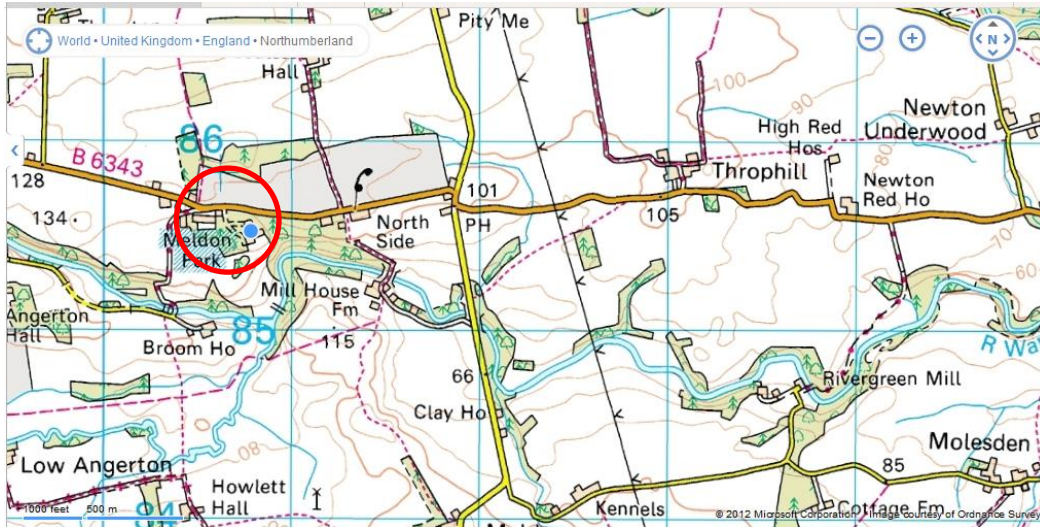


## DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

1. **DRAWINGS** submitted with this application for Listed Building Consent, All A3 originals:
  - a. **LOCATION PLAN**: included on Drawing 2301: 2A
  - b. **EXISTING** Drawing 2301\_01A Plan, Section, Elevations.
  - c. **EXISTING** Drawing 2301\_02A Location Plan, Site Plan, Roof Plan.
  - d. **PROPOSED** Drawing 2301\_P10 Plan, Section, Elevations.

### 2. LOCATION



O. S. MAP

The Lodge was built as a gatekeeper's cottage for the house at Meldon Park.

Meldon Park [NZ 10779 85459] lies 6.5 miles to the West of Morpeth and 1.5 miles to the north west of the village settlement of Meldon (a very modest collection of buildings and a small church – the church of St John) up from and overlooking the banks of the River Wansbeck.

Meldon Park is a Country House set at the top of a long slope Southwards down to the River Wansbeck. There is substantial block of stables and outbuildings associated with the house.

'Meldon Park' (M. Girouard), *Country Life* CXXXIX (1966) 406-9. The village of Meldon sits within the parish of the same name, which is within the union of Morpeth (being circa 6½ miles (W. S. W.) from Morpeth). There was a manor in the barony of Mitford till the time of Henry III., after which period the estate was held by various families of distinction; it eventually became the property of Lord Derwentwater, and was subsequently appropriated by the crown to the support of Greenwich Hospital, from the governors of which it was purchased by Isaac Cookson

### 3. CONTEXT.

- a. **LISTING, HOUSE**: The house is a Grade II\* listed building. It was added to the National Heritage List of England (NHLE) on 6th May 1952 (with an address change of the list description undertaken on 30th January 1986). A summary of the list description is as follows:  
*MELDON MELDON PARK NZ 1085 20/104 Meldon Park (Formerly listed as 6.5.52 Meldon Hall) GV II\* Country House, 1832 by John Dobson for Isaac Cookson, some internal alterations by Lutyens c.1930. Ashlar except for tooled and margined stone to rear of service wings; slate roofs. Rectangular main block with parallel service wings to north, truncated c.1960. Vest (entrance) front 2 storeys, 3 bays. Moulded plinth, shallow angle pilasters, 1st floor band. Central bay slightly recessed behind prostyle tetrastyle Ionic porch with two columns in antis in rear wall. 12-pane sash windows in architraves which extend down to plinth or band. Ground-floor windows have cornices on richly-carved consoles. Modillion eaves cornice and parapet with short central open balustrade to*

## DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

each bay. Hipped roof has 2 stepped and corniced stacks with quadruple shafts. Lower 4-bay service wing set back to left; 12 pane sashes, ground floor in architraves, stepped and corniced stacks to left end and on ridge. South front 5 bays, the central a full-height canted bay; similar detail. East front 5 bays, the central 3 slightly recessed; end bays have tripartite sashes. Lower service wing, set back to right, and link with conservatory (q.v.). Interior; restrained decoration with marble chimneypieces in most rooms. Imperial stair, altered by Lutyens. "The last flowering of the Georgian country house tradition .... perhaps the best example of Dobson's competence as an architect of country houses".

### b. LISTING, THE LODGE:



ENGLISH HERITAGE LOCATION PLAN, Jan 2023

#### **Listing**, from English Heritage:

Heritage Category: Listed Building Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1042085

Date first listed: 20-Oct-1969

Date of most recent amendment: 30-Jan-1986

Statutory Address 1: LODGE AT ENTRANCE TO MELDON PARK

District: Northumberland (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Hartburn

National Grid Reference: NZ 10616 85606

#### Details

HARTBURN MELDON PARK NZ 1085 20/51 Lodge at entrance to 20.10.69 Meldon Park (Formerly listed as Lodge to Meldon Park) GV Gate lodge, early C19, probably by John Dobson. Ashlar. 1 storey, bay. Plinth, cornice and parapet with moulded coping. Canted front to drive has 3 steps up to central 6-panel door under Tuscan porch, flanked by shortened 9-pane sashes with moulded sunk panels below sills. Flat roof, central tall corniced stack. Later additions to rear not of interest.

Listing NGR: NZ1061685606

Legal This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

## DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

- c. **Historical Progression:** it is clear from the form of construction visible on site, and the Floor Plan detail ref Drawing 01A, that the original building was only two rooms, i.e. the Living Room and the Dining Room, although at the time this was probably a Living / Dining / Kitchen and a Bedroom. This part of the building is of a vintage comparable with the Hall, probably 1840. For a residence to consist of only two room seems bleak now, however at the time this would have been an appropriate provision for the gatekeeper; a reflection of the disparity between the gentry and the working class at the time. This part of the building is thought to be John Dobson's work.

**Later Extension:** We know from records held by the RIBA that Edwin Lutyens prepared drawings for this building, these drawings are expected to be available in the New Year and the results will be shared with interested parties. His involvement in the interior of the main house is considered to be early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and it is likely that he was commissioned at the same time to take care of the extension of the Lodge.

The Later Extension comprises two parts:

- A frontage room, the kitchen, which has a heavily moulded parapet wall and stone walls that were clearly intended to be consistent with the original building, - unfortunately unsuccessful in that regard. The roof of this part is covered with mineral felt to a poor standard, - likely to have been lead originally.
- A rear Bedroom which was built to minimum standards, where the walls are finished with render scoured out to mimic stonework. The crude construction indicates that the parts of the Lodge not exposed to view were considered to warrant only minimum expenditure.

There is a little irony in the thought that an Architect of Edwin Lutyens standing may have been commissioned for such a low budget two room extension.

- d. **Current Condition:** the current condition is derelict, due to poor maintenance in the past few decades. There is an inherent vulnerability in the valley gutters between the parapet walls and the roof covering: gutters always fail and it may take 10 years or 100 years; this does not matter if the gutters are beyond the building face as with conventional eaves gutters, but in the case of valley gutters, when there is a failure, the water is discharged into the building fabric, as has happened here. The water ingress has caused most of the ceilings to collapse; the floor boards had been affected and large areas have been replaced with inferior particle board. The lack of heating and high levels of dampness has caused widespread condensation. Meldon Park was sold to the current owner, the Applicant, in 2022 and following collapse of areas of the ceiling, he has stripped out ceilings and flooring to remove the damp fabric and allow the building to breathe.

### 4. SITE:

- a. **Setting:** the Lodge is located adjacent to, and Westwards of, the main entrance gateway to the House, on land that is raised by approx. 0.6 m from the level of the main entrance road. The area around the Lodge within the estate boundary is heavily wooded with some magnificent mature trees.



- b. **Aspect:** the main line of the building lines up West to East.

## DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

### 5. USE:



The building has always been used as a residence, originally as the gatekeeper's cottage, but unoccupied for the last two years due to its derelict condition.

### 6. CONSTRUCTION:

a. **Walls, original part:** in solid ashlar sandstone, coursed, with ashlar stone to the reveals, jambs and lintels of the openings, all of the finest quality. The base of the wall is formed as a plinth, which is also a feature of the House itself: this was done, not only to provide a foundation, but also to create a bench mark level for the subsequent main body of the wall.

The wall around the "Front Room" - Living Room, - is 460 mm thick; the top of this wall is extended upwards to form a parapet wall, 230 mm thickness, heavily moulded externally, capped with a moulded stone coping. There is an inherent vulnerability in that the masonry above the roof is a continuation of the masonry below the roof, without a damp proofing membrane above roof level, so that if the parapet wall becomes wet though during prolonged wet weather, the dampness migrates into the wall below roof level. This can be mitigated with heating, ventilation and breathable plaster, as was the case traditionally, but this dampness ingress, combined with the failures of the valleys, has clearly overwhelmed the building's ability to keep dry in the last few years.

The part of the wall for the "Back Room" - Dining Room, - is 340 mm thick is covered by the eaves projection of the roof. This stonework of this wall is consistent in quality with the wall of the "Front Room."

An injection damp proof course has been carried out to the walls of the Original Building; this is unlikely to have been successful due to the solid thickness of the stonework.

**Walls, later extension:** these walls are 310 mm thick, indicating that these are likely to be cavity walls.

The part of the wall around the Kitchen is of ashlar stone, squared but not coursed with ashlar quoins and jambs to the openings. This part of the wall was clearly intended to look consistent with the original building, however the stonework is poorer quality: random squared instead of coursed ashlar, artstone cills and heads instead of stone. This wall is extended upwards to form a parapet wall, 230 mm thickness, heavily moulded externally, capped with a moulded stone coping. The parapet is one stone course lower height than the front parapet.

The part of the wall around the Bedroom is masonry construction, probably brick or blockwork, faced with render, scoured to mimic stonework.



## DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

- b. **Portico:** a canopy over the front door, an enhancement to the view of the Lodge from traffic passing through the gates, all formed in stone: the roof is a stone slab shaped to a double slope on a flat stone base; carried by a pair of Doric style columns. This roof form is a direct repeat of the stone roof over the original rear entrance at the House. An attractive feature, also of practical benefit in providing shelter to what was originally the front door.



NORTH ELEVATION, gateway on the left. Original building

Later extension.

- c. **Roof:** the roof over the original building is a pitched slate roof, the front part of which is hidden behind the parapet wall with a lead valley gutter between the wall and the roof. The slate covering is nailed to the slating laths without underlay, The valleys at each side drain to the eaves gutters of the rear roof. The roof of the later extension is in two parts: the part above the Bedroom is a pitched slate roof, a continuation of the slate roof of the original building. The part above the Kitchen is a flat roof covered with mineral felt, draining to a weir outlet at the South West corner. All the slate roofs have been poorly maintained: timbers widely are deteriorated due to woodworm and rot, slate replacements carried out crudely.

- d. **Floors:** the floor in the Kitchen and Lobby are solid concrete; all other floors are suspended timber; due to rot and woodworm, large areas of boards have been replaced with particle board in the past, - crudely. Attempts have been made in the past to improve the sub floor ventilation by drilling holes in the base layer of stones.

- e. **Doors:** the original front door is a six panel Georgian style timber door, still intact in its frame, but blocked off internally to improve



**DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT**

the layout, at the time the extension was added. The later extension door is a ledged framed and battened timber door of routine quality, painted.

- f. **Windows:** the windows of the original house are vertical sliding box sash windows, with glazing bars, 3 panes to the top sash and 6 to the bottom sash. The Dining Room window is a replacement, six over six panes. All these windows have been restored by the Applicant in their original form.

There was a window originally in the North side wall of the Living Room; this has been built up, most likely at the time that the Later Extension was added. The windows to the Later Extension are budget standard sash windows; that to the Bedroom is steel.

**7. HERITAGE ASSET:**

- a. **The original building** is worthy of the listed status: a simple elegant design, the frontage expressed with a 45 degree bay and elegantly moulded parapet, all executed to high standard. The roof was designed to be hidden behind the parapet wall, consistent with John Dobson’s design for the House, and just as for the House, the valley gutters create an inherent maintenance problem. The stonework of the walls and the portico is well-crafted, effectively designed with bold and well-proportioned detail to impress visitors to the estate. The original building is a fitting prelude to the magnificent presentation of the House.



WEST ELEVATION, from South West. Existing Kitchen to left, existing Bedroom to right, all part of the later extension.

- 8. **The Later Extension** did not benefit from the same quality of design and construction; this is a mundane extension of negligible heritage asset, and it will be interesting to find out from the drawings held by the RIBA to what extent was Edwin Lutyens involved.



SOUTH ELEVATION. Existing Bedroom and Bathroom, all part of the Later Extension. Bedroom 2, Liv Room: the original building

## DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

9. **PROPOSALS:** the proposals are intended to restore the building, without alteration to the existing building form, to a sound habitable standard, together with minimal internal alterations to provide an attractive 2 Bedroom cottage.
- a. **Walls:** no visible alterations; lead cloaking to the coping of the parapet walls and a small bat crevice to be built into in the West gable: a crevice 100 x 200 x 20 mm under the slope of the roof verge, with 15 x 20 mm access aperture, as directed by the Ecological assessment submitted in conjunction with this Statement.
  - b. **Slate roofs** to be stripped off, rotten timbers replaced, a new slate roof covering using salvaged slates consistent with the existing. The leadwork comprehensively renewed and extended behind the parapet walls to prevent rain water ingress from the parapet wall into the walls below.
  - c. **New Solar Panels:** to the South facing slope of the Later Extension, Solar PV installation with battery storage, to contribute towards energy the energy consumption.
  - d. **Flat roof:** existing felt covering to be stripped off, new roof insulation, new flat roof covering.
  - e. **Rain Water Goods:** no alterations, but for replacement of corroded parts and re-painting, colour black.
  - f. **Floors:** no alterations, but for replacement of rotten parts.
  - g. **External Doors:** no alterations, but for re-painting, same colour as existing.
  - h. **Windows:** no alterations generally; replacement of existing rotten windows to Bedroom 1, Bedroom 2 and Lobby to same configuration as existing.
  - i. **Internal Doors:** no alterations, but for removal of doors to the Living Room and the Kitchen / Dining Room.
  - j. **Internal Partitions:** no alterations, but for removal of the partition between the Kitchen / Dining Room and the Passage, and between the Living Room and the Passage.
  - k. **Internal Plaster Linings:** to external walls: existing plasterboard linings to be stripped out and replaced with damp proofed insulated dry lining to improve the insulation standard. Ceilings: new vapour membrane, plaster board and plaster skim lining.
  - l. **External:** no alterations, other than pruning back the undergrowth that has encroached onto the garden.
10. **HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT:** the proposals have no impact on the external envelope of the original building, - other than lead cloaking to the parapet walls. The changes to the Later Extension are replacement of deficient windows that are of no heritage merit, and addition of the solar panel installation. Internally the only alterations are removal of partitions to the Living / Dining / Kitchen areas; partitions which are likely to have been absent in the Original Building when it was only two rooms.
11. **ACCESS:** the existing ramped access to the entrance door will not be changed.
12. **ENVIRONMENTAL / ECOLOGICAL:** there are no adverse environmental implications envisaged: refer the Ecological Impact Assessment and Bat Survey prepared by Ruth Hadden, BSc. MCIEEM, Ryal Soil and Ecology, submitted together with this Statement, the directions of which will be fully complied with in the renovation works.

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Mr Frank Harrison, B.Arch, RIBA

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