

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

TRELOWARREN

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**TRELOWARREN**

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Name:               | TRELOWARREN   |
| District:           | Cornwall (Unitary Authority)  |
| Parish:             | Gweek   |
| District:           | Cornwall (Unitary Authority)  |
| Parish:             | Mawgan-in-Meneage   |
| District:           | Cornwall (Unitary Authority)  |
| Parish:             | St. Martin-in-Meneage   |
| label.localisation: | Latitude: 50.081888<br>Longitude: -5.2114985<br>National Grid Reference: SW 70343 25139, SW 71994 23745<br><a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a> |
| label.overview:     | Heritage Category: Park and Garden<br>Grade: II<br>List Entry Number: 1001294<br>Date first listed: 02-Mar-1994   |

## Details

Mid C18 and early C19 gardens and parkland, with earlier origins.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1427 Honor Ferrers married John Vyvyan, bringing the Trelowarren estate into the family in whose possession it has remained up to the present day (2000). In 1561, a further John Vyvyan succeeded his father and married a co-heiress of Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, a match which brought significant new wealth to the family and provided the means for a remodelling of the medieval manor and chapel. John Norden's Map of Cornwall (1584) shows the C16 house set within a park. Richard Vyvyan (1611-65) supported the Crown in the Civil War and had charge of the Royal mints at Truro and Exeter; he was created a baronet by Charles I in 1645 (CL 1999). Sir Richard, or perhaps his father, Francis, again restored and remodelled the house and chapel; this work continued into the late C17. Sir Richard's son, Vyell (d 1697), inherited in 1665, and was responsible for the construction of the stables. He was in turn succeeded by a nephew, Sir Richard, third Baronet, who died in 1724. In 1745 the estate passed to another Sir Richard, fifth Baronet, who was then a minor. The house was visited in 1752 by the Rev Thomas Lyttelton, who sent a description to his brother, Lord Lyttelton of Hagley Hall, Worcestershire (qv) (CL 1999). On coming of age in 1754, the fifth Baronet undertook a major programme of rebuilding in the house using as his architect Thomas Edwards of Greenwich, an introduction perhaps effected by the Cornish antiquarian, the Rev William Borlase (*ibid*). A series of drawings of Trelowarren by Borlase clarify the extent of Sir Richard's work. Sir Richard also refashioned the pleasure grounds under the direction of Dionysius Williams to complement the gothicised house (*ibid*).

The Rev Sir Carew Vyvyan, sixth Baronet inherited the estate in 1783 and continued the programme of improvements, making extensive plantations across the site; he also undertook more detailed work in the pleasure grounds. The sixth Baronet was

succeeded in 1814 by his cousin, Sir Vyell Vyvyan, seventh Baronet, who developed a system of drives and refaced the medieval chapel. The eighth Baronet, Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan, succeeded his father in 1820 and undertook further improvements, including the construction of a new approach from the Gweek Drive and a quay on the Helford River, in anticipation of a visit from Queen Victoria. Sir Richard also constructed three walled gardens in the grounds (Pett 1998). The eighth Baronet more than doubled the size of the estate by purchasing adjoining properties, and between 1829 and 1833 spent nearly £11,000 on improvements, thus seriously depleting the family's finances which, since the mid C18 had been enhanced by revenue from tin mines (CL 1999). At his death in 1867 the estate was encumbered with mortgages.

Sir Richard was succeeded by his cousin, the Rev Vyell Vyvyan, who lived at Trelowarren until his death in 1916, when his son, Col Sir Courtenay Vyvyan, inherited the estate; outlying areas were sold in 1935-6. Sir Courtenay's second wife, Lady Clara, continued to live in the house after her husband's death in 1941, renovating the pleasure grounds and creating a garden of her own, until her death in 1976; her experiences were recorded in a series of books including *A Cornish Year* and *Letters from a Cornish Garden*. During the Second World War the house was requisitioned by the army, with 3000 troops billeted there during preparations for the Normandy Landings; this led to significant damage to both the house and grounds.

A comprehensive programme of restoration has been undertaken in both the house and grounds in the late C20; the site remains (2000) in private ownership.

#### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Trelowarren is situated c 6km south-east of Helston and c 1.5km west of the village of St Martin's Green, to the south of the Helford River. To the north the site adjoins Mawgan Creek, and to the north-east the Helford River. The north-west boundary is formed by a stream which flows from south-west to north-east to join the head of Mawgan Creek, while to the west and east the site adjoins agricultural land. To the south-west the boundary is formed by the B3293 road which runs south-east from Garras to St Keverne. There is a further, detached area to the north-west of the core of the site, which is situated to the north-west of the village of Mawgan. This long narrow strip adjoins agricultural land to the east, south, and west, and the Helford River to the north; to the north-west it adjoins domestic properties in the village of Gweek. Trelowarren stands on the northern edge of the plateau of the Lizard peninsular, to which the ground rises to the south and south-east; to the north the ground falls to the Helford River and Mawgan Creek, of which there are views from within the site.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** Today (2000), Trelowarren is approached from Garras to the west. From Carabone Lodge (mid C19, listed grade II) the drive, planted with an avenue of ilex oaks, leads east across a causeway (listed grade II) between Pond Cottage (c 1833, listed grade II) and an associated pond (silted-up, late C20). The drive continues through woodland and across the park before passing between a pair of stone piers (listed grade II\*) into the pleasure grounds. The stone piers, dating from the 1660s, originally stood at the entrance to the mid C17 forecourt on the west side of the house. From that position they were moved to the Double Lodges c 1760, and subsequently to their present position c 1832. A service drive leads between a pair of ornamental wrought-iron gates (listed grade II) decorated with cast-iron fir-cones to reach the stables. These gates previously stood at the entrance to the park east of the house. The drive passes along the side of a crenellated wall (listed grade II) which was constructed, like this section of the drive, in 1833, and then leads south of the house to reach the east front. The west drive was laid out by Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan in 1832-3.

The west drive is joined by a longer approach from Gweek to the north-west. Gweek Drive is today (2000) a public road, the B3293, and starts c 3km north-west of the house, at the early C19 thatched Gweek Lodge (listed grade II), which stands opposite Tenement Farm on the Helford River east of Gweek. The drive leads south through Ponsontuel Creek, through Traverly Wood, and then on to Garras. The Gweek Drive was laid out for Sir Vyell Vyvyan c 1815. A second lodge, Ponsontuel Lodge does not survive, and appears to have been demolished c 1922 when the drive was adopted as a public road.

The north-west drive from Mawgan enters the site to the north and joins the west drive to the south-east of Venton Gannal; this drive predates the mid C18 landscaping undertaken by Sir Richard Vyvyan. A further drive leads from Tremayne Quay to the north-east. This drive winds southwards through woodland to the settlement of Caervallack, skirts the west side of earthworks known as Caer Vallack (scheduled ancient monument), passes between a gateway and a lodge, and thence leads through The

Warren to the house. This drive was laid out by Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan in the mid C19 in anticipation of a visit by Queen Victoria.

A further drive enters the site from the B3293 road to the south-west at a point opposite a minor road leading south-west to Trevassack. The entrance is marked by the mid C18 Double Lodges (listed grade II), beyond which the drive leads north-east and north through Trelowarren Plantations; these plantations of silver fir, Pinaster, and Scots pine were planted on Lizard Heath as experimental forestry c 1755. The drive continues to the east of Chybilly to join the west drives c 250m west of the house. The south drive was the principal access to the site in the C18. To the east of the plantations which adjoin the Double Lodges a second entrance leads north to the mid C19 Polawyn Lodge and on to the east of Polawyn Cottage, before sweeping west to join the south drive.

The east drive formed a branch leading from the south drive, passing east across the Great Park before swinging back west to approach the house from the north-east. The construction of this approach for Sir Vyell Vyvyan c 1815 involved the removal of a garden wall which ran to the east of the house, and was associated with moving the entrance front from the west to the east front of the house c 1810. This drive is no longer in use (2000).

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Trelowarren (listed grade I) is approximately U-shaped on-plan with wings to the north, south, and east enclosing an open, west-facing court which is today (2000) laid to lawn. The house is constructed in stone and comprises two storeys under hipped slate roofs and crenellated parapets. The south wing comprises the mid C17 chapel, which was rebuilt either by Francis Vyvyan or his son, Sir Richard, to replace a medieval chapel on the site. The east and north wings are lit by mullioned windows, those to the first floor of the north wing being set beneath dormer gables. The west facade of the east wing is lit by a central, full-height canted bay window and there is a further canted bay on the south facade. The house has medieval origins, and was extensively rebuilt in the mid C16 and again in the mid C17. Further alterations were undertaken by Sir Richard Vyvyan with the advice of the Greenwich architect Thomas Edwards in the mid C18; these included the regularising of the fenestration and the construction of a new roof and the crenellated parapets, as well as internal decoration using Gothic-style plasterwork. Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan made further improvements in the early C19 which included moving the entrance from the west facade to the east, and extending the north range to incorporate new family apartments. The service quarters lie to the north of the house.

To the west of the house are a range of outbuildings, including the stables (listed grade II) which are dated 1698 and which were rebuilt in 1882 (date stone), the stable blocks (listed grade II), and the carriage house (listed grade II).

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens and pleasure grounds lie principally to the south of the house, where rising ground is cut to form a grass terrace extending from east to west. Beyond the terrace the ground rises again to the edge of wooded pleasure grounds. An undated plan of c 1750 which is attributed to Dionysius Williams shows pleasure grounds laid out to the south of the house with a series of serpentine walks; these broadly correspond to walks which survive today (2000). Below the north-west wing of the house an enclosed garden, known as the Lady's Garden, comprises geometric flower beds set in grass and divided by gravel walks, planted principally with herbaceous subjects. To the south the garden is enclosed by a low iron fence which separates it from the west lawn and chapel, while to the north and west it is enclosed by granite walls (listed grade II) which are surmounted by crenellated parapets, and which incorporate various architectural features. The walls were brought to Trelowarren by Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan from Nanswhydden, St Columb Major, another Cornish house designed by Edwards (CL 1999). The Lady's Garden was constructed as part of Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan's early C19 alterations to the north wing of the house, and was laid out as a botanical garden by the head gardener, William Duncan. The present planting has been developed in the late C20 from the mid C20 scheme implemented by Lady Clara Vyvyan (d 1976). To the north-east of the house is a shrubbery comprising beech underplanted with laurel, which flanks an ornamental walk. This area was laid out c 1810.

**PARK** The deer park or Great Park is situated on rising ground to the east of the house and comprises pasture which is enclosed to the north, east, and south by park pales, beyond which are areas of woodland including Parkhills Wood and Lawnhills Wood. The deer park existed before 1584 when it was recorded by Norden; it was subject to improvement by Sir Richard Vyvyan under the direction of Dionysius Williams in the mid C18 (ibid). A further area of park is situated to the south of the house on

ground which rises towards Trelowarren Plantation on the southern boundary of the site. Lying to the east of the south drive and to the west of the deer park, this area formed part of Sir Richard Vyvyan's mid C18 improvements.

The western half of the site is divided up with field boundaries and blocks of woodland planted for shelter. These include Chybilly Plantation to the east of the south drive which was planted c 1820, and the contemporary Polawyn Plantation to the north-east. This area was developed as part of the early C19 picturesque improvements undertaken by Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan (ibid).

The fogou at Helliggye forms a notable feature within the site to the west of the house. It is situated c 200m west of The Mount, a feature constructed by Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan using spoil from the construction of the east drive.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** Two kitchen gardens are situated c 20m north-west of the house and immediately west of the stables, and are enclosed by early C18 brick walls (listed grade II) c 3m high. Within the northern walled garden is an early C19 granary or seed store (listed grade II). The area occupied by the kitchen gardens and adjacent stables is a raised and levelled platform, separated on its south side from the drive by a crenellated stone wall (listed grade II) dating from the 1830s. A turret at the west end of this wall provides access through to the gardens beyond.

The home farm, Chybilly, lies c 450m south-west of the house. Dating in part from 1524, most of the buildings are late C18 and early C19, while the house and cottages date from the early C20.

#### REFERENCES

J Norden, *A Topographical and Historical Description of Cornwall* (1584) W Borlase, *The Natural History of Cornwall* (1758), pl 6 R Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall* (1803) J Britton and E W Brayley, *Devonshire and Cornwall Illustrated* (1837), p 41 Gardener's Mag 13, (1837), p 420 Country Life, 39 (8 April 1916), pp 450-5; no 29 (22 July 1999), pp 52-7 Trelowarren and the Vyvyan Family, guidebook, (J S Vyvyan 1976) Trelowarren Landscape Survey and Management Plan, (Nicholas Pearson Associates 1994) D E Pett, *The Parks and Gardens of Cornwall* (1998), pp 70-2

Maps Dionysius Williams (?), Plan of Trelowarren, c 1750 (private collection)

Archival items The Vyvyan family papers, including accounts and plans from the mid C17 to the C19, are held at the Cornwall Record Office.

Description written: September 2000 Amended: October 2000 Register Inspector: JML Edited: October 2001

## 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.