

PLAS TEG

Ref No PGW (C) 24
OS Map 117
Grid Ref SJ 287 597
County Flintshire
District Flintshire
Community Council Leeswood

Designations Listed building: Plas Teg Grade II*

Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Remains of seventeenth-century courtyard, with gazebo, to one of the most important houses in Clwyd

Type of Site

Courtyard entrance; walled garden; shrubberies; avenue

Main Phases of Construction

Seventeenth century; nineteenth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Plas Teg was built by Sir John Trevor (1562-1629) in 1610. Trevor was the second son of Sir John Trevor of Trevalyn Hall. In terms of design Plas Teg stands on its own amongst other houses of the period in Clywd. Its compact design has similarities to houses such as Hardwick Hall, Wollaton and Lulworth Castle in England and Ruperra Castle in south Wales. Sir John was knighted by James I, and was made steward and receiver at Windsor Castle amongst other honours. No doubt these court connections influenced the design of Plas Teg. A house is known to have stood on the site of Plas Teg before the building of the present house but nothing survives.

Plas Teg stands with its back to the hill, facing north-east. The building consists of a three-storey central block with corner towers. The towers have ogee roofs and square cupolas. The north-east and south-east facing sides are of ashlar blocks whilst the remaining sides are of rubble. The top storey of the house was remodelled in the eighteenth century. This is quite obvious on the north-east front where the pediments are built of a honey coloured sandstone as opposed to the grey of the rest of the house. The gable on the south-east was apparently curvilinear too, but now has three plain gables, and a single gable on the south-east and south-west ends.

The stables and farm buildings lie to the north-west of the house. It is likely that these utility buildings were erected at the time of the remodelling of the house in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, or perhaps were remodellings of existing buildings. The stone stable block has three rounded archways reaching to the full height of the building. The central block which advances slightly from the other two has a brick pediment which contains a dovecote. The outer archways have been filled in with brick panels. A building similar in design, but without a pediment, lies just opposite. It has the same archways, two of which are panelled with brick.

It is doubtful if there was ever a scheme for a park, mainly due to the fact that family attendance at Plas Teg was fairly sporadic right from the moment it was built. Long periods were spent at court in London, and as a result of marriage Glynde in Sussex was to become the chief family seat. During much of its life Plas Teg has been tenanted, or left empty.

Nineteenth-century drives remain to the north and south of the house, but the lodge, formerly at the north entrance, was demolished when the A541 was widened.

To the north-west of the house is a wooded area which has a small ha-ha around it. At some time many of the trees appear to have been coppiced. Some specimen oaks and limes are scattered throughout the area to the south-west, north-west, and south-east of the house. There are also some mature sycamores. Aligned on the north-east front of the house are the remains of a lime avenue stretching to the A541 Mold-Wrexham road. This is shown on a late eighteenth-century estate map, but the present trees are younger, indicating that the avenue has been replanted. The ground is generally very wet and as a result there is quite a high percentage of silver birch.

There are two ice-houses at Plas Teg. The first lies to the north-west of the house just north of the site of a pond, now covered by a farm building. It is stone built with a stone vaulted interior. The second lies just off a line to the centre of the house on the far side of the road. It is stone built and various local stories state that a secret passage runs under the lime avenue to this ice house.

Very little survives of any garden at Plas Teg. An eighteenth-century drawing shows that there was an entrance courtyard on the north-east front of the building with two pavilions, one at each outer corner, with a pillared gateway in the centre. The two side walls of the court are shown joined by a wall capped with fretted stonework, in the centre of which, aligned with the front door, is a gateway entrance with arch over. On the arch is some type of carved stonework, perhaps a coat of arms. The drawing also shows walled enclosures on each side of the pavilions, and to the front. The south-east pavilion survives with fragments of walling and there are fragments of the other pavilion to the north-west. The pavilion is single-storey, built of stone with a pyramidal slate roof. It is open on the north-west and part of the south-west sides, with a simple column in the corner. A late eighteenth-century estate map shows the walled courtyard at the front of the house, and to the north. The area labelled garden extends to the south side of the house.

The ground behind the house is steeply sloping, and directly behind the house is a stone retaining wall. Immediately to the south of the retaining wall and to the south-east are the remains of a nineteenth-century shrubbery largely overtaken by gorse, but with some azaleas and rhododendron remaining. This area is bound to the north-west and south-east by stone revetted ha-has. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (25") indicates meandering paths and a small pond. A small oval glasshouse, possibly a conservatory, is also shown to the south-east of the house but this does not survive.

The small stone built walled garden lies to the south-west of the house on sloping ground above it. The garden is almost certainly nineteenth-century, not being indicated on a late eighteenth-century map of the house and surrounding land. The walls are about 3m in height, with thick coping slabs which slightly overhang the wall. The southern end of the garden has a wide and deep stone revetted ditch instead of a wall, with the remains of a scooped out wall on the garden side. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows a greenhouse on the north west wall.

Sources

Primary

Late eighteenth-century book of Trevor Estate maps including Plas Teg, found in solicitor's office, Birch Cullimore, Wrexham. No ref.

Secondary

Smith, P., 'Plas Teg', Trans. Flintshire Hist. Soc. 18 (1960), pp. 157-62.

Girouard, M., 'Plas Teg', Country Life, 19 July 1962, pp. 134-37.

Pratt, D., and A.G. Veysey, A Handlist of the Topographical Prints of Clwyd (1977), no 838.

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 376-78.