

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

SITE DOSSIER

SITE NAME Wyelands

REF. NO. PGW (Gt) 51

OS MAP 172 GRID REF. ST 524919

FORMER COUNTY Gwent UNITARY AUTHORITY Monmouth Borough COMMUNITY
COUNCIL Mathern

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

SITE EVALUATION Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Well preserved Regency terraced garden set in contemporary landscape park

TYPE OF SITE

Landscape park; terraced and informal woodland gardens

MAIN PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION

c. 1820

VISITED BY/DATE Elisabeth Whittle/December 1991

HOUSE

Name Wyelands

Grid ref ST 524919

Date/style c. 1820/Regency villa

Brief description:

Wyelands is situated in rolling lowland to the west of Chepstow, near the east boundary of its park. The house is a compact classical Regency villa dating to around 1820. It was designed by Robert Lugar for George Buckle (sheriff of the county in 1819). It was advertised in the Monmouthshire Merlin, on 18th July 1846, as 'lately erected from the designs of [Robert] Lugar. In about 1840 it was bought by John Russell, proprietor of collieries at Risca, who sold to Major General Sir Edmund Keynton Williams, whose son sold to the Revd Robert Vaughan Hughes.

The house is two-storey, built of stone, with a low-pitched tile roof and wide eaves. The main entrance front is on the north side, with a shallow porch and doorway flanked by pairs of Ionic columns. There are a number of false windows, including that to the right of the entrance. The service end of the house is a lower range on the east side of the main block. The garden lies to the south of the house.

OUTBUILDINGS

Name Stables

Grid ref ST 524920

Date/style, and brief description

A single-storey range of stables lies to the north of the house, in a small cobbled and walled courtyard. It has rendered walls and a pitched slate roof.

To the east of the house is a low stone range of outbuildings, and to the north of the house and kitchen garden is the Home Farm.

THE PARK

Central grid ref ST 523920

Date/style c. 1820/landscape park

GENERAL DESCRIPTION, HISTORY AND LAYOUT

The Wyelands park lies on rolling lowland to the south-west of Chepstow (between Chepstow and the village of Mathern). It survives in its entirety, and is of an irregular shape, elongated north-south. The two entrances are at the north and south ends of the park. The north drive is the main one, with a small lodge in the same style as the house on the A48 road, just east of Pwllmeyric. This was probably also designed by Robert Lugar. The drive winds through the park to the north side of the house. The south drive has a small lodge with stepped gables at the entrance, and runs up through woodland, joining the main drive on the north side of the kitchen garden. The park is bounded on the north-west and south-east, where its boundaries are along roads, with stone walling. Elsewhere it is bounded by iron fencing.

Most of the park is permanent pasture, with scattered isolated ornamental trees (both deciduous and coniferous, including some fine cedars of Lebanon), and some clumps of trees (mixed). Some of these trees appear contemporary with the creation of the park. To the north, south-east and east of the house are areas of woodland. That to the north is ornamental, with some fine specimen trees. To the south-east and east the woodland is semi-natural deciduous. To the east of the house, east of the Mathern-St Tewdic lane is a small wood (East Wood) with a single-storey stone rustic lodge at its entrance. This semi-natural deciduous woodland is also part of the park, and has a winding path through it.

The park is contemporary with the house, and was created in about 1820 for the Vaughan-Hughes family. It has been little altered, apart from some tree renewal, fencing, and tarmacking of the drives.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

Drives

There are two drives, from the north and south ends of the park. Both are tarmacked. The north drive is the main one, and enters the park just east of Pwllmeyric, off the A48 road. It winds southwards through the park to the north side of the house, where it widens. The south drive enters the park off the Mathern-St Tewdic lane, and runs northwards up a small wooded valley to the north end of the kitchen garden, where it joins the main drive.

Paths

There is a winding track through East Wood (ST 526917), from the lodge on the lane to farm buildings at its southern end.

WATER FEATURES

A small duck pond to the north of the Home Farm (ST 525922), which was formerly a quarry.

BUILT FEATURES

Lodges

There are three lodges in the Wyelands park. The main one is at the entrance to the north drive (ST 522926), on the east side of the entrance. It is a small single-storey stone classical building, in the same style and of the same date as the house. It has a projecting porch on the west side, a modern extension on the east side, and its small garden is surrounded by iron fencing.

The south lodge (ST 525917) is situated at the entrance to the south drive, on the east side of the entrance. It is a small single-storey rustic stone building with battlemented eaves and stepped gables. Of different style from the house and main lodge, it may be slightly later in date (but pre-1880s).

The east lodge (ST 525919), called Eastwood Lodge, is situated on the east side of the Mathern-St Tewdic road, east of the house. It is a small single-storey rustic stone building with overhanging eaves, diamond-paned windows, and a small porch on the south side. There is no drive here, but there is a gate in the park wall opposite it, with a path leading from it to the house. The path through East Wood begins just south of the lodge.

Walls, gates and railings

The north-west park boundary, along the A48 road, consists of a stone wall of rubble construction. At the entrance the walls are lower, curve inwards, and have iron railings on top. At the entrance is a pair of simple iron gates. There is a similar stone wall along the south-east boundary of the park, on the Mathern-St Tewdic lane. At the south entrance are square stone gate piers flanked by low stone walls topped with iron railings, and a pair of simple iron gates. Just inside this entrance a short track branches off west from the drive, flanked by low stone walls with iron railings on top, with iron gates at its end (on the park/garden boundary).

At Eastwood Lodge the Mathern-St Tewdic lane is bounded on both sides by low stone walling topped with iron railings. Two iron pedestrian gates, opposite each other, lead from the path to the house on the west side of the lane, to the lodge and East Wood on the east side.

Between the two roads the park is bounded with iron fencing (being renewed along the east side of the north drive), both along its outer edges and on the park/garden boundary.

Lime kilns

On the east side of the valley to the east of the house are two blocked arched lime kilns built into the slope. These probably pre-date the house, park and gardens.

PLANTED COMPONENTS

The park is mainly rolling permanent pasture, ornamented with isolated trees and clumps of trees.

The north drive is flanked by rows of oaks. The northern end of the park is dotted with small clumps and isolated deciduous and coniferous trees, including mature oaks, firs, pines, and cedars. The southern end of the park has similar planting, including some fine mature coniferous clumps and isolated oaks and cedars of Lebanon. Along the boundary next to the Mathern-St Tewdic lane, south of the south lodge, are some majestic, ancient oak trees which must certainly pre-date the formation of the park (as probably do many other oaks in the park).

On the east side of the park, east of the Mathern-St Tewdic lane, is the roughly rectangular East Wood. This is a predominantly deciduous semi-natural woodland, without ornamental trees.

BOUNDARIES

North-west: stone wall, with main entrance

East (north of Home Farm): iron fencing
East (along lane): stone wall, with pedestrian entrance and secondary
drive entrance
West: iron fencing

ESSENTIAL SETTING, VIEWPOINTS AND CONTINUATIONS OF FEATURES BEYOND THE
PARK, EYECATCHERS ETC.

Essential setting: farmland (permanent pasture) to east, west, and
south of park

Views: S and W from house and garden across park (A and B on map)

LAND-USE
Permanent pasture; unmanaged woodland

ELEMENTS OF BOTANICAL OR OTHER NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST
None known

SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

Structural components: all
Water features: all
Built components: all
Planted components: most

THE PLEASURE GARDEN

Grid ref ST 524918

Date/style c. 1820/terraced; informal woodland

GENERAL DESCRIPTION, HISTORY AND LAYOUT

The garden of Wyelands lies all around the house. It can be divided into three main areas: the woodland approach to the north, the terraced garden to the west and south, and the woodland garden to the east. The garden is contemporary with, or slightly later than the house, dating to c. 1820-30. It retains most of the structural features from that period, and many of the trees are also probably contemporary.

To the north of the house the main drive winds through an area of open mixed ornamental woodland to the forecourt in front of the house. The large, mature trees are largely beech, with some cedars, sweet chestnuts, and evergreen oaks. Oaks predominate near the north end. Along the north boundary of the woodland is a screen of evergreens (yews, Portugal laurel and holly). The house is flanked by Portugal laurel and euonymus hedging, with clipped yew arches over iron gateways into the garden on the west, and service area on the east. To the east of the forecourt is further open woodland and a tennis court (modern) between the stable yard on the north and outbuildings and a high stone wall on the south.

To the west and south of the house is a narrow terrace with a stone-flagged path, bounded by a grass scarp down to a wider lower terrace. This is bounded by a stone revetment wall topped with stone balustrading of linked circles topped by a flat parapet. The terrace is grassed, but retains its original layout of island beds on the south side of the house (nine beds of circular and curving shapes, arranged geometrically). At the north end of the west side wide stone steps lead up to a small platform backed by a stone wall. Below the lower terrace is a smooth grass slope down to the garden boundary of iron fencing, beyond which is the park.

Steps lead down from the east end of the upper terrace to a curving gravel path leading to the upper of two further terraces to the south-east of the house. These are built out over the western side of the small valley to the east of the house, and are bounded on the east by a high stone revetment wall topped with balustrading similar to that on the other terraces. The revetment wall along the south side of the terrace is topped by the same balustrading. The upper terrace has a central path (north-south), with a sundial in the middle, and a perimeter path (leading on from the curving path from the terrace south of the house) along its south side. This leads at its east end to a corner pavilion. This is single-storey, with roughly coursed stone walls, dressed stone door and window surrounds and corners, and a curving roof topped with a cupola and ball finial. The entrance door is on the west side, and there are two mullioned windows, on the south and east. Flanking the paths are rectangular flowerbeds. The rest of the terrace is grassed, and is bounded on its north side by a clipped yew hedge. The central path passes under a clipped yew arch in the hedge, and then winds up, flanked by rockwork, to an arched doorway in the high stone wall bounding the garden on this side.

Stone steps lead down from the south end of the central path to the lower, larger terrace. This is grassed over, including the central path, which is flanked by clipped Irish yews. The south end of the terrace is bounded by a yew hedge and iron railings, with a central iron gate leading to stone steps down to the woodland area.

The small valley to the east of the house is a semi-natural woodland area which has been ornamented with winding, rockwork-edged paths. Any ornamental planting that there might have originally been has gone. The path which enters the area from the south end of the terraces winds along the side of the valley down to the south lodge. Half-way along it passes through a ruined arch (only one side of which

is left), and down rustic stone steps. In the bottom of the valley is a small stream, with signs that it may have been part of the design, with small rustic stone bridges over it. A further similar path leads from a rustic stone archway to the north of the terraces (north of the wall to the east of the house), down rustic stone steps into the valley bottom, and up the other side. Originally it led to the gateway into the lane opposite Eastwood Lodge.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

Drive to north of the house - see PARK section.

Terraces

The upper terrace on the west and south sides of the house is narrow, mostly taken up with a wide stone-flagged path with raised stone edging. The terrace is bounded by a steep scarp c. 1 m. high, below which is the lower terrace. This is bounded by a rubble stone wall, c. 2 m. high, with a slightly battered base. The south side of the terrace is laid out with nine flowerbeds in the grass, arranged in a geometrical pattern. It is thought that these are the original beds, and that they have not been altered. The central one is oval, flanked to north and south by smaller circular beds. To east and west are two pairs of narrow curving beds, with smaller crescent-shaped beds beyond them, on the central axis. At the north end of the west side wide stone steps lead up to a small raised rectangular paved area. To the south of the terrace is a levelled square area in the gentle grass slope, which is a former croquet lawn.

The flagstone path on the upper terrace continues as a gravel path with stone edging along the foot of the wall to the east of the house. From the east end of the terraces a curving stony path leads to the upper terrace south-east of the house, and continues as the perimeter path along the south side of the terrace. To the north of the terrace is a grass slope between the terrace and the wall to the east of the house. A curving path edged with rockwork leads from the doorway in the wall to the centre of the north side of the terrace, where it continues as a straight path down the centre of the terrace. On either side, and along the perimeter path, are square and rectangular flowerbeds, thought to be original. The upper and lower terraces, and the area between them and the wall east of the house, are bounded on their east sides by a high stone revetment wall, and the upper terrace is bounded on its south side by a similar revetment wall c. 2 m. high.

The lower terrace is larger, bounded with revetment walls on all but the west side. That on the south side is topped at ground level with black coping stones (topped with iron railings). A ruinous, rough stone revetment wall continues south-eastwards from the south-east corner of the terrace, across the slope in the woodland.

Woodland paths

Two paths lead through the woodland to the east and south-east of the house. The first begins at the south end of the lower terrace south-east of the house, and winds down to the south lodge. It is edged with rockwork (becoming larger towards the bottom of the valley), and there are rustic stone steps at intervals. It crosses a small dried up stream over a stone slab bridge. The second path leads from a rustic arch in a stone wall to the north of the high wall east of the house, down into the valley bottom, and up the other side to the pedestrian gate into the lane opposite Eastwood Lodge. It is similar to the first path, but the eastern half has lost much of its rock edging.

Stream

In the foot of the valley to the east of the house is a small winding natural stream, at present dried up. This was probably an integral part of the woodland garden, and there are a few small flagstone bridges over it.

BUILT COMPONENTS

The garden grounds to the north of the house are bounded by iron fencing. That on the west side continues around the garden to the west and south of the house, and continues along the garden boundary to the south lodge.

The upper terrace around the house is reached from the forecourt through a simple rounded ironwork arch and gate on the west side. The forecourt is bounded on this side by iron fencing hidden in hedging.

The revetment wall of the lower terrace south and west of the house is topped by stone balustrading of linked circles topped by flat coping. At intervals are square stone piers with tops protruding slightly above the level of the coping. The platform at the north end of the west side is backed on its north side by a dressed stone wall c. 1.5 m. high. At the north end of the east side of the platform are two iron gate posts, indicating a former gateway. On its south side are four wide stone steps down to the terrace level.

To the east of the house a rubble-built stone wall c. 4 m. high, with a restored rustic top, runs west-east to the edge of the valley slope. Near its east end is a pointed arched doorway with a dressed stone surround and a simple iron gate. A similar stone wall c. 2 m. high, on top of the revetment wall, runs southwards from its east end.

At the east end of the terraces are steps in two flights down to the curving path to the south-east terraces.

The south-east terraces have similar balustrading along their east sides and along the revetment wall between them. Stone steps flanked with similar balustrading lead down from the central north-south path on the upper terrace to the lower terrace. The south side of the lower terrace has iron railings on top of the revetment wall, with an iron gate in the middle outside which are stone steps bounded by iron railings leading down to the woodland path.

The pavilion

In the south-east corner of the upper terrace stands a single-storey square pavilion, which appears contemporary with the terracing and balustrading. It is built of roughly squared, roughly coursed stone, with dressed stone door and window surrounds and decoration. On the west side are two stone steps up to a narrow doorway, with a rough wooden door, above which is a decorative lintel. On the south and east sides are mullioned windows. Above a protruding cornice is balustrading similar to that on the terraces (non-functional), with a circular ventilation opening and curving pediment over the door. The square domed roof with curving tiles is topped by a small cupola on top of which is a small ball finial.

Rustic stonework on the woodland paths

Half way down the path from the south-east terraces to the south lodge are the remnants of a rustic archway, below which are rustic stone steps. The south-west side stands over 2 m. high, and the springing of the arch is visible. The north-east side stands only to c. 1 m. The west end of the other woodland path, to the east of the tennis court, is complete (and probably gives an idea of what the other arch originally looked like). It is a rustic rounded arch with a flat top constructed of large blocks of undressed stone.

ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENTS

In the eastern half of the lower south-east terrace is a small circular stone pool with a cobbled surround. It used to be a fountain.

In the middle of the central path on the upper south-east terrace is a stone sundial c. 1.3 m. high. It is tear-drop in shape, with a square top, a square plinth, and an octagonal base.

Half way along the west side of the upper south-east terrace two tiers of iron staging surround the base of a tree (the upper, inner layer is digging into it).

PLANTED COMPONENTS

The area of woodland to the north of the house has many fine mature trees. At the north end, on the boundary with the park, is a row of yews, Portugal laurels and holly, and conifers screen the Home Farm to the east. The north end of the woodland is mainly planted with oaks. Nearer the house it is mainly beech, with some cedars, evergreen oaks, and sweet chestnuts, some planted informally, some in rows flanking the drive. Beneath the trees is grass (bulbs in spring). To the east of the kitchen garden, where the back drive curves around it, there is a large clump of bamboos, and an area of laurels screening the Home Farm from the drive.

The forecourt is flanked by evergreen hedging (laurel and euonymus on the west), with clipped yew around two gateways east and west of the entrance. The area around the tennis court has isolated deciduous trees, with evergreen shrubs (mainly laurel) along the east side. Evergreen shrubs also screen the stable court and kitchen gardens on their west sides.

The terraces around the house are largely lawn. To the north of the west side are pines and a wellingtonia. A large Magnolia grandiflora grows against the south side of the house (near the west end). The nine flowerbeds on the lower terrace are planted with bedding plants. Below the terraces is further lawn. In the grass below the east end of the terraces is a large beech tree. Along the west boundary of the garden, to the east of the terraces, there is a holly hedge backed by oak trees. There are further single oak trees to the east of the terraces.

The upper south-east terrace is bounded on its north side by a clipped yew hedge with a central arch over the path. To the north-east is a large fir tree. The lower terrace is bounded on its south side by a yew hedge, and the central grass path is flanked by 14 alternating pairs of clipped Irish yews.

The valley to the east is open semi-natural deciduous woodland.

Reconstructions of original planted features

None

Special collections of garden plants

None

Documented living plants

None

Other (including elements of nature conservation interest)

None known

ESSENTIAL SETTING AND VIEWS BEYOND THE SITE

Essential setting: park to north, west and south

Views: west and south from terraces around house (A and B on map)

ANY SPECIAL FEATURES

None

SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

Structural components: most (parts of woodland paths missing)

Built components: most

Architectural ornaments: most

Planted components: some (trees survive)

UTILITARIAN GARDENS

NAME Kitchen garden

Grid ref ST 524920

Date/style c. 1820/walled

DESCRIPTION

The walled kitchen garden lies to the north of the house, east of the drive. It is rectangular, with stone walls curved at the corners. It is reached near the south end of the west wall via a stone-edged path beneath a yew tunnel supported on an iron framework, which leads up to a pointed-arched doorway in the wall. This leads into the southern section of the garden, which has lower walls (c. 2.2 m.) of rubble construction, and is separated from the main part by a high wall. It is narrow, with a gravel path leading to a pointed-arched doorway in the cross wall. The path is intermittently lined with clipped box hedging. The stables protrude into the south side. The west side of the garden is cultivated, the east half is grass. On the wall is a very large wisteria.

The main part of the garden has walls 4 m. high, of coursed stone capped with dressed stone tiles. The interior is laid out with central crossing and perimeter paths of gravel, box edged intermittently. The inner sides of the paths are lined with iron fencing and old espalier fruit trees. In the middle of the north end is a restored lean-to greenhouse of brick and glass construction, with iron piers and a central hollow wall (for heating). This has two rooms, terracotta chimneys at each end, narrow glazing panels, and ten low arches along its base. In front of it is a semi-circular flowerbed bounded by the perimeter path. A cast iron vase on a cast iron plinth stands on the central axis on the edge of the bed.

The north end of the kitchen garden is separate, and similar to the south end, with lower rubble walls, a pointed-arched doorway through into the main garden, and another in the east wall. Against the cross wall are single-storey stone lean-to bothies, stores etc.

SOURCES

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

Secondary

Monmouthshire Merlin, 18th July 1846 (quoted in H. Colvin, A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, p. 527).
J. Bradney, A History of Monmouthshire, Vol IV, pt. I (1929), p. 62.

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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