

BENARTH HALL

Ref No PGW (Gd) 10 (CON)

OS Map 115

Grid Ref SH 789 768

Former County Gwynedd

Unitary Authority Conwy

Community Council Henryd

Designations Listed buildings: house and terrace Grade II, summer house Grade II, ice-house Grade II; Site of Special Scientific Interest (woodland); blanket Tree Preservation Order.

Site Evaluation **Grade II**

Primary reasons for grading An interesting example of an early twentieth-century layout set in older woods and parkland; extensive late eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century walled kitchen gardens; views.

Type of Site Woodland, small park, walled gardens, rockery, 'wild garden' and small formal garden area, with views over the Conwy valley.

Main Phases of Construction Between 1790 and 1810; after 1916.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Benarth occupies a sloping site on the west bank of the Conwy estuary, on the edge of the town. There are lovely views over the estuary, the climate is mild and well suited to farming and gardening, and the town, with its castle and bridge, is at a convenient distance. All these things suggest that there has probably been a house here from an early period, and the name itself, probably from 'pen' (head) and 'gardd' (garden), shows that the site has been considered suitable for cultivation for at least as long as the name has been current (there is a seventeenth-century documentary mention, but it may be much older than this).

Apart from some minor changes made in 1916, the house remains much as it was when built in 1790. It has a three-storey central block with, on the garden front, semi-hexagonal bays either side of a semi-circular verandah porch with a balustraded balcony over; and a single-storey pavilion either side. There are French windows in the centre of both ground and first floors (the latter opening on to the balcony over the porch). The garden front, which faces south-east, is the main front, the house being on a level site cut out of the slope, with a fairly high rock wall behind; but the main entrance, with a porch, is at the rear, and has a large Diocletian

window. At the back of the two wings are circular, domed extensions, one of which housed the music room and the other the kitchen. The house is stuccoed, and has a shallow-pitched slate roof.

The present rear porch and front verandah date from 1916, the former replacing a verandah porch all along the rear facade. There is a wider area opposite the porch which is the site of an open-fronted building shown in photographs taken in 1931, but not shown on a plan of 1916; this seems to have been a sort of car port. Other changes of around 1916 include filling in the small spaces (one glazed) which were originally left between the main house and the pavilions (which communicated with the house only at the back), and alterations to the domes.

The house was built in 1790 for Samuel Price of Lincoln's Inn Fields, a new owner, the previous owner of the estate having been Owen Jones. Price died about the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and following this there seems to have been some question about the estate, possibly connected with the fact that Price died in debt, so that it was not sold for some time; but it was rented out for at least part of this period. One tenant or visitor was Sir George Beaumont, who sketched the house in about 1801, and this shows that it remained substantially unchanged throughout most of the nineteenth century, by comparison with a photograph of the 1880s or 1890s in the possession of the owner.

The house was sold to a Mr Burroughs in about 1805, having previously been on the market in 1803 (sale particulars of both dates are held in the National Library). A few years later it was visited by Edmund Hyde Hall, who was clearly most impressed by the gardens, glasshouses and so on, which had been recently built, and by the woods; but he does not mention any pleasure grounds.

Later in the nineteenth century the estate seems to have been let for most of the time, amongst others to a Revd Henry Rees, who died there in 1869, and to Wood, who built Bodlondeb on the other side of Conwy. Dr James Edwards, who moved there in 1871 when it was in a ruinous state, rented and eventually bought it; his family remained in possession until 1914. An interesting footnote to their ownership is that Lionel Dalhousie Robertson, who illustrated the original edition of *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell, was a member of the family, and evidently drew on his memories of Benarth for his illustrations. Parts of the grounds with stables and distant views of the house appear in the paintings, not drawn accurately and clearly done from memory, but recognisable.

The Tattersall family of Cheshire bought the house in 1914, and they were responsible for the 1916 alterations. They must also have been responsible for much of the layout of the main area of gardens close to the house. The estate was put back on the market in 1931 and sold in 1933, to Sir Joseph Kay, who owned it until 1960, when it was bought and owned for a short time by a syndicate.

Since the 1960s the house and garden have been allowed to decay, but the present owner now hopes to restore them.

The Coach House has now been converted into a dwelling with its own small garden, and has evidently undergone changes at different times, but the core is likely to be a coach house and stables contemporary with the house. In the late nineteenth century it occupied much the same area as it does now, and in the 1930s it consisted of garages, laundry, a small stable and shippon, with a staff flat on the first floor.

There is a level gravelled terrace in front of the Coach House with a fairly substantial stone retaining wall up to 3 m high, now buttressed.

There is also a cottage and galvanised iron boathouse, the latter built between 1913 and 1931, at Benarth Bach, on the shore of the river to the east, which are now in separate ownership.

The park was very probably laid out when the house was built in 1790, but is possibly earlier. The woods were favourably commented upon by Hyde Hall in about 1810, and although the kitchen gardens were clearly very recently laid out at this time, the woods seem to have been more established; some at least may have been older, pre-dating the 1790 house.

The present site occupies an inverted 'L' shaped area, with the stem of the 'L' along the edge of the river (which is navigable close inshore here). The house is just south of the corner of the 'L', facing south-east over its gardens towards the estuary. The home farm, a nineteenth-century stone-built (with brick details) 'model farm' near the entrance to the south drive, is in separate ownership and lies outside the park boundary, but still farms the open area of parkland south of the house and gardens.

The area to the north of the house consists almost entirely of woodland, through which the drive approaches. The south drive is also wooded part of the way, but begins alongside open parkland near the home farm, with more woods along the edge of the estuary. The main area of gardens is to the south and south-east of the house, now much overgrown.

There are two drives, approaching from north and south, of which the combined length is over 1.25 km. The south drive is now disused, and was probably always secondary. The north drive is tarmac-surfaced and, for most of its length, walled on the upper side, with park fencing along the lower side. It is walled on the sea side near the gate, where it is immediately above the shore. The house is not visible during the approach from this direction, but there are occasional views and glimpses over the Conwy estuary, when the trees allow; going towards Conwy, approaching the gate there are splendid views of the castle. Near the house the drive has recently been realigned, so that it approaches the rear of the Coach House (now a separate dwelling) directly, but originally it crossed immediately behind the house and then curved south and west, passing the Coach House and continuing on to the south gate. The new branch is in a deep cutting. There is also a recent branch south-east to Benarth Bach, along the line of a former footpath.

At one point a small stream crosses the drive, and there appears to be artificial rockwork in its bed, though probably fairly recent.

The south drive has a tarmac surface at first, from the house end, with recent stone edging, but soon becomes more or less unsurfaced, though quite stony. It goes through a narrow belt of woodland to the west of the garden, and here it is unfenced, but when it reaches the open parkland to the south there is iron fencing on the park side, and later, when the woods on the west come to an end, on both sides.

There are lodges at both entrances, although the south one now falls outside the park boundary and had been sold by 1931. There was a third lodge just north of the house, opposite the point where the path to Benarth Fawr left the drive, but this has now been demolished, leaving a passing or turning space; it had clearly already gone by 1931.

The north lodge is single-storey, modernised and extended to the north since 1931, when it had been 'recently rebuilt' according to the sale particulars. It is on a fairly steep slope above the entrance, and in 1931 had a double-gabled front with an entrance in the centre. There are no gates, but tall, square-sectioned gateposts built of roughly-dressed stone remain, swathed in creepers. A photograph with the 1931 sales particulars shows these topped by lamps with glass globes. A second, outer, pair are not so tall; the gap between the two pairs is filled with walling on the sea side and contains a modern wooden pedestrian gate on the lodge side. The gate across the south drive, north of the farm, is white-painted iron hung on iron posts.

In 1890 the park and woods were well served by paths, some probably utilitarian, others for riding or promenading. By 1913 many of these had already disappeared, and today few survive in a usable condition. One, which crossed the original north drive, near the house, on a footbridge has now been partly destroyed by the new drive to the Coach House, and the path to Benarth Bach has now become a drive; others are simply overgrown. On the maps of both 1890 and 1913 a track is shown along the top of the beach, running from close to the north entrance all along the shoreline to the slipway near Benarth Bach, but although the beginning of this can still be seen it is not shown on the modern map and appears to be disused.

The woodland, mainly of oak, sycamore and beech, with a natural understorey, is concentrated to the north of the house, although there are areas to the south-east and south-west, along the shoreline and flanking the south drive respectively. All of this except the woods by the south drive, but including part of the garden, is now included in the Benarth Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest. The woodland may be in part based on old natural oak woodland, but was clearly added to and improved, having been mixed woodland by 1890; it provides a certain amount of shelter from the north, but this is in general a sheltered site and the woodland's primary purpose was certainly simply to beautify, and perhaps to provide timber. By about 1810, when mentioned by Hyde Hall, the woods were obviously fairly well established, but he gives no clue as to whether all was quite recently planted or some older. It is probable that there would have been some new planting at the time the house was built in 1790, but this may have been mainly adding to or extending existing woods.

There are plantings of rhododendrons and other ornamental shrubs, also some hedging, along both drives, now suffering from neglect and shading by taller trees. The north drive has laurel and rhododendron alongside for most of its length, not only *R. ponticum* but also some other

varieties, and there is some rather overshadowed beech hedging between the end of the park fence and the wall on the sea side towards the north end. The south drive has some more interesting plantings, including limes, oaks and a large fir, ornamental varieties of holly, a large viburnum, and several different rhododendrons, and there are some small beech trees which may again once have been a length of hedging.

All of the open parkland is to the south of the house. It now consists of one large enclosure and a smaller one to the north, bounded by farmland on the south, the garden on the north and woodland on east and west. The home farm, to which the parkland belongs, is at the south-west corner. In 1890 the small northern enclosure was larger, and included an area of orchard, also having a greater density of specimen trees than the main area. By 1913 it had become rougher ground with some scrub, probably due to the cessation of grazing, and the orchard had shrunk, but later part of the area was included in the garden, as can be clearly seen from air photographs, leaving the smaller enclosure which remains today.

On top of the hill behind the house, to the north-west, there seems to have once been a viewpoint. It is a place where there would have been a spectacular panoramic view before the trees cut it off, and it is noticeable that the trees to the west and south-west, away from the view, are much larger than those to the east and north. The site is level, probably naturally, with a steep drop to the north-east, and although the paths and any shelter or building are lost, there are some ornamental shrubs such as golden privet, rhododendron and cotoneaster, the privet possibly the remains of hedging - whereas the rest of the undergrowth in the area is natural. There is a recent dog burial surrounded by stones.

There was a tennis court, now disused, in the field to the west of the house; this is shown on the 1913 map, but not on that of 1890. It is not mentioned in the particulars of 1931 so may already have fallen out of use.

The ice-house, set into the slope in the woodland on the hill behind the house, is not shown on the 1890 25-in. map, but appears on the 1913 version and is mentioned in the 1805 particulars of sale. It may therefore be contemporary with the house. It is brick-built, domed, and about 3 m in diameter with a conical base about 4.5 m deep. There is a rebate for a floor or lid all the way round the chamber, and there was a door in the entrance and another in the stone-walled passage, which has a right-angle in the middle and is cut into the solid rock on the outside of this.

The large walled gardens were laid out at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the lawned terrace in front of the house may be older than that, probably contemporary with the 1790 house. The rest probably dates from 1914 onwards, though there may have been a small wilderness area before this.

The gardens now, apart from the extensive walled gardens to the west, consist of a level terrace in front of the house which must have had stunning views over the Conwy estuary; a rose garden and rockery, with pool, below this; and an extremely overgrown area on a slope to the south. The terrace, which was clearly formerly lawned, remains open, although trees have grown up to

block the view, but the rest of the gardens are now more or less wooded, except where they have been recently cleared. Nevertheless, much remains, not only of the structure but even of the planting.

The builder of the house, Samuel Price, was probably responsible for creating the terrace in front of the house, which is really necessary to set the building off, and makes the most of the site by encouraging appreciation of the view, which must have been an important factor in the choice of site. Price seems to have planted trees in what remained basically a woodland garden until after 1913 (the particulars of sale of 1805 mention both 'forest trees' and 'the choicest evergreens' as being within the pleasure grounds), and possibly created a small wilderness or shrubbery south of the house, extending westwards over the area between the house and the Coach House, although this could have been added later. As the particulars mention hothouses, melon pits, vinery and peachery he must also have had a kitchen garden.

Whether Price intended to lay out any further areas of garden is not known, and he died before he had lived at Benarth ten years. His successor, Mr Burroughs, probably extended and improved the walled gardens, as Hyde Hall, in about 1810, talks of these in terms which suggest they were less than 15 or 20 years old. The walled garden in 1931 was nearly three acres in area, but the southernmost acre does not seem to have been part of the original layout. Burroughs was clearly mainly interested in the kitchen garden and appears to have added little to the ornamental garden, except perhaps for more trees.

This situation seems to have continued throughout the nineteenth century, and the 25-in. Ordnance Survey maps of 1890 and 1913 show only the house terrace and the little wilderness area. The former was oval, with a path all round it, and one leading off to the north, crossing the drive on a footbridge; the latter in 1890 seemed to make use of what appears to be a small quarry, but by 1913 this feature is no longer shown and the path layout has been simplified. Plans drawn up in connection with the house improvements of 1916 show a small rockery, with steps, linking the terrace with the wilderness area, and this was probably already in place rather than being part of the improvements to the garden carried out contemporaneously with or soon after the work to the house.

At present the terrace remains the same, although the path is overgrown, and the footbridge survives; a summer house and aviary have been added. The wilderness area has been levelled and made into a rose garden and a large rockery with a pool at the bottom has been added to the east, on the steep slope below the terrace. Part of the park and orchard area to the south has been taken in to the garden, but is now so overgrown that if it were not for the surviving planting it would be impossible to tell that it had ever been part of the garden.

These improvements were made after 1913 and before 1931, as is clear from maps and photographs, and can therefore be ascribed to the Tattersalls, who owned the house from 1914 to 1933. The balustrade round the viewing platform added to the terrace is similar to that on the balcony over the front verandah, which was built by 1916, and was probably conceived at the same time; the rose garden and main rockery are probably also fairly early developments in this phase of improvements. The rockery area would have been disturbed by the construction

of the viewing platform above, and the planting does look fairly mature on an air photograph, issued as a postcard, which was probably taken in the mid 1930s. The plan of 1916 does not show any of the garden improvements, however, so they may postdate the improvements to the house - perhaps begun after the end of the First World War in 1918.

The southern area may have been added later still, and does appear fairly newly established on the air photograph. It was known as the 'wild garden', but the layout appears to be much more formal than this would normally imply, with a central path down the middle of a double herbaceous border and shrubs and trees evenly dotted about the rest of the area, which was turfed. The photograph of this area in the 1931 particulars of sale shows that it had been created by then, but as only the herbaceous borders are shown, it is not very helpful in gauging its age. The air photograph suggests that the area above and behind the house, now mostly removed by the new drive, was developed at around the same time as the southern area.

The surviving planting, apart from the older trees, is commensurate with an early to mid twentieth-century date, including a much wider range of flowering shrubs than was usual in the previous century. These can be seen in the air photograph dotted about, singly and in small groups, with a wide range of varieties of conifer; some of the latter have survived and grown into large trees.

The photographs in the 1931 particulars are interesting as there are several of the gardens. The rose garden seems at that time to have contained island beds with bulbs and bedding plants, as well as beds with roses, and the rockery contained low-growing plants and surfaced paths, and there were no trees obscuring the view from the terrace (although some which now do so can be seen, still small enough not to be in the way). The photographs show, and descriptions mention, climbers on the walls of the house, which included forsythia, wistaria and roses - 'Gloire de Dijon' and *R. banksiae* being mentioned by name - and elsewhere in the garden there were palms, mimosa and 'the rarer varieties of rhododendron'. The air photograph which was made into a postcard was evidently taken a few years later, as can be deduced from the growth of certain trees.

The drives cross the garden area, running between the house and the Coach House. It is not clear from the old maps how the stables were reached, but the plan of 1916 shows a sharp curve back towards the east side of the Coach House, and this is the present arrangement, now continuing northwards to link up with the new branch of the drive.

The main paths are two long straight ones which run either side of the walled garden, both now overgrown and inaccessible. The one on the east can be followed part way down and has some trees beside it, including a large oak which pre-dates the garden, some conifers and some black poplars about 35 years old. There is a more recent track between the one on the west and the south drive, but this also soon disappears into the undergrowth.

There were few minor paths in the garden before the post-1916 improvements, but one old one is the edged path across the area between the house and Coach House, in the curve of the drive. This is shown on the 1916 plan, though not on either of the 25-in. maps, as steps, but

these have now gone. The now invisible path around the terrace, and the truncated one using the footbridge, are also older than most.

The network of paths in the shrubbery area south of the house has been replaced following the major changes to this area, and one which ran east to west along the top of the southern area later taken in to the garden had already disappeared by 1913. Later paths created when the rockery and 'wild garden' were laid out can be traced to some extent, but any surface has gone; photographs suggest that at least some of the footpaths in the rockery were surfaced, and the path running down the double border was of grass. There are some clearer paths at the south-western end of the terrace, where a continuation of the path crossing the area within the curve of the drive, also stone-edged but now tarmac-surfaced, leads on to the lawn; another stone-edged path branching off it to the south runs through a group of trees down to the rose garden. There is also an edged path, with a couple of stone steps, leading up from the southern 'wild garden' area towards the walled garden.

The terrace is oval, partly supported by a natural rocky bluff and partly by stone walling. It was obviously once lawned - although the grass is now very tall, there are no trees or bushes. A golden yew hedge runs around it. On the house side is a narrow terrace at a higher level, paved with York stone, and steps of the same material (the lowest few circular) descend from this either side of the central area in front of the house verandah.

Opposite the central verandah, at the lower level, is a viewing platform or balcony which was added to the terrace shortly after the verandah was added to the house. The reconstituted stone balustrading around it is in the same style as that on the balcony over the verandah, and the floor is paved. There was a path, with a hedge, all round the outer edge of the terrace, but this is now untraceable although the hedge survives. At the south-west end paths and steps lead off it to the lower areas of the garden, and at the north-east end of the terrace is a summer house and aviary, with steps down nearby, probably added about the same time as the viewing platform. Close to this is a brick and stone bridge over the drive, shown on maps from 1890 onwards. At either end of the bridge are pairs of ornamental piers, one with a gate between them.

The summer house is circular, brick-built with a conical slate roof, and has an aviary for small birds attached on the north side. There are four sets of French windows, and a double window on to the aviary. In the photograph of the summer house with the 1931 particulars, a smaller wooden summer house or shelter can be seen immediately to the north of the aviary. This has now gone.

The main area of rockery is below the house terrace and viewing platform, but on the west it continues along between the terrace and the rose garden, an area which was probably already rockery before the main area was constructed. Due to the steepness of the slope, the rockery is terraced, with informal dry-stone walls of varying heights; the terraces are mostly fairly narrow and sloping. Some of them clearly carried paths, with informal steps between them, although these are now mostly untraceable; from the photographs in the 1931 sale particulars it can be seen that some at least of these were surfaced and edged.

Only one terrace, around the middle of the slope, is laid out with rocks, but the steepness of the whole area and the terrace walls give it all the character of a rockery. There is little left of the original plantings, apart from the tall trees which now block the view from the house terrace.

At the bottom of the rockery, on a wider terrace, is a concrete-lined oval pool, about 3 m by 5 m, which was fed by rainwater collected in a small stone-edged channel which crosses the terraces. This channel has tiny artificial waterfalls, and although it now holds no water was clearly a feature of the rockery. On one level it disappears into a tank and reappears at the level below, where there is a small pool, basin and lion mask.

The pond has stone-edged planting shelves at the sides and a stone and slate-built seat above it at one end. There may have been stone-edged beds and/or paths around it, and it was clearly an open area, although now so overgrown that this is hard to imagine. There is a small iron gate at the edge of the pond terrace which formerly had a yew arch over it; the iron framework survives and the yews are still alive. This gives on to the sloping 'wild garden' area below.

The rose garden is a terraced level area south of the house, below the south-east end of the main terrace. It has recently been cleared of undergrowth, but no details of the layout are visible; photographs suggest there was an irregular pattern of island beds in grass, without formal paths. Steps lead down into it from above, and out of it into the 'wild garden' below. In 1931 the garden was planted with many plants other than roses, but now, apart from a row of skimmias along the south edge, it contains only old rose plants.

There is a sundial, which can be seen on the air photograph in the centre of a large circular bed; it is not shown on the earlier maps. There is also a tiny stone-edged circular pool (filled from a tap) near the southern edge of the terrace, with an open mock-stone urn beside it which has now fallen off its base.

On the north-west corner of the rose garden is a water supply, in the form of a small tank fed by a tap which is hidden by a stone 'hood' built over it.

The area on the slope to the south, formerly known as the 'wild garden', had little formal structure and relied mainly on planting, so has not survived well. The double border and path running down the middle, however, can be seen in places as a triple bump. A beech hedge runs along the south boundary. A number of ornamental shrubs survive in the area, including a fine Japanese maple.

Behind the Coach House is a small level area with a few large specimen trees, which has been recently re-seeded as a lawn. At the south-west corner of this is a small stone-lined well, now dry, but formerly the site of a pump. This area may at one time have been a drying green, as the laundry was located in what is now the Coach House.

The terraces within the rockery area are supported by dry-stone walls of an informal character, mostly under 1 m high. Below this area and the rose garden is a wall, the final retaining wall, up to nearly 2 m high at the rose garden end, and below this is the natural slope. This

wall is also dry-stone, but neatly built to present a smooth face, and thus less informal than the terrace walls in the rockery.

Above the rose garden there is some walling at the south-west end, but a rockery slope east of this, with steps through, rather than a terrace wall.

Steps

The steps in the main rockery area seem to have been mostly very informal, and in its current state it is hard to pick them out. The steep flight down from the house terrace at the north-eastern end is concrete, but damaged and impassable at present. There are steps down to the pond terrace at either end, those on the west from the rose garden; although unusable at present it can be seen that these are informal stone-built steps.

There is a fairly wide flight of stone-built steps down through the retaining wall below the rose garden, at an angle, giving on to the slope of the 'wild garden' below. These can be clearly seen on the air photograph, as can a longer, curving flight up through the westward arm of the rockery to the house terrace, but the latter are brick, with stone edging. Towards the bottom they are very much overgrown by *Lonicera nitida*, which appears to have formed a hedge either side, but this is not obviously visible on the air photograph or the one of these steps in the 1931 particulars. In the latter there appears to be a pergola over the top of the steps, but this definitely does not appear on the air photograph. There are also a few stone-built steps down on to the house terrace from the path leading to it from the south-west.

Fairly extensive hot- and glasshouses are mentioned in the particulars of sale of 1805, so it is likely that a kitchen garden existed before this date. The present tripartite walled garden seems to have been in existence by about 1810, when seen by Edmund Hyde Hall, and was described by him as recently built, so may be an enlargement constructed by the post-1805 owner. The southernmost enclosure is a later addition. It is unlikely that any part of the extant garden pre-dates the 1790 house.

The extensive walled gardens lie to the south-west of the house, covering almost three acres. It is certain that all this area had been taken in by 1931, as the acreage is given in the particulars of sale of that date, but the southernmost enclosure appears to have been a paddock with parkland trees in 1890, and its status is not clear from the 1913 map, although the trees had by then disappeared.

In 1890 the three northernmost enclosures had a layout of paths which divided them into six roughly equal segments, though the two at the extreme north were in fact slightly smaller as the north-east and north-west corners of the garden are rounded off. The northernmost internal wall, presumably built as a fruit wall, did not reach to the outer walls of the garden on east and west, but had paths passing the ends. The central path must have passed through a doorway in this wall and the one to the south of it, as no gaps are shown. There was a large glasshouse along the north wall, with a central entrance through it and a range of buildings at the back, outside the garden. The apple store outside the east wall and the stable for the garden horse in the north-east corner of the paddock which was later taken in to the garden are shown on the

1890 map. There was also a cold frame near the south-east corner of the glasshouse.

By 1913 there were no obvious changes to this layout, although fruit trees are shown on the map of that date around the walls of the central section. These may have been omitted from the earlier map, or may have been planted between the two dates in response to the reduction in size of an orchard to the east during the same period (the site of this orchard later became the 'wild garden'). It is possible that by this time the paddock to the south had become part of the garden.

In 1931 there was a vinery and peach house and a modern three-part greenhouse, and the air photograph of a few years later shows that half of the old glasshouse had by that time been demolished. The 'modern' greenhouse overlaps its site, so it must have gone by 1931. A wide gap had also been made through the centre of the northernmost internal wall by the time the air photograph was taken. Wall fruit and many orderly lines of vegetables can be clearly seen, together with what looks like a rose pergola to the west of the central north-south path.

Now the garden is completely overgrown and only the northernmost area is fully accessible, although the walls largely seem to survive. The condition of the two southern sections is unknown as they are completely inaccessible.

The walls are of mortared stone lined with handmade brick, the internal walls brick throughout, and the greenhouse and frame bases are also of brick. The average height of the walls is between three and four metres, up to five on the inside at the north end. There is a central gap in both visible internal walls, and the northernmost still has gaps at both ends. There are visible entrances through the middle of the north wall (formerly through the glasshouse) and into the second section through the east wall, both with doors still in situ; there must be more entrances which are not visible at present.

The range of buildings outside the north wall, including the boiler house, still containing the boiler, and potting sheds, survives, and is stone-built; the apple store outside the east wall is now roofless. A second frame base has been added since 1913, close to the first, and there are two brick forcing pits, part sunk and part terraced (now filled in) against the north wall just east of the original end of the old glasshouse.

Both the remaining part of the older glasshouse and the more recent greenhouse are in need of repair, but both retain most of their internal arrangements, such as heating pipes, ventilators and vine rods. The central section of the later greenhouse in particular appears to have been designed for steamy heat, as there are multiple hot pipes along the sides with water tanks underneath. The superstructure (most of the glass has been removed and stored) is of white-painted wood, with decorative iron brackets, and the framework of the staging remains, except in the northern section which has raised beds. The greenhouse was supplied by Foster and Pearson of Beeston, Notts.

Some fruit trees remain against the walls, but otherwise there is little trace of plantings, and there are some quite sizeable seedling trees. The supporting wires are still on the walls. The

old glasshouse still contains vines.

The whole area slopes down from west to east, and also, less noticeably, from north to south. There are a few brick and slate steps to cope with the changes in level around the glasshouses in the northernmost section. A stone-walled terrace has been created to provide a level site for the later greenhouse.

Sources

Primary

Information from Mr M. Herman

Information from Mr P. Welford

Photographs kept at the Coach House

Particulars of sale of 1805 and 1931 (National Library)

Secondary

Hyde Hall, E., *A Description of Caernarvonshire* (1909-1811)