

DESIGN STATEMENT

COPSE HILL HOUSE, LOWER SLAUGHTER



FLEMING *FA* ARCHITECTS

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*Our ref: DS_0396_TLA_v1
April 2024*

Design Statement

Introduction

This design statement is submitted in support of an application seeking consent to amend the external cladding and minor internal changes to the consented extension, reinstatement of Lutyens' porch, leaded lights and bay window mullions, and amended design to the consented parapet, at Copse Hill House, Lower Slaughter.

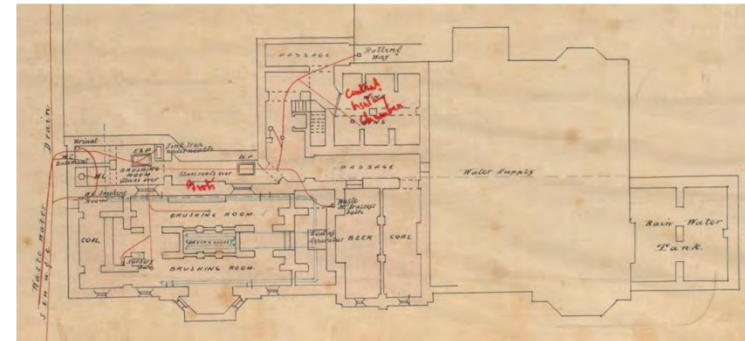
Understanding the Existing Building and Site

The following text is credited to the extant Heritage Statement by HCUK Group, dated February 2022, as well as the Phasing Plan and subsequent references to it. Images have also been extracted from HCUK Heritage Statement, and are credited under each image to their corresponding page number

Copse Hill House was built in 1871-5 as a hunting residence for Henry Arthur Brassey, son of Thomas Brassey the wealthy railway magnate. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Brassey). It was seen as ahead of its time when built, with many modern luxuries such as state of the art heating system, drains and services generally.

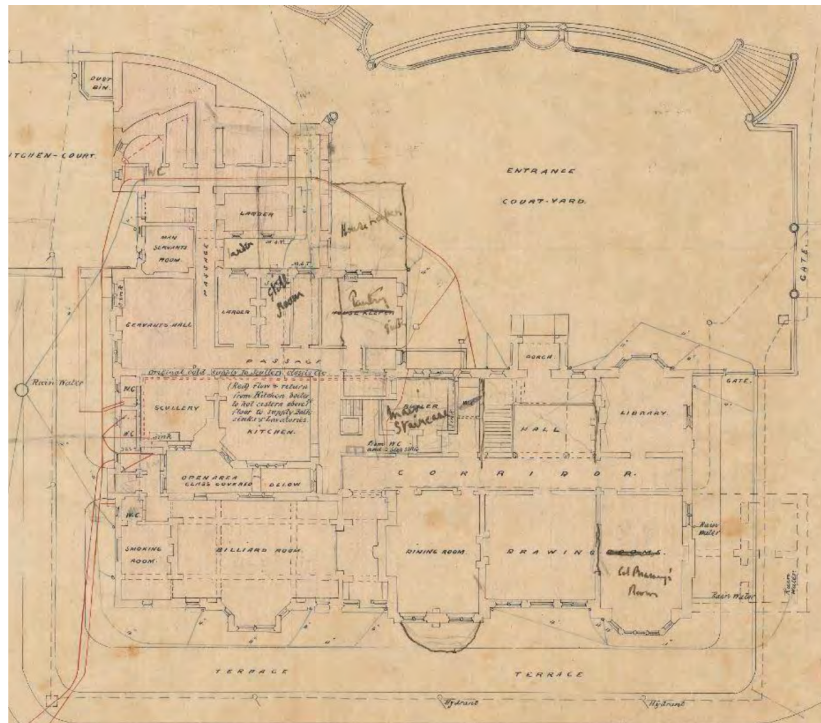
The house was designed by Charles Forster Hayward, and built by Albert Estcourt, builder and stone mason of Gloucester. The house comprised:

- i) Basement or cellar, used primarily for storage of wine, beer and coal with an extensive heated 'brushing room' set into the space beneath the billiard room (now kitchen).



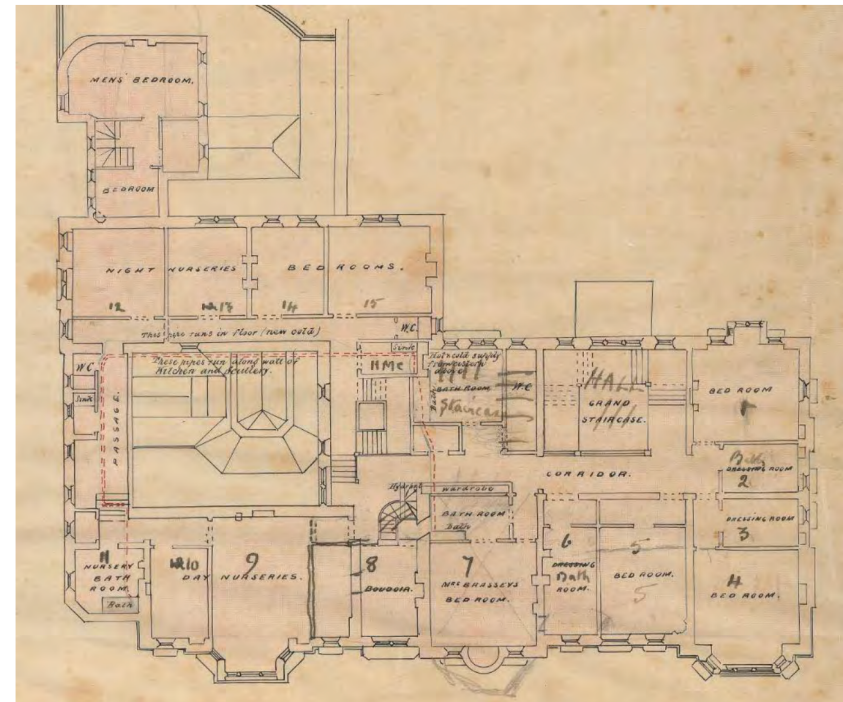
Basement Plan Image above from HCUK Group Heritage Statement, Feb 2022, page 10

- ii) Ground Floor. Much of this historic ground floor plan remains legible in the building today. Principal differences include layout and function of the service range, removed in 1973, and the original position of the stairs passing over the main entrance. The current stair position was originally occupied by the butlers' room and a WC. Other differences show two entrances into the north wall of the dining room instead of the current double doors and a wide gap between the central and south-eastern rooms, both highlighted as 'drawing rooms'. Doorways now present between the southern reception rooms are not shown here, and the billiard room entrance was much wider. Permission was granted (application number 23/01390/LBC) to open this out to its original arch, work which is in progress. This plan is notable also for showing a clear indication of the work later undertaken to relocate the main stairs, open up the hallway and create a rounded bay on the southern front. The two drawing rooms are shown as divided and various changed and relocated functions are labelled in the service range. It would seem a distinct possibility that these plans were marked up by Lutyens though they are very approximate and show no detail.



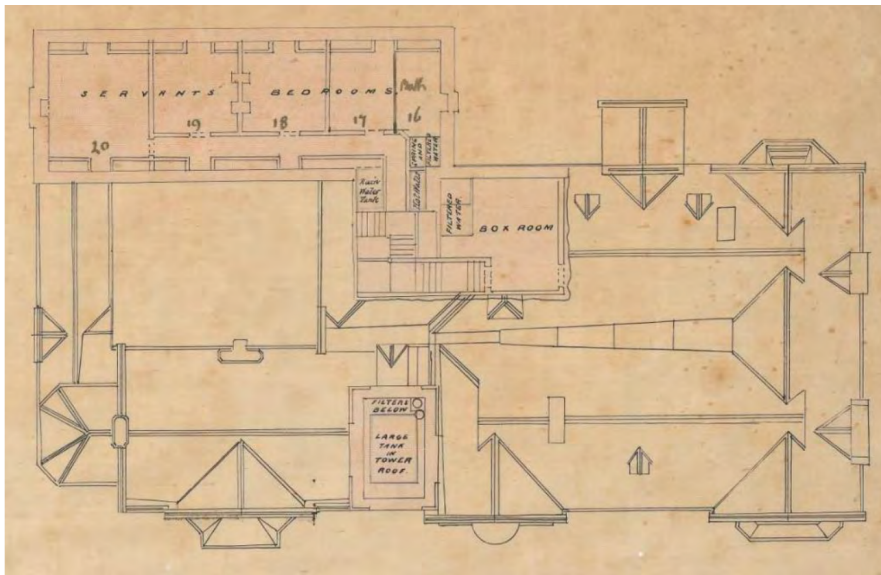
Ground Floor Plan Image above from HCUK Group Heritage Statement, Feb 2022, page 10

iii) The first floor, like the ground floor, has varying aspects that remain legible today, particularly in the southern and eastern rooms. The rooms south of the entrance hall and stair have all been reduced in size after Lutyens' works to relocate the stair, which is again marked on to this plan along with some of the demolition's required including the winding stair shown giving access up to the water turret. At first floor level the light well above the kitchen is much larger. The position of windows next to the back stair appear consistent to today but there is no sign in the elevations of a roof line.



First Floor Plan Image above from HCUK Group Heritage Statement, Feb 2022, page 11

iv) Attic plan. The servants' quarters were clearly within the service range attics with only a box room labelled in the main northern section, though a doorway clearly implies access through to the rest of the roof space. There is no obvious access to the southern roof structure across the central valley and if access was provided it was most probably through the eastern roof structure. A single small dormer in the centre of the southern roof slope supports the suggestion that in the original incarnation there was little accommodation in the southern roof area.



First Floor Plan Image above from HCUK Group Heritage Statement, Feb 2022, page 11

Henry Arthur Brassey was a Liberal politician from 1868 until 1885. He and his wife Anna Harriet had five sons and seven daughters. The house remained in the Brassey family until the early 1970s.

Phasing of the Building

The building today retains substantive portions of the 'original' house of 1871-5. Subsequent phases of major works are identified as:

- c.1877 or later—extension at roof level by Cutts (assumed), possibly also SW corner.
- 1906-9—work to entrance porch, hallway, stair, garden bay by Edwin Lutyens.
- c.1910-1915—removal of water tower, roof dormers, amendment of entrance porch.
- 1973 and later—removal of service wing. Re-roofing. Current kitchen installed.

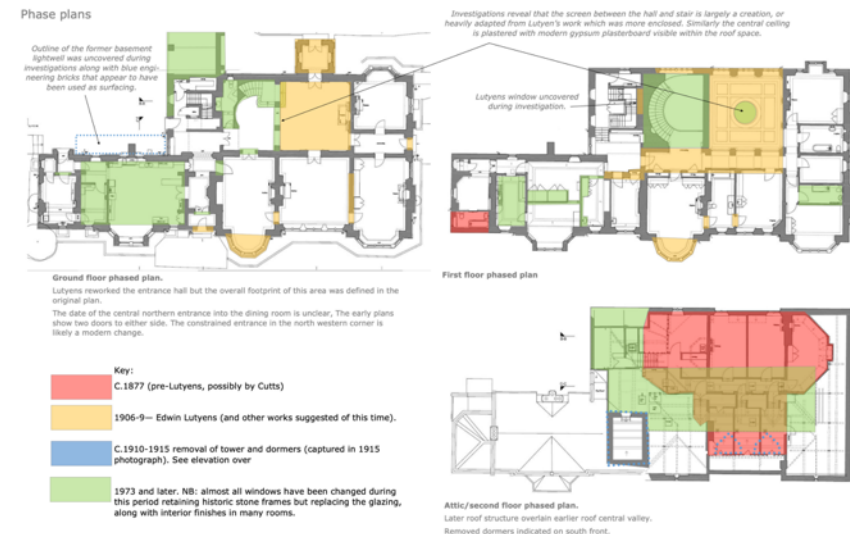


Image above from HCUK Group Heritage Statement, Feb 2022, page 20

Note: Since the HCUK Heritage Statement dated February 2022 was written, it has become clear that the porch was built in stages. Refer to page 13 of this document.

c. 1877:

Some features and alterations, such as the altered doorways into the dining room, are harder to place within a specific phase.

Much of the original building of 1871-5 remains understandable in external elevations and interior planform and features. The principal room divisions that survive within the building today are by and large legible as part of the original building, albeit with changes.

The most defining change during the earlier period of the house is the lifting of the central roof by Cutts, and the addition of the 2 dormers. Otherwise the general characteristics of external façade are identifiable against the historic photographs and drawings of the building but the later changes from the historic aesthetic are readily apparent reflecting the reductive nature of most subsequent changes to the building.

The building retains cornices, joinery and fireplaces that are appropriate for the late 19th century and without evidence to the contrary are probably original survivals. Recent discoveries at the house make it more likely that the majority of the ground floor and many of the first floor cornices date to Lutyens' involvement in the house. Historic plans of the building drawn up in 1875 to illustrate the hot and cold water supply, drainage and gas routes to the building also helpfully label rooms so that we can identify dining room, drawing rooms, library, main entrance hall and stair as well as the full suite of service functions, bedrooms, servants' and childrens' accommodation.

Within the present building the 'original' rooms least changed are now in the south and eastern part of the building. The billiard room has become the kitchen, the smoking room is now a laundry and utility.

1906-09:

In the period 1906-9, Sir Edwin Lutyens was commissioned by Henry Arthur's second son, Captain (later Lt-Col.) Harold Ernest Brassey to remodel parts of the house. The extent of Lutyens' work is uncertain. Weaver described the commission as follows: *'Sir Edwin was called upon to remodel the hall and staircase, and to effect other minor alterations'*. The replacement staircase of Lutyens replaced a butlers' room at ground floor level and a bathroom and WC at first floor. The stair involved insertion of a substantial mullion and transom window in the internal wall backing on to the service stair. This window was concealed during later works after Lutyens' stair was removed.

In addition to the internal changes, Lutyens was also responsible for replacing the porch and reconfiguring the windows above it, and for the construction of a new two-storey bay in the centre of the south side of the building, described in the Historic England Listing text as *'a heavy Lutyens-esque six-sided bay'*.

At around this time a new doorway was inserted in the eastern façade and the doorway immediately west of the Lutyens' Bay had been reworked with new stone framed overlight.

The house was vacant by 1913 and was loaned to the Red Cross as an auxiliary convalescent (Class B) hospital, with 50 beds.

The 1939 Register shows that the house was occupied by two of Henry Arthur Brassey's children: Edwin and his widowed sister Gwendoline. Gwendoline died first and Edwin died in 1973, and so Copse Hill was sold on.

c1973:

The changes that were undertaken after the sale of the house were substantial and transformative. The service wing forming the north-western third of the building was demolished. This resulted in making good work to the newly exposed north and north-western elevations that had previously been connected to the service areas. The access points to the basement were closed off. The roof was altered and amended with the current deep hipped corner roof constructed and the central valley infilled and capped with a flat roof. The whole roof was re-covered in manmade cement tiles.

Overview of Proposals

This application seeks consent for five elements:

- 1) Minor changes to the external cladding treatment of the consented extension, and minor internal changes
- 2) Reinstatement of Lutyens' porch
- 3) Reinstatement of Lutyens' leaded lights to front windows
- 4) Minor adaptation to consented parapet design to flat roof
- 5) Reinstatement of mullions to Lutyens' garden bay

1 – Minor Changes to external cladding and internal changes to consented extension.

Consent was given two years ago for the demolition of existing outbuildings and the proposed extension and link to Copse Hill House, ref 22-00573-FUL and 22-00545-LBC. This scheme was well conceived and represented a brave addition to the house with notable references to the work of Lutyens which was pleasing.

However, the building of the sample panels has revealed difficulties in its construction, such as the pointed apex of the front (east) gable opening, and

the coursing of the stone as it meets the series of rebates, both leaving exposed sawn faces or difficult junctions. Having considered these difficulties and in light of concerns the extension was too stark for the arrival area, the clients are now seeking a softer approach which borrows from traditional architecture yet detailed in a contemporary manner and directly referencing Lutyens' work: namely the rustication of his porch.

The porch stands alone in both detail (rustication) and form (segmented crown), giving it an incongruous character, notwithstanding it is the work of Lutyens. This author's opinion is that Lutyens was looking to blend his own version of A&C classicism (perhaps inspired by Ledoux's gatehouse, see below) and the existing Victorian porch which appears segmented. However, what exists can be said to have no point of reference across the building, and this feeling of incongruousness is expressed by every visitor. (The porch is assessed in its own right, see following section 2).

Therefore, the new extension provides an opportunity to anchor both porch and extension. The proposed extension borrows from Lutyens' rusticated bands, however the bands are reduced in height to convey subservience, and are squared, without ornamentation, ensuring they read as architecturally contemporary, or differential.

Architecturally, the principle of the banding or rustication is pleasing. It gives a pattern or rhythm to the designs and can be used in many ways to either articulate or soften a building's character.

The principle of banding or rustication is seen on both contemporary and traditional buildings of the Cotswolds. This makes it an ideal tool to marry the extension and host. Indeed, there are examples in the local village of Upper Slaughter, where there is banding as a result of different stone used from the various quarries.



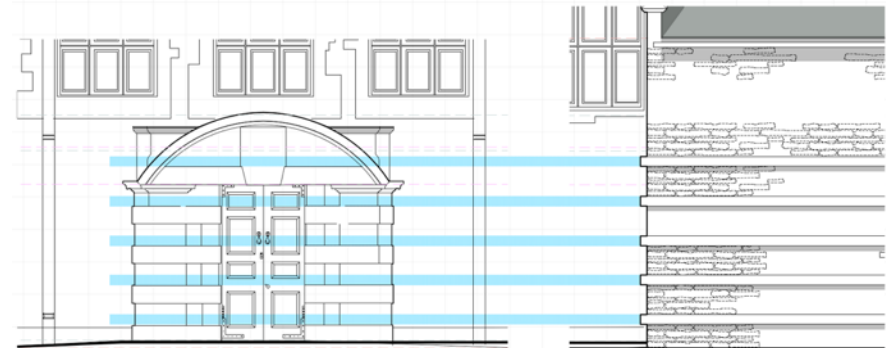
Photos show images of houses in Lower Slaughter with natural banding to them.

The concept of banding has also been borrowed many times by contemporary architects, here by James Gorst at a listed farmhouse in the Cotswolds:



Above images show modern use of banding at GII listed farmhouse in the Cotswolds, by James Gorst Architects.

For the proposed designs, the stone bands have been “synchronised” to the bands of the porch, ensuring they are relevant; they sit at the top of each band of the porch, and are 4”, compared to 12”, making them subservient but also meaningful in position and alignment.



Detail showing String Courses of Proposed Extension marrying with Rustication of Lutyens' Porch

Image above showing how the proposed bands synchronise with the existing bands of the porch, giving them meaning and subservience.

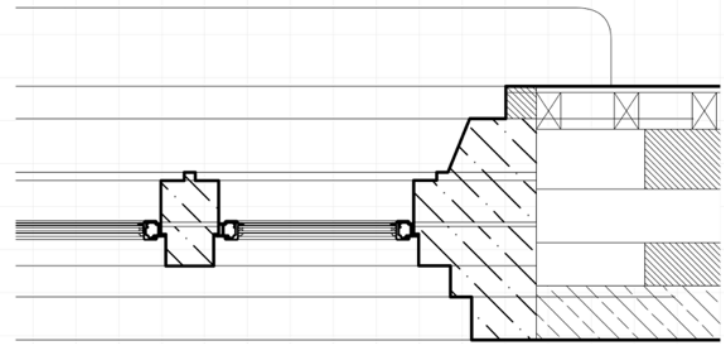
The theme of the bands is played on, stopping at the 1F level. This is a largely traditional device to articulate hierarchy; there is no reason not to employ the device here, regardless of contemporary or traditional design, as it gives additional layering and playfulness, something Lutyens sought in all his work.

As well as the bands, the mullion windows are also detailed to be simple and square, in the contemporary manner, for instance by Louis Osman, a post-war architect who worked on many projects in the Cotswolds and who used square, uniform detailing to give modernity to his work.

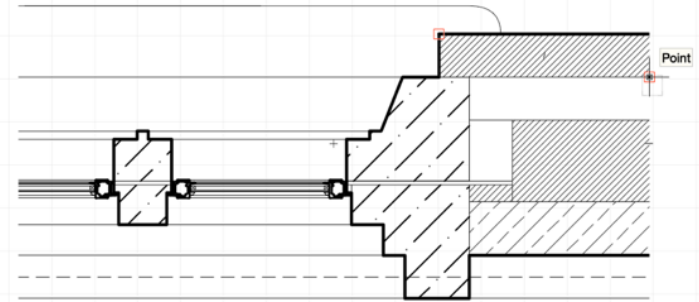


Images above showing work by Louis Osman in manor house south of Cirencester.

At ground floor, the mullion frames protrude so they run flush with the bands – in the same manner as the porch. At first floor, they run flush with the masonry – a play on the layers and depths, adding to the sense of hierarchy between the 2 storeys, and again in the manner of adding playfulness and rhythm.



First Floor - Detail 2



Ground Floor - Detail 1

Image above showing details of the contemporary mullion window frames, differing in placement and reveal depth between the different storeys.

To the rear, the previous designs showed a half-completed series of arches, in the manner of Folly Farm. This design has been modified slightly to reflect a more compact series of arches; the contemporary detailing is still there, in the recessing of the archways and staggered planes, whilst keeping the banding or rustication. Lutyens himself was known to undertake this detail, see below image, albeit here he uses wider, heavier rusticated bands, as with the porch.



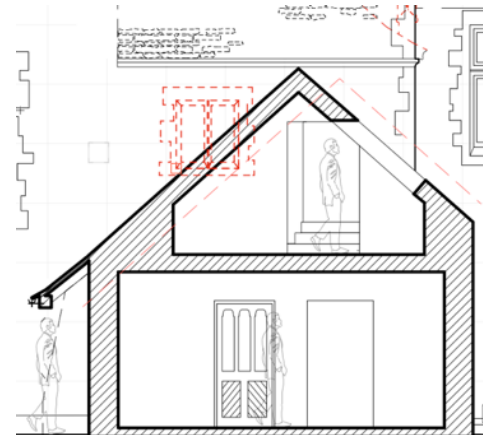
Image above showing example of Lutyens' rusticated bands and series of archways, at Nashdom.

All these details give the extension its own contemporary character, yet still borrow from Lutyens. The existing scheme did the same, for instance in the form of the arches, the buttresses, the catslide roof, all echoes of Lutyens' Folly Farm, however this design does this in a softer, less stark manner, simultaneously anchoring both porch and extension.

This softness we feel is especially important to the east elevation, which is the first thing to be seen on approach to the house, even before the house itself. The amended design gives a more sympathetic, less severe arrival to the house, whilst still being contemporary and of its time. This was true of the house itself when it was first designed in 1871, and of Lutyens' work in 1906, both styles having traditional roots of proportion and detail yet both being termed contemporary at the time.

It should be made clear there is no significant change to the footprint or massing to the extension.

It should also be noted the linking roof design has been adapted to read as softer in character. A door has been introduced to the east elevation, allowing for informal access to the Boot Room. An extended eaves detail provides a canopy over the access. In this way, the roof form now meets the host range over one of the windows.



Extract showing the loss of the 1F window as a result of the amended link roof design.

However, this window is part of the 1977 works, after the service wing had been taken down. Therefore, the significance of this window is low, having little to no architectural or evidential value, and its removal is unlikely to harm the significance or legibility of the heritage asset. Indeed, the room to which the window serves was consented as a storage room, therefore arguably a window here is inappropriate in any case.

2 – Reinstatement of Lutyens’ porch

Special assessment of the porch is required, as it is a key influence on the proposed amended designs and this application seeks to reduce the porch to the size Lutyens originally proposed.

The porch has a potted history, starting life in 1871 as a Victorian frontispiece with elliptic head and pitched roof, seen on the original drawing and post-completion photograph.



Photo taken immediately following completion of construction (Historic England Photograph Ref. OP11030)



Extract of original design by Hayward as published in ‘the Architect’ in 1876

Shortly after, in 1906, Lutyens ‘reinterpreted’ the porch as a neoclassical element, possibly keeping the elliptic reference of the original porch which might explain its design.



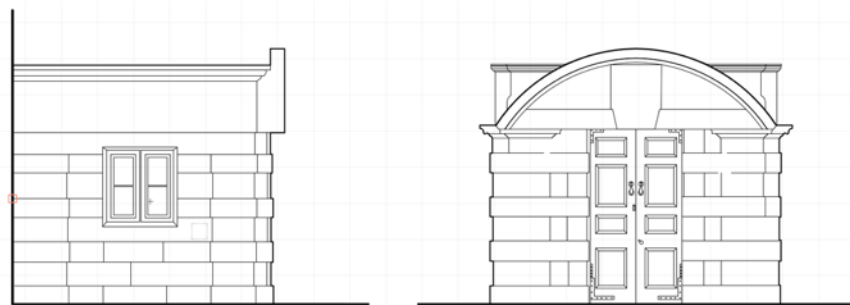
Photo above taken shortly after Lutyens work (from the Henry Taunt Collection held in the Oxfordshire Picture Collection)

In designing the porch, Lutyens might also have taken reference from Ledoux's gatehouse at the Saline Royale, as Lutyens was known to follow his work, Ledoux being a proponent of both wider and domestic architecture in the same manner as Lutyens.



Gatehouse of the Saline Royale, Arc-et-Senans, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux
Ledoux gatehouse, with its rusticated bands and segmented head and recessed masonry panels.

Interestingly, the depth of Lutyens' porch is not what is seen today; it was originally designed to protrude only several feet. Sometime after 1909, the porch was extended by several metres. Thus, the current porch is a curious amalgam of Lutyens' and the original architect Hayward's work.



Existing Porch

Image above of existing porch, as set out in survey information.

Top RHS: photo taken shortly after Lutyens work, 1909. We feel this version of the reduced porch is much more pleasing; it sits more comfortably within the framework of the mullion windows above.

Bottom RHS: Photo from 1913 Sales Particulars. It is difficult to tell but it appears as though the horns either side of the arch now appear, as well as the porch appearing

to extend further out. If this were the case, it would mean the porch was extended straight after it was built. This is credible as the patina and strata of the entire porch appear completely contemporaneous; it is difficult to see where or how the porch would have been cut to enable its extended length.



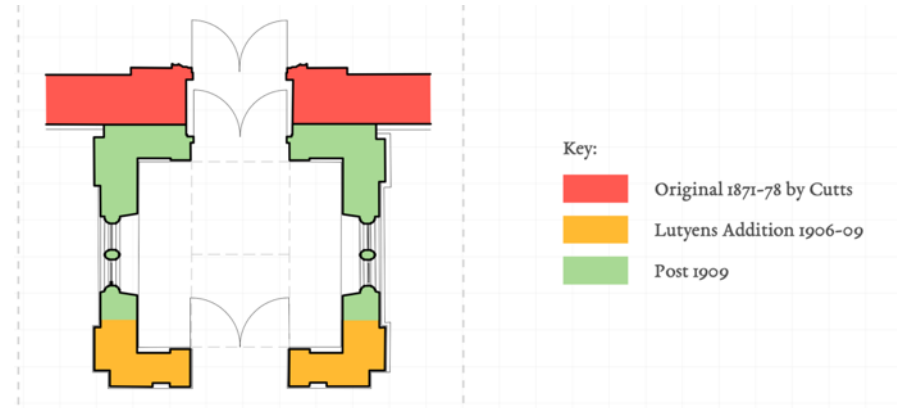
Photo of early 1970s, with service wing still in existence. Note the length of the porch is clear, more closely resembling the original 1871 porch length (photo credited from HCUK Group Heritage Statement, Feb 2022, page 15)



Photo above showing how the masonry of the porch appears entirely contemporaneous.



Photos above of porch as standing today. Note the completely flat exposed face, nominally 3" deep, recessed 2" behind the outer face.



Extract showing likely phasing of the porch.

In this light the proposed porch seeks to reduce its length to the original length as proposed by Lutyens. The horns are removed, a curved roof internally is re-expressed, and the wall of the host range is re-expressed through the removal of the back-facing bands.

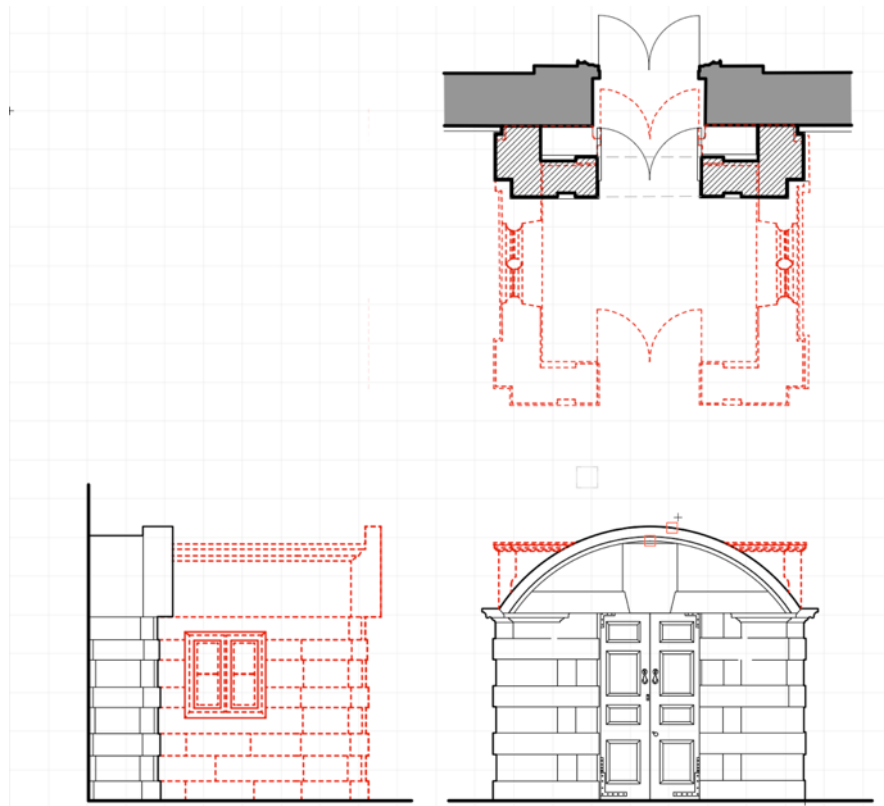


Image above shows extract of proposed reduced porch.

Note the removal of the second set of doors. It is inconceivable that Lutyens had three sets of doors here. Furthermore, the second set of doors do not fit within their pockets. On close examination of the doors, there is no meaningful indication of each of the doors' provenance; even the 1913 photo is not conclusive as to whether the porch had been extended by then, implying all three doors might originate from 1913. But given much of the fabric had been moved around in the 1970s, and the sheer fact the porch is to be reinstated to Lutyens' original design, it is felt the loss of the second set of doors would not cause harm, particularly as the doors do not fit anyway.



Image of the three doors in succession. Note the gap on the second set of doors, between frame and door. This implies this second set of doors is unlikely to be part of Lutyens' design, clearly diminishing their significance.

3 – Reinstatement of Lutyens’ Leaded Windows

Currently these windows are double glazed, dating from the 1973 phase.

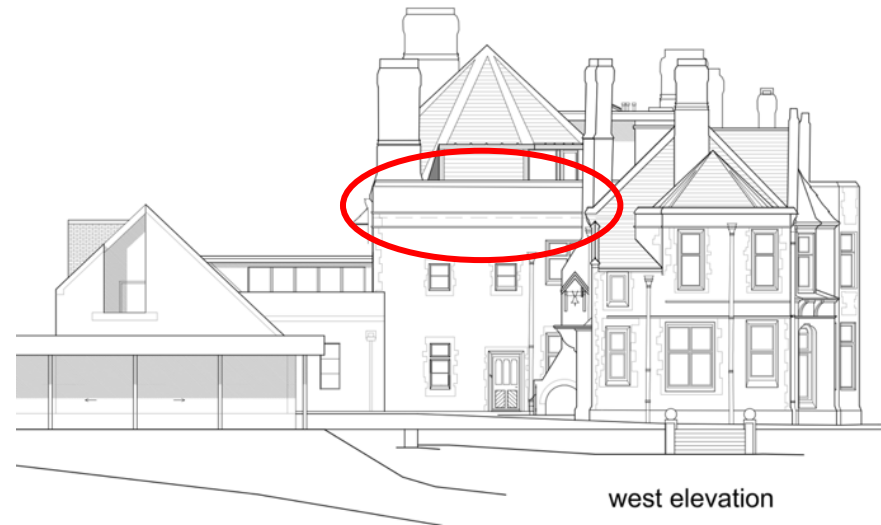
The current proposals seek consent to reintroduce Lutyens’ original design of leaded lights, as noted in the photo below.



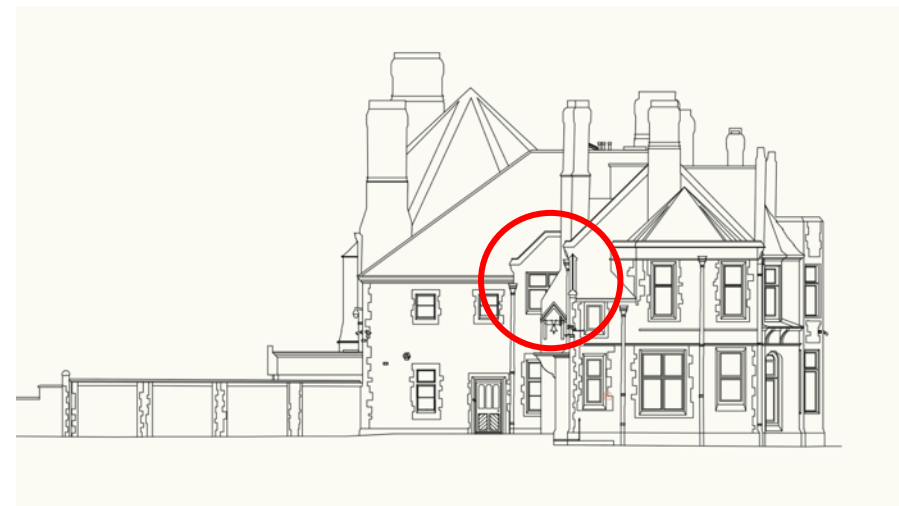
The windows would be slim-lite double glazed, to reduce further rehashing to the mullions, but have bi-way lead to the front window face to be as largely authentic as possible.

4 – Minor adaption to consented parapet design to flat roof

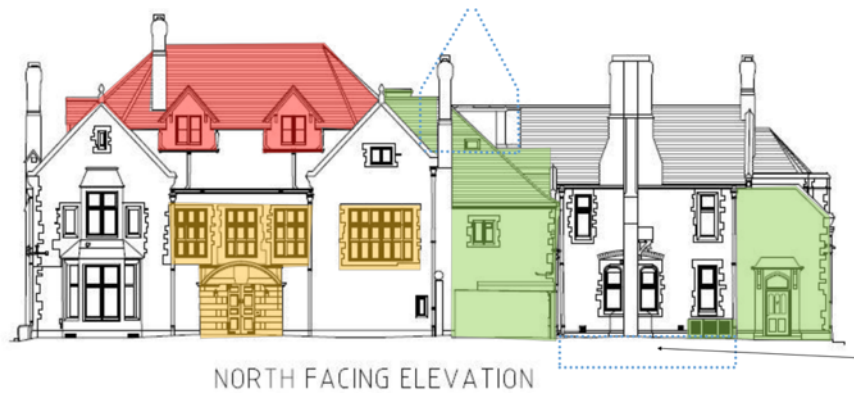
The current proposals ref 22-00573-FUL and 22-00545-LBC propose a consistent straight parapet across the flat roof where the service wing roof once existed.



Extract above from consented scheme, ref 22-00573-FUL and 22-00545-LBC, showing straight parapet detail.



Extract from survey, showing existence of ‘dropped’ parapet detail at junction of the two ranges.



- Key:
- C.1877 (pre-Lutyens, possibly by Cutts)
 - 1906-9— Edwin Lutyens (and other works suggested of this time).
 - C.1910-1915 removals (captured in 1915 photograph).
 - 1973 and later. NB almost all windows have seen their glazing replaced in this period.

Above diagram credited from HCUK Group Heritage Statement, Feb 2022, page 21

The consented design is a success, we feel, in bridging the two ranges and overcoming what was arguably an uncomfortable design dating from the 1970s.

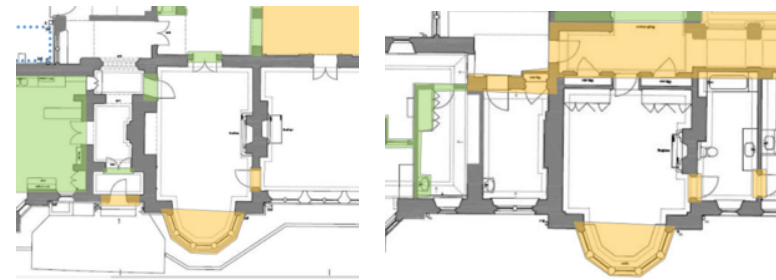
The current proposals seek to adapt the consented design slightly, incorporating a dropped parapet. We feel this breaks up the massing of the parapet and echoes a pre-existing detail.



Above extract showing proposed amalgam of consented design and the pre-existing design with the dropped parapet.

5 – Reinstatement of Lutyens’ Mullions to Rear Bay Window

Sadly, some of the vertical and horizontal mullions of Lutyens’ bay window have been removed, plausibly as part of the 1970s overhaul.



Extracts from HCUK Group Heritage Statement, Feb 2022, page 21



Images above: top image shows extract from heritage report. Image below shows original Lutyens bay.



The removal of the mullions can be seen today, where the mullions were cut flush and spun flush.



Images above: LHS shows missing mullion. RHS shows structural failures where mullions were removed.

Clearly the reinstatement of these mullions is both architecturally pleasing and accurate, and also ostensibly necessary, to prevent further structural deflection or, worse, failure.



Extract showing proposed reinstatement of mullions.

Materials

The proposed masonry would reflect, but not match, the existing palette. Namely, the rubble stone would be Clipsham rubble, which is a thin seam running from Lincolnshire through to Somerset and passing the Cotswolds to the north. The main house ashlar stone is Clipsham, as can now be seen from the cleaning of the stonework. Therefore, the new proposal is an inverted mirror of the house's palette, namely the same stone but swapped between the rubble and ashlar components.

The ashlar stone is likely to be Oathill Cream, from the Guiting quarry near Stanleys.

The roof would be blue slate to match the existing palette of the house.

All doors to be painted hardwood.

Casement windows to be powder coated metal, set back. Separate window details have been provided as part of the application.

Conclusion

The above elements seeking consent are all enhancements to the consented scheme. There is no significant change to massing or footprint of the extension, it is more a development of the designs, typical of many larger projects where more is uncovered as works progress and a fuller understanding of the building's history comes to life.

The overriding theme with all of the five elements is a reimagining of, or reinstating of, the work of Lutyens, this being such a key phase of work to the building. This was already evident in the existing consent. Nonetheless the current proposals seek a softer approach to the extension, still contemporary but a closer cousin to Lutyens' work. This softness we feel is especially important to the east elevation, which is the first thing to be seen on approach to the house, even before the house itself. The amended design gives a more sympathetic, less stark arrival to the house, whilst still being contemporary and of its time. This was true of the house itself when it was first designed in 1871, and of Lutyens' work in 1906, both styles having

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March 2024*