

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Garden House, Nunwick

Replacement windows



20 SEPTEMBER 2023

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Introduction

Doonan Architects Ltd was commissioned to prepare a listed building consent to regularise unauthorised works carried out to Garden House, Nunwick (a Grade II Listed Building), ie. replacement windows. The applicant was unaware of the listed status of the dwelling when these works were carried out.

The applicant was first made aware of the listing status on receipt of a letter dated 6th December 2021, ref 21/00931/ENDEVT, from Northumberland County Council. Advising of ‘unauthorised’ work being carried out.

A Listed Building Consent application was prepared and submitted:

- Ref 22/03065/LBC
 - Application validated 26 September 2022
 - Decision notice to refuse: 29 March 2023.
1. The initial application sought to replace the windows on the east elevation with sliding sash windows and retain the recently replaced windows on the remaining elevations. From discussions with the planning department this was not received favourably and amendments were suggested.
 2. The application drawings were amended to include for replacing the windows to the south, east and north elevations with sliding sash windows, and retaining the recently replaced window to the west elevation as there was no evidence available of its design. Further comments were received from the planning department.
 3. The application drawings were finally amended. This include for the replacement of all the windows with sliding sash windows apart from a ‘larder window’ which had fixed glazing given its small size, and the original window had fixed glazing.

The application was refused and the decision notice provided the following reason for the refusal:

‘The proposed windows would fail to preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building. The loss of historic joinery has not been clearly and convincingly justified as required by paragraph 200 of the NPPF. The level of harm caused to the designated heritage asset has been identified as "less than substantial"; however, it is not considered that there are public benefits resulting from the development that would outweigh the identified harm. The proposal would not accord with Policy ENV 7 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework’.

Listing Description

Garden House was first listed in July 1987.

The listing description is:

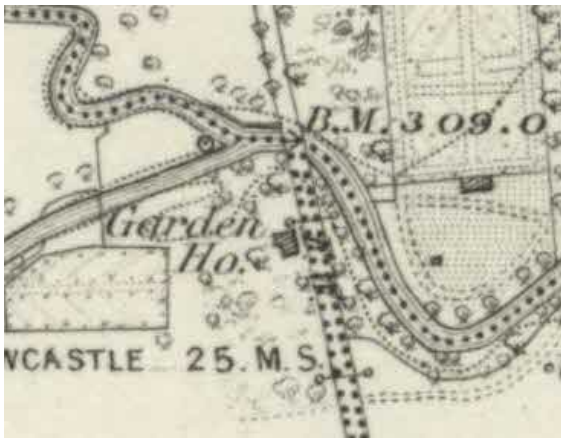
SIMONBURN B 6320, Nunwick NY 8773 (West side) 19/130 Garden House II

House, c. 1800. Ashlar front with coursed rubble returns and rear; graduated slate roof and ashlar chimneys. 2 storeys, 3 bays. Central 6-panel door and 16-pane sashes (renewed on first floor) in square-cut openings with deep reveals. Roof has coped gables. Stepped end stacks with top bands. Single-storey rear outshut with tall stack rising through centre of roof. Single-storey wing at right-angles on left rear.

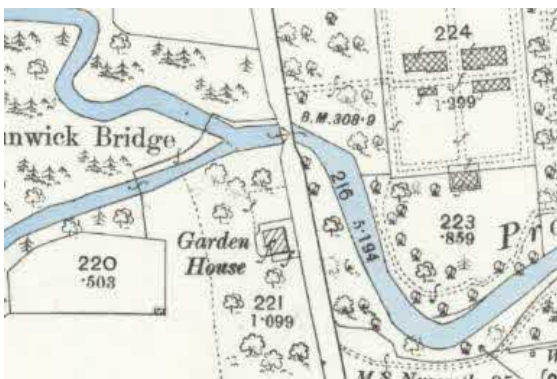
Listing NGR: NY8773873876

Historical significance

Map regression. The following are a series of extracts from historic OS Maps showing the progressive development of the dwelling.



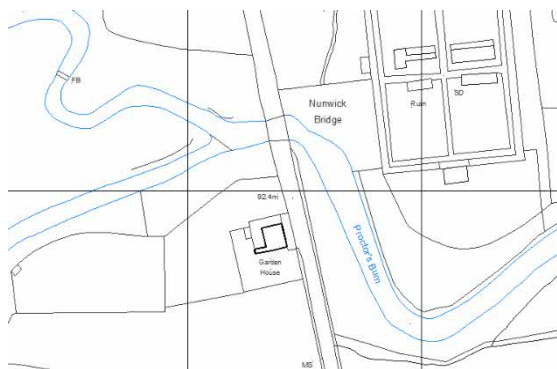
The 1862 map shows a narrower footprint to the main dwelling: with an offshoot to the north west, the latter presumably with a double pitched roof.



The 1895 shows a broader depth dwelling with no offshuts. The footprint of the main house is as present. The second floor has been added. The rear broad offshoot with a cat slide roof.



The 1920 map shows a similar footprint as the 1895 map.



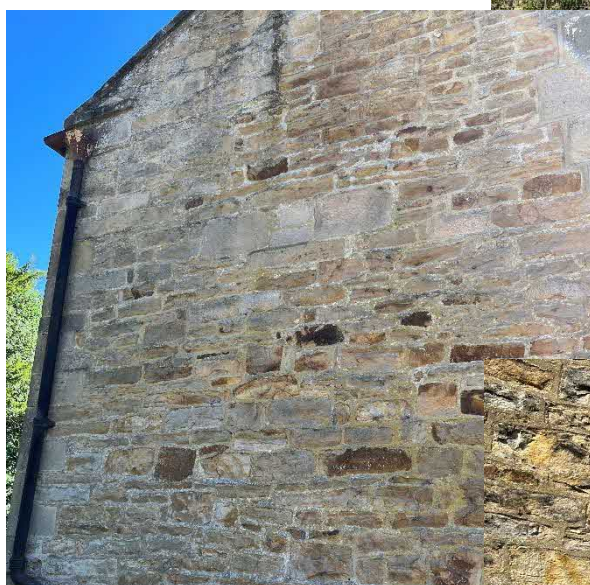
The current OS map shows the same footprint as the 1895 and 1920 maps with the addition of a narrow single storey extension to the south west.

Discussion on the historical development



Gables to Garden House: Note blocked openings to original loft spaces and the 'outline' of the original gables profiles in the stonework.

NB the recently replaced inappropriate casement windows



Blocked openings in the gables.



The sequence of alterations to the dwelling in the 19th C and 20th C is evident in 'reading' the existing building fabric, the map regression and reviewing historic photos.

The original dwelling was a modest single storey dwelling, constructed in circa 1800.

The south and north gables have blocked window openings providing evidence of an earlier low level loft. There are also faint outlines in the gables showing the original lower gable profiles. Further evidence of the additional second floor is in the detailing of the ashlar: slightly different coursing to the upper storey. The map regression indicates the second floor was added in the mid 19th C.

Finally the single storey wing was added in the early 20th C.

At the time of the listing (1987), the principal east elevation had original joinery to 2 no windows (W1 and W2). The listing advises the upper windows had been replaced (W8, W9 and W10). More recently all the windows to Garden House had been replaced. The applicant advises that this was considered necessary as the existing windows were in too poor condition to repair. Although there is no evidence to justify this, the applicant considered replacement to be the optimum approach.

Whilst the east elevation is specifically described in the Listing, there are no records of the form of the other windows. However, Google Earth photographs provide some indication.



Historical Significance

The significance of a heritage asset is equal to the sum of its special interest. Special interest is considered to be made up of:

- **Historic and Communal Interest** – which is measured by the historic interest of the building or area, and people or events, associated to a building.
The Garden House has historic and communal interest in its association with Nunwick Hall. It is assumed from its name it was the residence for the Head Gardener. Nunwick is a fine 18th C house set in a designed landscape within estate walls. It has an extensive walled garden within the overall estate (clearly shown on the historic maps). Garden House will have been one of a number workers cottages associated with the estate needed for the up-keep of a very demanding estate. This social strata existed up until WWI after which many such social norms were swept aside. Garden House is separated from the main estate by the B6320. This may have been for social reasons. The map regression informs a large area to the west of the west of Garden House which may originally have been for the Gardener's use, though the applicant has stated 'family' knowledge believes it was used as a tree nursery in living memory. Garden House is in a prominent position on the road side and a notable local landmark.
- **Architectural or Artistic Interest** – which is measured by the general character, appearance and aesthetics of buildings, as well as the spaces between.
Garden House in itself is a modest two storey double fronted dwelling in stone with a slated roof. It is a typical design of the period (early 19th C), double fronted with central door. Its only architectural feature of merit is its east elevation which is finished in fine ashlar courses. The masons were careful to ensure the window and door openings were neatly co-ordinated within the ashlar coursing. The listing describes 5 windows in the east elevation with 16 pane sashes. At the time of the listing (1987) only 2 no of these windows were original: the upper 3 no windows having been replaced. All 5 no. were lost through recent unauthorised works (subject of this application): being replaced with casement windows. Originally a single storey building it is assumed the ashlar was a feature of the original design. The second storey was added in the late 19th C, with matching ashlar. The remaining elevations of Garden House are unremarkable random rubble stonework in vernacular design of little interest other than the remains of blocked openings.
- **Evidential or Archaeological Interest** – which is measured by the evidence yielded from the fabric of the structure, or evidence of human influence on change to the environment.
The form of its construction, typical of its period, ie. early 19th C., and the remains of features within the external fabric provide indications of its development, there is little evidential or archaeological interest

Clearly, an effort was made to give an element of importance to Garden House with the use of fine quality ashlar and a symmetrical east elevation. This 'elevated' architectural status of Garden House was presumably to reflect its relationship to the Nunwick Estate and its use by a more senior workman (head gardener?). The remaining elevations to Garden House are asymmetric and in a simple vernacular style.

Garden House should be considered of Moderate Historic Significance.

Proposed works and discussion on the impact to the listed building

It is unfortunate that the windows replaced recently was done without seeking formal Listed Building Consent. However, the applicant advises this was done innocently, not appreciating the Listed Building status of Garden House. The Nunwick Estate has a record spanning many decades and generations of respecting and caring for the historic buildings within their control.

The works proposed in this application is to replace the recently installed casement windows with traditional sliding sash windows.



The 'modern' casement windows to the east elevation

The east elevation of Garden House and its windows is of MODERATE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE. The windows themselves are noted in the listing description. However, whilst the listing refers to 16 pane sashes it also advises that the 3 no first floor windows had been replaced at the time of the listing in 1987. It is assumed only the 2 no lower windows were original at that time. All of the windows were replaced in 2015 with plain casement windows.



Photo extracts from 'Google Earth': 2009.

NB the lower sashes without horns and the upper sashes with horns.

In the east elevation, it is noted the lower sashes were typical of late 18th C design ie without 'horns'. The sashes of the upper windows were later 19th C replacements with horns. For historical correctness it was proposed in the earlier application to replace these windows to follow the traditional design for late 18th C windows, ie. without 'horns'.

However, it is noted the planning officer has specifically requested all the windows should have horns. Therefore, this application proposes horns to the sashes.

The north, west and south elevations of Garden House are of MODERATE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE. Historic photos extracted from 'Google Earth' indicate the windows recently removed were 19th C in style. These were typically 2 over 2 fenestration with 'horns' to the upper sashes.

The exceptions to the 2 over 2 style were:

W4, which was a larger window. This had 3 no panes above slatted timber ventilators. It is proposed to install a new window with 3 fixed panes to the upper panel and solid boarding to the lower panel.

W11, this is a 4 over 4 sash window of uneasy proportions, however it is intended to replace this to match the 19th C window shown in historic photos.



Photo of north elevation showing W4 and W11.

W6, this was a 6 over 6 sash window. It is proposed to reproduce this pattern in the new sash window.



Photo of south elevation showing W6.

Discussion on style and detailing of the replacement windows:

In developing this further application the comments from the planning officer and the NCC Conservation Team have been considered.

In the email from the planning officer dated 28 June 2023, the officer advised:

‘Having discussed this with Built Heritage & Design we would reiterate that:

- Windows must be a like-for-like match of the historic windows removed without Listed Building Consent, including single glazing
- This proposal should be amended to replace windows W3 W4 W6 W7 W11 with like-for-like copies of the traditional windows as far as is possible based on the Google Streetview images
- The window W5 replacement is not in keeping with the period and architectural style of the building. A 2 over 2 pane sliding sash design would be appropriate.
- The original windows W1, W2, W3, W7, W8, W9, W10 and W11 had horns so their replacements should also have horns. The glazing bars should have 19th century profiles’.

The proposals presented in this application follow the guidelines in Historic England’s publication: Traditional Windows, their Care, Repair and Upgrading.

The proposed general style of joinery profiles follows the HE guidance and replicates, as far as is known, the windows which were recently lost. The window pane proportions and pattern are repeated and horns specified for all upper sashes.

The thermal properties of the replacement windows has been a consideration: in particular heat loss through air filtration and thermal properties of the glass. It should be noted that there is a National and local expectation for buildings to meet ‘nett Zero’ energy criteria. Single glazing will inevitably lead to condensation, particularly in bedrooms which can lead to deterioration to decoration and glazing bars.

The HE document advises that ‘Draught-proofing is one of the most cost-effective and least intrusive ways of improving the comfort of occupants’. To that end modern draughtproofing detailing has been incorporated in the replacement sash window designs as recommended in the Historic England document, with brushes recessed in the sashes and parting beads.

It should be noted that Garden House is located on a busy local distributor road serving Kielder Forest. Large transport vehicles for timber use this road. Garden House is located in a dip in the road which requires vehicles to change gear which exaggerates the noise nuisance. The slimline glazing in association with draught stripping will aid sound proofing and improve the comfort to the occupants.

The HE document makes many references to slimline double glazing mainly in association with ‘repairs ‘ to existing historic windows. However, nowhere in the document does it categorically exclude the use of slimline units. It does stress caution citing potential conflicts with the rebates in glazing bars, and the relative thermal value contribution to the overall heat loss. However, this is in the context of isolated glazing replacement where they suggest the effect will be marginal. However, in this application all of the windows are to be replaced. Therefore thermal and acoustic qualities will be greatly enhanced.

The planning officer requested the use of 19th C style glazing bars. The design shown in this application is a copy of that illustrated in the HE document.

There are very few comments in the HE document dealing with the complete replacement of windows. However, one such reference which is pertinent to Garden House advises:

'In cases where the significance of a building has been harmed by the installation of replacement windows of non-historic design, consideration maybe given to the installation of new slim-profile double-glazed replacement windows where:

- the new windows are of a more sympathetic design and the net impact on significance will be neutral or positive
- no incidental damage to the building fabric will result from the removal of the existing windows'

It is argued that all of the above apply to Garden House, in particular having a neutral net impact on significance.

The document also makes reference to:

Where historic windows have been replaced with ones whose design does not follow historic patterns, these are unlikely to contribute to the significance of listed buildings. Replacing such windows with new windows of a sympathetic historic pattern, whether single-glazed or incorporating slim-profile double-glazing, may cause no additional harm. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building, which is the desired outcome under national policy.

Consequently, and further to the above guidance, it is proposed to incorporate slimline double glazing in the new sliding sashes. These will be accommodated in narrow glazing bars 19mm wide of 19th C design.

Public Benefit:

The proposed works in this application will have clear public benefit:

- The inappropriate windows will be removed and replaced with new windows in keeping with the status of this listed building .
- The use of slimline double glazing will improve the thermal and acoustic characteristics of the building fabric. This will have direct benefit for the occupiers and, by deterring condensation, the long term maintenance and survival of the windows and the historic fabric. Acoustic improvements will enhance quality of life for the occupants.
- The nett impact on the historic significance will be neutral (as suggested by the HE document)

Additional justification.

It is acknowledged that all Listed Building Consent applications should be reviewed on their own merits. Regarding the use of slimline double glazed units being used in Listed Buildings this architectural practice has direct experience in LBC applications which have received consent. The following are examples both in this authority and a neighbouring authority where slimline double glazing has been approved, both with parallel issues with this application:

Thornbrough House, Thornbrough, Northumberland:

20/00245/FUL and 20/00246/LBC

This is a detached grade II listed dwelling.

The owner had replaced all the windows with inappropriate windows.

A listed building consent application was prepared to replace the inappropriate windows with traditional style sliding sash box frame windows including slimline double glazed units.

The application was approved.



Photos of the implemented approved works to windows.

Fellgate Farm, South Tyneside:
ST/0390/23/LBC

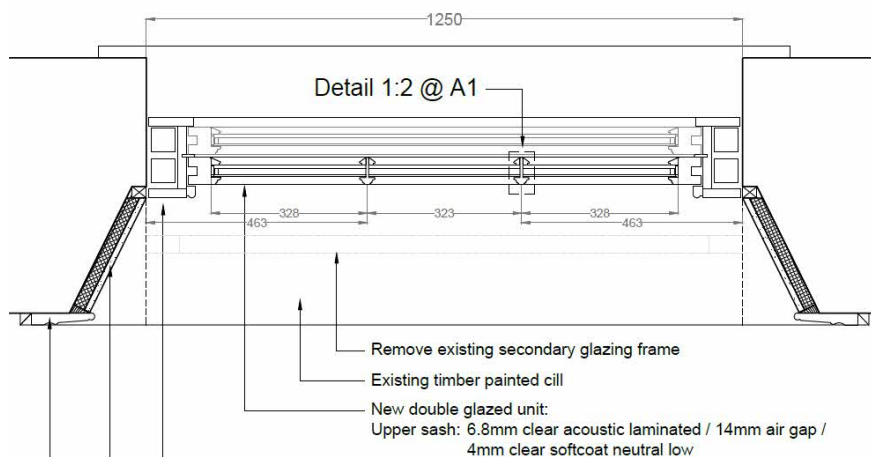
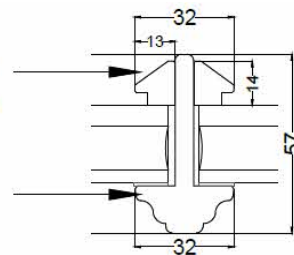
This is a detached grade II listed building.
The dwelling faces a busy main road.

The owner wished to replace defective sliding sash windows (installed circa 1980) which have single glazing, with new traditional style sliding sash box frame windows using sealed double glazing.
The application was approved and the works will be underway shortly.



Chamfered External Timber Beading to Resemble Glazing Putty. Overall 32mm Wide.

Solid Timber Glazing Bar 32mm Wide



Elevation facing the main road along with approved details in the listed building consent.

These are only two examples which this architectural practice has direct experience. There will be other examples from within this authority and elsewhere.

Design and Access

Amount, mass and form

The proposed works are repairs: the amount, mass and form remains unaltered.

Access

Access will remain unchanged.

Layout

The layout of the building will remain unchanged.

Scale and appearance

The scale of the building will remain unchanged.