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

SITE DOSSIER

SITE NAME New Cemetery, Abergavenny

REF. NO. PGW (Gt) 37

OS MAP 161   GRID REF.   SO 290137

FORMER COUNTY Gwent   UNITARY AUTHORITY Monmouth B.C.   COMMUNITY
COUNCIL Llanfoist Fawr

DESIGNATIONS   Listed building: Grade
National Park AONB   SSSI   NNR   ESA   GAM SAM   CA

SITE EVALUATION   Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Well preserved Victorian landscaped garden cemetery, complete with
lodge and chapel

TYPE OF SITE

Late 19th-century landscaped garden cemetery

MAIN PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION
1894

VISITED BY/DATE Elisabeth Whittle/April 1991

THE PLEASURE GARDEN

Grid ref SO 290137

Date/style Late l9th-century/landscaped garden cemetery

GENERAL DESCRIPTION, HISTORY AND LAYOUT

The cemetery lies on a low hill on the south bank of the river Usk
between Abergavenny and Llanfoist. Access to it is from a small lane
at the south end of the Abergavenny Bridge. In the north-east corner
of the cemetery is a small lodge. There are two entrances off the
lane, the eastern one with a lych gate and the western one a wider
gateway flanked by stone piers. This entrance may have been
deliberately sited opposite an old oak tree on the river bank, which
has been drawn into the landscaping scheme with an iron bench around
its trunk, and railings around it.
      The eastern end of the cemetery was built, landscaped, and
opened in l894. The cemetery was later extended westwards, and this
part has not been landscaped. The oldest part is landscaped in the
style of a Victorian public park or garden, with sweeping gravel
(parts now tarmacked) drives, grass, and informal planting of trees
and shrubs. The planting is mainly evergreen, with many pines,
hollies, yews and cypresses. In the centre, on the top of the hill, is
a small stone chapel with an octagonal tower. The oldest graves are
around the chapel. The east side of the cemetery is bounded by a row
of large mature pine trees, and between the cemetery and the river is
a row of pines and oaks.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

A winding drive leads from the main entrance (western) up to the
chapel, with a further loop to the south of the chapel. This has been
tarmacked, but was originally gravelled. Older drives, still
gravelled, lead from the entrance along the lower level on the north
side, and wind up the east side to join the main drive.

BUILT COMPONENTS

Along the north side of the lane bounding the north side of the
cemetery are heavy iron railings (E. Hampton Ltd., Abergavenny) which
appear contemporary with the cemetery. They run from the old railway
bridge at the east end of the cemetery to just west of the main
entrance. Opposite the main entrance they curve out in a semi-circle
around an old oak tree, around whose trunk is an iron bench (which the
widening girth of the tree is now engulfing).
      The cemetery is bounded on the north side, next to the public
lane, by a mortared stone wall which rises in steps up the slope. On
either side of the lych gate it curves in slightly. There are two
steps up to simple wrought iron gates beneath a wooden gabled canopy.
The curving parts of the wall are topped by low ironwork. On either
side of the main entrance the wall takes a broad curve in to square
gate piers which flank the gate. The tops of the piers are ornamented
in Gothic style. The gates are wrought iron, similar in style to the
others.
      At the east end of the north side is a two-storey gabled lodge.
It is built of stone, with a slate roof, and with red brick quoins,
window surrounds and decorative string courses. There is an entrance
off the public lane, and a gate from the lodge garden into the
cemetery. Nearby, in the north-east corner of the cemetery, are some
old cold frames.
      Within the cemetery there are stone steps leading from the drive
near the main entrance up to the chapel.

The chapel, in the centre of the cemetery, is a simple Gothic gabled building built of stone, with a tile roof. On the south side is a large entrance porch. The east end is semi-octagonal, and next to it, on the south side, is a tall thin octagonal tower topped by a steeply sloping conical roof of stone slates.

Most of the Victorian graves, some of which are elaborate, with marble sculptured angels etc., are near the chapel.

ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENTS

Some of the Victorian graves are ornamented with marble sculpture, for example of angels.

PLANTED COMPONENTS

Outside the north side of the cemetery, between the lane and the river Usk, is a row of trees planted as part of the landscaping of the cemetery. The eastern half is of pines, the western half of oaks. The iron railings curve outwards to include an older oak in the landscaping.

There is a further row of mature pines along the east boundary of the cemetery, and there are some old beech trees along the north side.

The eastern half of the cemetery is informally planted with lawn, trees and shrubs. The trees and shrubs are mainly evergreen, with clipped hollies and laurels, a laurel hedge flanking the tarmacked drive, and yews and cypresses near the north edge of the steep slope of the hill. Near the steps down to the main entrance are some rhododendrons.

The western end of the cemetery is largely unplanted, with grass between the graves.

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: trees and river bank to the north
Views beyond site: fine view of the Blorenge mountain to the south-west (A on map)

ANY SPECIAL FEATURES

None

SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

Structural components: all
Built components: all
Architectural ornaments: all
Planted components: most

SOURCES

(Primary and secondary. For primary, give location. Aerial photos
(AP): ref. no and collection)

To be appended: 1:10,000 map of site, marked with boundaries,
viewpoints etc.; colour photographs of site, photocopies of relevant
material, where available.
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