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Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

THE OLD CEMETERY, DERBY

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Name:	THE OLD CEMETERY, DERBY
District:	City of Derby (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.919052 Longitude: -1.4935897 National Grid Reference: SK 34147 35857 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000787 Date first listed: 18-Mar-2003

Details

The Old Cemetery, opened in 1843 by the Derby General Cemetery Company, was the first cemetery to be established in the town.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Prospectus for the Derby General Cemetery Company appeared in the local papers in January 1841 (Derby Mercury, 20 January 1841). Its formation was in response to the urgent need for additional burial space in Derby. By this time the existing burial grounds were inadequate for the town's rapidly increasing population. There was concern not only over the risk to health of burial within the town but also aspects of security from 'disinterment'. Thus it was intended that a suitable site for the proposed cemetery be found out of the town, at a moderate distance from it, and that it should be for the use of 'all denominations of Christians and all classes of the community'. The company was founded on an initial capital of £5000 in 500 shares of £10 each (ibid).

The Old or General Cemetery was opened in March 1843, containing 4.5 acres (1.8ha), 'tastefully laid out and fenced', at a cost of about £3400 (White 1857). It was situated on the south side of Uttoxeter New Road, beyond the built-up area but easily accessible from the town (Map of the Borough of Derby, 1838). A stone chapel, in the Gothic style, was built on the west side of the main entrance and a sexton's cottage on the east side, both buildings designed by Mr J Hadfield (Derby Mercury, 4 May 1842). Joseph Barlow Robinson (1821-83), who worked as a stone carver for Pugin and Barry on the Palace of Westminster before returning to Derby to set up the Midland Sculptural & Monumental Works, was responsible for some of the monuments in the cemetery (Craven 1998).

In July 1854 the cemetery was sold to the Derby Burial Board, formed in 1853, for £4400 (Black 1872). The Burial Board thus took over the management of both the Old Cemetery and Nottingham Road Cemetery (qv) (White 1857). In 1895 management of the cemetery was transferred from the Burial Board to the borough council (Cemeteries Committee Minute Book, 25 March 1895). The cemetery chapel was demolished in the mid to late-C20. The cemetery remains open for burials and is currently (2003) in the ownership of Derby City Council.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING The Old Cemetery is situated c 1.5km west-south-west of Derby city centre, on elevated land rising to the south-west. The c 1.8ha site lies in a residential and commercial area. Beyond

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the east boundary, which is defined by a high red-brick wall (C19), are the private grounds of late Georgian buildings, now in office and residential use. To the south, the cemetery is bounded by a high stepped boundary wall, also in red brick, with stepped base, regular vertical piers, and flat stone copings (C19 and C20 rebuilding). It forms a distinct element of enclosure on the southern edge of the cemetery, beyond which is a private road, the continuation of Camden Street, and an area of sheltered housing accommodation (late-C20). The western boundary is formed of a medium-height brick wall surmounted by security railings (late-C20), opposite which are commercial and residential properties (late-C19) on Boundary Road. Opposite the north boundary along Uttoxeter New Road, which is defined by a high red-brick boundary wall (C20) and sections of low stone wall surmounted by railings (C19) to either side of the main entrance, are the striking buildings of the Diocesan Training College, some late Georgian buildings, and a recent building scheme (late -20). Distant views to the north and north-east are afforded from the south-west corner of the cemetery across the centre of Derby and beyond, now (2003) partly obscured by mature tree growth and buildings. Views from the southern edge of the cemetery to the north and north-west are now (2003) partially obscured by housing.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES From the city centre, the cemetery is approached from the north-east along the A516, Uttoxeter New Road. The main entrance stands near the centre of the north boundary. A central carriage entrance, with a pair of cast-iron gates and two stone gate piers, is flanked to either side by pedestrian entrances with simple cast-iron gates and stone piers. Beyond the pedestrian entrances, to either side, low stone boundary walls c 15m in length are surmounted by cast-iron railings. These terminate in stone piers similar to the entrance piers.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The cemetery lodge (J Hadfield 1842, listed grade II), formerly the sexton's cottage, is situated within and close to the north boundary of the cemetery, immediately east of the main entrance. Built in stone, in Gothic style, the front of the lodge, with a canted bay window and pointed arched doorway, faces south towards the cemetery grounds.

OTHER LAND The layout of the cemetery is simple and formal. The main walks and secondary routes are arranged in a simple rectilinear grid around a central axis connecting the main entrance to a focal monument which terminates the axis at its junction with the walk running parallel to the southern boundary.

Approaching the cemetery through the main entrance on Uttoxeter New Road, the wide rectangular forecourt, now (2003) used as a car park, was formerly the forecourt and site of the mortuary chapel. The chapel, originally situated 20m west-south-west of the main entrance, was demolished in the mid to late-C20. A number of large monuments are situated along the wide central axis running south-south-east. The elaborate monument to Thomas Skevington (1877, listed grade II), standing c 50m south of the main entrance on a secondary path leading west-south-west from the main axis, is thought to be the work of the local sculptor and carver, Joseph Barlow Robinson (Craven 1998). It is a square monument constructed in Portland stone with polished red granite dressings.

Some 85m south-south-east of the main entrance and immediately west of the junction of the main axis with the walk running parallel to the south boundary, stands the prominent monument to Robert Pegg (1867, listed grade II). Nearby, c 90m south-south-east of the main entrance, the handsome monument to John Gregory Pike (1854, listed grade II) terminates the main axis. The Pegg and Gregory Pike monuments are also thought to have been the work of Joseph Barlow Robinson (*ibid*).

To the west-south-west of the Gregory Pike monument the walk running parallel to the south boundary is overhung by a group of mature London planes which may have been part of an original planting scheme. Headstones and grave surrounds line either side of the walk on the approach to the south-west corner of the cemetery where there is another group of elaborate monuments. From here there are extensive views to the north and north-east across the cemetery, towards the city centre and beyond, now (2003) partially obscured by mature tree growth and surrounding buildings. A pedestrian entrance through the west boundary at this point is currently closed. From here a narrow path descends, running parallel and close to the western boundary wall and security railings; these are currently (2003) reinforced by high temporary metal fencing. Mature trees along parts of this path, including horse chestnuts, may also form part of an original planting scheme.

Some 125m south-west of the main entrance, a path leaves the southern boundary walk and, gradually descending to the north-north-west, links to the northern boundary walk, running parallel to the central axial route. A number of large monuments as well as headstones with grave surrounds line both this walk and a minor route which connects at right angles to the central

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axis. The walk running parallel to the northern boundary gently descends to the east-north-east towards the car park and main entrance, lined with headstones and grave surrounds. A line of young trees including cherries has been planted adjacent to the boundary wall in the late-C20.

The walk, flanked by headstones and grave surrounds, proceeds beyond the entrance lodge, with young ash trees (late-C20) planted along the northern boundary wall reinforcing the sense of enclosure. Some 80m east-north-east of the main entrance a square brick building (mid-C20) occupies the north-east corner of the cemetery; formerly used as a works depot on the cemetery side, it is currently (2003) partly used as an electricity sub-station with access from Uttoxeter Road.

From the north-east corner, the walk turns to the south-south-east to gently ascend parallel to the east boundary. From here views across the eastern half of the cemetery reveal fewer large monuments and more headstones with grave surrounds. A number of mature tree specimens including beech, weeping ash, and Turkey oak may have formed part of an original planting scheme. A minor path connecting this walk with the central axis begins 80m east of the main entrance. A memorial stone 100m east-south-east of the main entrance forms a feature incorporated into the high red-brick boundary wall, which is currently (2003) showing much evidence of weathering. In the south-east corner of the cemetery the walk turns to the west-south-west, running parallel to the south boundary wall to return to the monument to John Gregory Pike and the central axis. From here views to the north-west and north are now partially obscured by mature tree growth and buildings.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION Old Cemetery, Derby is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Old Cemetery is an early Victorian cemetery (1843) laid out to a formal plan. * The cemetery was established by a commercial company and was the first C19 provision of burial for Derby. * The layout of the cemetery survives largely intact, together with some apparently original planting. * The cemetery contains a good collection of funerary monuments which reflect the development of Derby during the C19; some monuments were carved by Joseph Barlow Robinson (1821-83), proprietor of the Midland Sculptural & Monumental Works, who had previously worked for Pugin and Barry on the Palace of Westminster.

Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.

Bibliographie

Books and journals

Black, , *Tourist Guide to Derbyshire*, (1872), 157-8

Craven, M, *Derbeians of Distinction*, (1998), 192-3

White, , *Directory of the Borough of Derby* , (1857), 60

Other

[Archival items] *Cemeteries Committee Minute book*, entry of 25 March 1895 (Derby Local Studies Library)

[Map] *Map of the Borough of Derby*, published by Dewhurst & Nichols, London, 4 September 1838 (Derby Local Studies Library)

[Map] *Swanwick I T* , Land Surveyor, *New Map of the Borough of Derby*, 1835 (Derby Local Studies Library)

Derby Mercury, 20 January 1841, 2; 4 May 1842, 2

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1947 edition

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1882, published 1883

OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1901