of the house. The trees that are left now are mostly pines (some appear too young to date from the original planting, and all may be 19th-century), mostly large and mature. Most are situated on either side of the public road at the SW end of the avenue (7 on the NW side, more on the SE). Further NE (after the public road has veered off eastwards) there are three isolated pines in a row - part of the SE side of the avenue - the northernmost one of which is very large. Near the house there are a few large oaks on the line of the avenue, which may suggest that the original avenue was of oak trees. No trees of the avenue remain to the east of the Pandy-Oldcastle road.

To the N of the pine avenue, near the N corner of the park, is a large clump of mixed deciduous and coniferous trees (pine, oak and sycamore), of late 18th or 19th century date.

The lime avenue runs NW-SE from the road up to Trewyn across the park to the lodge. It is narrow, with the trees close-set. There are some gaps (replanted) and some dead trees, but most of the avenue is intact. It is thought to date from the second half of the 19th century. To the S of the entrance gates at the SE end is a large mature horse chestnut.

Throughout the park are isolated mature oak trees, some of which possibly pre-date the park. Near the Pandy-Oldcastle road, to the N of the Trewyn road, are some conifers including a wellingtonia (small). Along the E boundary of the park (the Pen-y-bont-Oldcastle road) is a row of large pines.

From the park a prominent clump of pines is visible on the top of the Hatterall Hill ridge, on the Pen-twyn Iron Age hillfort. This is shown on the 1880s OS map, and is considered to be an integral part of the 19th-century tree-planting at Trewyn, although not actually in the park.

BOUNDARIES

N and S: field boundaries

W: garden

E: public road

ESSENTIAL SETTING, VIEWPOINTS AND CONTINUATIONS OF FEATURES BEYOND THE PARK, EYECATCHERS ETC.

Essential setting: farmland to N and S

Viewpoints: A: NE from house along avenue

B: W from park up to clump on ridge top

ELEMENTS OF BOTANICAL OR OTHER NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST

None known

SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

Structural components: none (drive up lime avenue)

Water features: none (pond)

Built components: all

Planted components: some

THE PLEASURE GARDEN

Grid ref SO 328228

Date/style 17th and 19th century

GENERAL DESCRIPTION, HISTORY AND LAYOUT

The garden at Trewyn lies to the E and S of the house, where the sloping ground has been terraced. To the E (the main front) is a rectangular garden enclosed by a high stone and brick wall on all but the E side, which is closed by railings and central gates. Next to the house are two stone-revetted terraces linked by central stone steps in three flights. This garden is virtually unaltered since it was made in the late 17th century (it is shown on the 1726 map). From the top terrace there is a fine view beyond the garden straight down the Scots pine avenue, which continues the axis.

Along the S side of the house is an upper narrow terrace, below which is a wide rectangular terrace built up over the slope and retained by a stone revetment wall. This is now grassed over, but a gravel perimeter path can be made out beneath the turf. Below, a stone and brick wall encloses a narrower sloping rectangular area, formerly used as an orchard and kitchen garden, but now rough grass. The upper terrace is part of the original 17th-century layout, but the lower ones are more recent, probably 19th-century (there by the 1880s); the 17th-century layout on this side was one of a large square walled garden to the S of the garden on the E of the house, a narrower walled garden to the W, and a further small rectangular walled garden to the S of the square one. Only vestiges of this layout are still visible.

In the 19th century a series of narrow ponds was built along the contour on the western edge of the garden to the S of the house. These are fed by a stream to the W. Although much silted up these are still in existence, with dams between them and several stone sluices to control the water level. Below them at the S end of the garden is a level area which was formerly a tennis court. To the E of the ponds, on ground sloping steeply to the E, is an area of ornamental woodland (coniferous and deciduous), mostly planted in the early 20th century.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

East side of house

The walled garden to the E of the house has two terraces. The top terrace is c. 3 m. high, with a sloping stone revetment wall; the lower terrace is c. 1 m. high, with a stone revetment wall. Running SW-NE down the centre of the garden is a wide path, with three flights of steps (see below) linking the terraces and continuing to the gates as a wide gravel path. Under the upper flight of steps is an arch.

South side of house

The upper terrace on the E side of the house continues along the S side, where it is revetted by a brick wall c. 2.5 m. high (a modern terrace has been added on top of it, but this is to be removed). Stone steps (see below) at its E end lead down to the large rectangular terrace below. This is retained on its S and E sides by a stone revetment wall with a maximum outer height of c. 2.5 m. This wall continues above the terrace as a low

parapet wall c. 0.8 m. high, faced with brick along the E side, and topped by flat stone slabs. A perimeter path (formerly gravel) is visible in the grass. At the W end of this terrace is a smaller raised level rectangular terrace, revetted on its E side by a stone wall c. 2.5 m. high, and enclosed on its W side by a low stone wall (see below). This terrace appears on the 1726 map, and is probably 17th century.

Along the SW boundary of the garden, to the S of the terraces, are two long sinuous narrow ponds, fed by a stream which runs down the S side of the small upper terrace to the SW of the house. They are dammed all along their E sides by a large earth bank, and each has a well built stone sluice through this bank. At the S end the pond is terminated by a stone wall. Between the two is a stone bridge, turfed over, with a narrow arched channel under it.

Below the southern pond is a large levelled area, now rough grass, which was originally a tennis court (? built 1920s).

BUILT COMPONENTS

East side of house

The E garden is enclosed on its N and S sides by walls: that on the N side is stone on the outside (next to the road) and brick on the inside, and stands to its full height (c. 2.5 m. high on the inside); that on the S side is of brick and stands to its full height (c. 2.5 m. for most of its length, higher at the end of the lower terrace, where it formed the back wall of a glasshouse. Further E there is a doorway in the wall, and just to the E of it the gable end of a ruined stone building, with two slit windows in it, forms the E end of the garden wall. (This building is probably older than the garden, and is probably a barn.)

The top terrace is of stone paving, with a raised section in the middle between two low stone piers topped by stone vases on either side of the steps. There is a short flight of steps (3) up to the front door. The revetment wall is capped by dressed stone slabs. At the N end of the terrace are simple iron railings, and at each end (N and S) a simple square pier c. 1 m. high.

The steps to the lower terrace are in two flights of ten steps each, separated by a level middle section. They are paved with stone and have low parapet walls on either side with square piers topped by ball finials at the bottom and either end of the middle section. The lower steps (5) have no parapet wall, and are flanked by topiary peacocks.

The E end of the garden is open, with iron railings bedded into the stone capping of a low brick wall (c. 0.3 m. high). In the centre is a pair of simple iron gates flanked by square stone piers topped by large stone urns (undergoing restoration), the whole being c. 3.5 m. high.

South side of house

At the E end of the upper terrace is a flight of stone steps down to the lower terrace.

At the W end of the lower terrace is a portion of stone walling which is part of the original garden layout. Near the top is a brick-lined water channel with a sculpted stone spout (now leading into a recently built pool). The butt end of the E-W wall of the 17th-century garden on this side of the house sticks out from this walling.

To the W is a level terrace bounded by a low stone wall (c. 1 m. high) on its W side. In the middle of the wall is an opening, and at its S end a water channel is built into the lower part of the wall (for the stream feeding the ponds). This walling too would appear to be part of the original layout on this side.

The large terrace on the S side is bounded on its S and E sides by a low stone parapet wall c. 0.8 m. high, capped with flat stone tiles. The inner side of the E wall is lined with brick (crumbling in places). At the W and E ends of the S wall are small square piers.

To the S is a further walled L-shaped area bounded by a stone and brick wall c. 2 m. high (maximum: partly a revetment wall; stone at base, to c. 1.2 m., brick above) on the S side, and a stepped brick wall c. 2.5 m. high on the E side. The S wall is topped with iron railings at the W end. There is a doorway in the E wall, and just to the N of it a ruinous lean-to greenhouse (modern), next to which is the base of a free-standing one (recently demolished). N of the lean-to greenhouse the E wall is of stone and appears much older than the brick part. It stands to its full height, and continues at the same height along the N side of this part of the garden, with a gap at the W end.

Near the E end of the wall between the E garden and the lower terrace on the S side is a small stone roofless building, with walls c. 2.5 m. high, and a diagonal opening (modern) cut across its SE corner. It has slit windows on the N and W (and there is a further slit window in the wall just to the E of the building). On the S side is a larger window. The purpose of this building remains obscure, but may have been adapted from a medieval barn into a store room of some kind.

ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENTS

Area E of house

- 3 pairs of stone ball finials on piers flanking steps
- 2 large stone urns on top of gate piers at E end of garden
- 2 large stone vases on piers flanking top of steps

Area S of house

- 2 stone ball finials at E and W ends of upper terrace wall, on small piers
- Stone sundial near E end of lower terrace, on square base c. 0.3 m. high. (Total height c. 0.9 m.)
- Pets' graveyard with small stone headstones on dam at N end of ponds.

PLANTED COMPONENTS

As the gardens have been neglected for some time they are mostly grassed over at present. The E garden is grassed, except for a pair of topiary yew peacocks which flank the lowest steps. There are narrow side borders, and were six raised circular beds (3 on each side of the central path), still clearly visible although grassed over (and the present owner intends to flatten them).

The S garden is grassed over. In the centre of the S side of the lower terrace is a large weeping. Just beyond the garden, to the E, are a large cedar and cypress.

To the E of the ponds is a wooded area probably planted in the 1920s, with Scots pines, cypresses, wellingtonias, various deciduous trees, and an underplanting of rhododendrons.

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: parkland to the E

ANY SPECIAL FEATURES

No

SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

Structural components: most

Built components: most

Architectural ornaments: some

Planted components: very little

SOURCES

Primary

1726 map: Survey of Upper and Lower Trewen, by E. Moore (Gwent Record Office: D 591.81.534)

Secondary

J. Bradney, A History of Monmouthshire Pt II.