

COED COCH

Ref No PGW (Gd)56(CON)

Former Ref No PGW(C)10

OS Map 116

Grid Ref SH 885 743

Former county Clwyd

Unitary Authority Conwy

Community Council Betws-yn-Rhos

Designations Listed building: Coed Coch Grade II
Landscape Heritage Site, Policy RL10

Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Fine small eighteenth and nineteenth century landscape park, with artificial lake, surviving in its entirety. Pleasure grounds with nineteenth-century tree planting.

Type of site

Landscape park; informal pleasure grounds

Main phases of construction

Eighteenth and nineteenth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Coed Coch is ostensibly an eighteenth and nineteenth century building, with a foundation stone in the cellar of 1804 and the inscription 'Johannes et Maria Wynne, 30 die Maii A.D. 1804'. However Edward LLuyd, in 1699, mentions Coed Coch as one of the principal houses of the district: 'Y Koed Koch Ycha', the home of 'John Wynne, gent'. Whether the Ycha refers to this site or another is not certain, although the site is slightly elevated from the surrounding countryside.

The main block of the present house as seen from the rear is a seven bay stone house under a shallow hipped slate roof. This part is thought to date from about 1790. Henry Hakewill is thought to have been the main architect. Some records suggest that the present building was started in 1713, with extensions in 1814 and 1848. There was originally a Greek Doric portico placed diagonally on the corner of the house. This was done away with apparently in the twentieth century and the corner filled in making a circular entrance hall. This can clearly be seen from the outside where there is a mismatch of stone. A sandstone porch with columns and a flat roof with

balustrading where added at the same time, perhaps using the columns from the original entrance to the house. A large single-storey room on the west is apparently a twentieth-century addition. It has a semi-circular bay window with pitch roof.

The stableyard is built of stone around a cobbled courtyard. The main entrance was at the east end with three archways which appear to have been filled in at a later stage. A clock tower sits above the main entrance. The entrance is now to the west. Part of the coach house buildings were made into a chapel when Coed Coch was Heronwater School, by Gerald R. Beech and J. Quentin Hughes in 1962. To the rear of the house is a small single-storey outbuilding with Gothic windows and a rustic verandah. There is also a square stone game larder.

The park at Coed Coch is a small landscape park lying to the south of the B5381, and bounded on all sides by lanes. The land is gently rolling lying in the folds of the surrounding hills. The ground rises gently towards the west where the house is situated on a small knoll. The River Dulas flows through the northern part of the park and pleasure grounds. To the south-east of the house is an artificial lake, with a planted island and a plain brick boathouse on the north shore. The drive sweeps gently through the park from the north-east boundary. The entrance has wrought iron gates flanked by stone gate piers erected in the early twentieth century. There is a small single-storey lodge. To the north of the house, built into a bank, is a turf-covered brick ice-house. A hexagonal two-storey tower, once the kennelman's cottage, and now ruinous, stands in a copse to the north of the ice-house, near the north boundary of the park. It may have been a converted folly tower, or have served a dual purpose. The park is separated from the pleasure grounds to the west of the house by a ha-ha.

The parkland planting is probably mid to late eighteenth-century in date, in the time of John Wynne of Trofarth and Coed Coch, who married Dorothy Wynne of Plas Ucha, Llanefydd in 1754. It consists mostly of scattered isolated oaks, with a few groups of beeches. There is some nineteenth-century perimeter planting of Scots pine, sycamore, oak, larch, beech, hazel and field maple along the east boundary.

The pleasure garden falls into two distinct physical areas. First is the area immediately surrounding the house which juts out to the west into the park and is separated from the park by the ha-ha. This area is informally planted with deciduous trees and has a circuit path. At the north end a path to the walled kitchen garden passes in a tunnel under the farm road. Secondly, to the south-west is an area of informally planted garden following the River Dulas, with informal paths winding through it. It is planted with specimen conifers underplanted with yew, holly, laurel and rhododendron. Most of the planting and certainly the layout of both areas dates from the nineteenth century except for some mature deciduous planting which dates from the eighteenth century. The area next to the house was laid out with formal rose beds but these are no longer extant. Part of this scheme was a paved sitting area, probably the foundations of a small building, and a small herbaceous border backed by the wall of the farm road.

The walled garden lies to the north of the gardens. It is comparatively small, with brick walls about 4m in height which are in a good state of repair. There is a small

range of glasshouses on the south-facing wall. The garden is now used for pheasant rearing.

Sources

Primary

National Library of Wales:

Anon pencil drawing of house from across the lake, 1854 (drawings vol. 141, no. 14).

Late nineteenth-century photographs of Coed Coch.

Secondary

Article on Coed Coch prepared by the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay District Field Club Vol 24-27 (1951-56), pp. 16-21.

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 206-07.