

PLAS UCHAF, LLANNEFYDD

Ref No PGW(Gd)55(CON)

Ref No PGW(C)36

OS Map 116

Grid Ref SH 967 716

Former county Clwyd

Unitary Authority Conwy

Community Council Llannefydd

Designations Listed building: Plas Uchaf Grade II

Site Evaluation Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Survival in slightly ruinous state of a formal walled and terraced garden attached to a modest manor house, dating to the seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

Type of Site

Walled garden with terrace and pavilion.

Main Phases of Construction

Seventeenth or early eighteenth century

SITE DESCRIPTION

Plas Uchaf stands in the lee of the hillfort Mynnyd y Gaer, which shelters the house from the east. It is a substantial stone farmhouse with stone coped gables under a slate roof. There are remains of stone mullioned windows, now blocked up. All windows are nineteenth-century in date. The house is an example of unit planning. It has been lived in by the Williams family since the 1850s. Initially they were tenant farmers of the Wynns of Coed Coch. For a period of ten years they did not live here as a result of the tithe wars, but later bought the farm.

To the north of the house are the stables, a building of uncoursed rubble, with stone coped gables, and a corrugated iron roof replacing the former slate one. The interior still has wooden partitioning and hay racks which are filled from the loft above. Two round window opening on upper floor with dressed stone surround. Outside stone steps lead to the upper floor. Underneath the steps is what appears to be a place for penning animals. Mr Williams thinks it may have been a place for keeping geese.

Plas Uchaf has an attractive yard with very little new building except for a corrugated dutch barn and a storage barn jutting into the walled garden. Other items of interest include three cheese presses in situ in another outbuilding. A pigeon house built into the end of a barn looks like an addition, possibly of the nineteenth century.

A walled garden on the south side of the house, now rather derelict, has some interesting remains. The garden is entered through a small sideyard on the western side of the house. A short terrace lies immediately on the other side of the door. Part of it has recently been filled in because it was falling down. However there are some remains of a terrace wall with a stone pillar at each end, and a lower wall between with large coping slabs. At the eastern end of the terrace and the boundary wall of the garden is a small two-storey building with a corner chimney and nineteenth-century fireplace. The purpose of the building, although an integral part of the garden, is obscure. It may have served as a banqueting house, a dovecote, or a brew house, or a combination of these. The upper storey has what looks like a landing platform for pigeons, below which is a square window. There are two door into the building, one on the ground floor on the south side, the other on the north side from the terrace. The windows on the east and west sides have been recently blocked up. There are stone steps from the lower level of the main part of the garden alongside the summerhouse and the terrace. The roof is corrugated iron. Next to the summerhouse at the end of the terrace are the remains of a five seater privy.

The north wall of the garden has extremely exaggerated overhanging coping stones for fruit protection. This wall is very well built of small stones worked closely together with lime mortar. The east wall has just about fallen down, and the central portion of the south wall has collapsed taking the doorway with it. The west wall, which has a door in it, is thickly covered with tree ivy.

A mountain stream from the west used to feed a farmyard pond, now dry, but the stream flows right underneath the walled garden, emerging on its east side and flowing into the stream below.

The interior of the garden is rough grass, with edging slabs for pathways protruding in several places. An old mulberry tree survives outside the walled garden on the south side. Beyond this is an area called the Vineyard, though the owner does not think this is significant.

Below the eastern wall of the garden is a steep bank which has been planted as an orchard.

The small yard on the eastern side of the house has as a perimeter wall, the wall of a byre, to the north. The top of this wall also has overhanging coping slabs. Three alcoves at ground level are blocked up entrances to the building behind.

Sources

Secondary

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), p. 201.