

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

SITE DOSSIER

SITE NAME Chippenham, Monmouth

REF. NO. PGW (Gt) 6

OS MAP 162 GRID REF. SO 507125

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

DESIGNATIONS Listed building: Grade

National Park AONB SSSI NNR ESA GAM SAM CA

SITE EVALUATION Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Historic common in centre of Monmouth; tree-lined paths laid out in 1909

TYPE OF SITE

Medieval common; early 20th-century public park

MAIN PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION

Common - medieval; public park 1909

VISITED BY/DATE Elisabeth Whittle/June 1990

THE PARK

Central grid ref SO 507125

Date/style

Medieval common; early 20th-century/public park, formal

General description, history, and layout

Chippenham is a public park lying on level low ground in the centre of Monmouth in the angle between the rivers Wye and Monnow. Formerly 45 acres in extent its area has been curtailed in the 20th century by the building of the A40, which cuts off the section nearest the river Wye from the rest (this part is now allotments and flood plain), and by the conversion of the part nearest Monnow Street to car parks. The southern end is occupied by a sports ground, bowling green and tennis courts. The main part of the park is a large level grassed area (part used intermittently as a rugby pitch) crossed by three straight paths lined with deciduous trees (mainly limes, some sycamores). These were laid out and planted initially in 1909 by the Improvement Association.

The history of Chippenham as a public open space goes back to the medieval period. It is a common: in 1804 Heath recorded that horses and cows were allowed on between September and February. Heath also records that it was carpeted with *Colchicum autumnalis*. Barber (1803) records that it was 'an agreeable plain ... the general rendezvous of Gwentonian beauty on summer evenings'. An 1835 map shows no paths, but the 1st edition OS map shows five paths crossing it, two roughly in the position of the present-day NE-SW and NW-SE paths. Horse racing took place on Chippenham throughout the 19th century (and probably earlier).

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

There is a large raised flood bank (modern) running WNW-ESE along the N end of the park. It is c. 1.8 m. high, turf-covered and steeply sloping.

Three straight paths (tarmac) cross the park, one from the NE corner southwestwards to the car park, one from the car park southeastwards to the edge of the park next to the A40 (parallel with the boundary of the sports ground and tennis courts), and one from this corner northwards to the NE corner.

BUILT FEATURES

On the N edge of the park, near the E end of Glendower Street (where a back lane adjoins the park), is a stretch of substantial iron railings c. 2.5 m. high and 9 m. long set in a stone plinth. In the middle is a heavy iron gate with scrollwork above it. This would appear to have been a boundary between a private property and the park, with an entrance into the park.

PLANTED COMPONENTS

In the middle of the park is a clump of mature trees - two horse chestnuts and a lime. The NE-SW path is lined with limes, the NW-SE one with young limes and sycamores, and the N-S path with large well-spaced limes (some new ones interplanted).

BOUNDARIES

N side: garden boundaries, and see above
E side: A40
S side: river Monnow
W side: car parks, road

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

None

LAND-USE

Public park; rugby pitch, sports ground, bowling green, tennis courts

ELEMENTS OF BOTANICAL OR OTHER NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST

None known

SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

c. 80% of original area survives as public open space

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

SOURCES

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

Secondary

Barber, J.T., Tour throughout South Wales and Monmouthshire, 1803
Heath, C., Historical and Descriptive Accounts of the Ancient and Present State of the town of Monmouth, 1804
Kissack, K., Victorian Monmouth

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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