

WREXHAM: WREXHAM CEMETERY

Ref No	PGW (C) 67
OS Map	117
Grid Ref	SJ 327 496
County	Wrexham
District	Wrexham

Community Council Offa

Designations Listed building: Cemetery chapels Grade II; Lodge Grade II; Gate piers, gates and railings to cemetery Grade II

Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Victorian garden cemetery, with surviving layout and planting

Type of Site

Garden cemetery

Main Phases of Construction

1874-76

SITE DESCRIPTION

Wrexham Cemetery is a large Victorian cemetery occupying a rectangular area on the western edge of the town, between the B5099 and A5152 roads. It was laid out between 1874 and 1876 by Yeaman Strachan of Wrexham on gently rolling ground outside the town, with the Great Western Railway on its western boundary. It was consecrated on 3rd July 1876, and was extended eastwards in 1890. Wat's Dyke, an early mediaeval boundary earthwork, runs north-south through the cemetery, but there is now no trace of it. The highest ground is at the west end, from which there is a steep drop down to the A5152 road to the south.

The cemetery was laid out as a public garden, with winding and straight paths, and scattered ornamental trees and shrubs, both coniferous and deciduous. These include a row of poplars along the south boundary, many limes, sycamore, acacia, horse chestnut, ash, beech, weeping willow, cherry, oak, pine, yew and cypress. The north boundary is hedged, with a row of pollarded limes and other trees along the inside.

The main entrance is set back from the road on the south side, with cast iron main and side gates flanked by stone piers with recessed gothic panels and heavy triangular tops. On

either side are curving cast iron railings on low walls. These continue along the boundary to the east of the entrance, and along the east side of the cemetery. To the west is a wall of large uncoursed blocks along the A5152. Just inside the entrance, on the west side, is a small two-storey stone lodge designed by William Turner of Wrexham. Inside the gates is a small tarmacked forecourt in front of twin gothic chapels linked by a central arch with a small tower and octagonal spire over it. These were also designed by William Turner of Wrexham. They are of stone, with steeply pitched slate roofs and gothic windows, and are built on a platform overlooking the eastern end of the cemetery. The chapels are flanked by trees, and a laurel hedge runs along the north edge of the platform, with a gap opposite the central arch. There is a secondary entrance on the north side of the cemetery, with cast iron gates flanked by simple stone piers with pyramidal tops.

Just inside the north boundary is a tall slender tapering brick column of uncertain purpose. It has no opening. In the middle of the cemetery is a small enclave of memorial stones to Polish forces who died in 1946, surrounded by yew hedging.

Sources

Secondary

Palmer, A.N., The History of the town of Wrexham (1893), pp. 205-06.

Dodd, A.H., ed., History of Wrexham (1957), pp. 133-34.

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), p. 304.