



Linthill Walled Garden, Lilliesleaf
Architectural Commentary
10380-CSY-Z1-XX-RP-(21)-001

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1.0 INTRODUCTON

This document has been prepared on behalf of our client and appellant, Mr. Geoffrey Longstaff, in January 2024.

In outline, the purpose of this document is to form part of the planning appeal, as submitted by their agent, Ferguson Planning, to address the refusal of retrospective applications 23/00647/FUL and 23/00646/LBC, relating to the replacement roof of the reconstructed glass house within Linthill Walled Garden, Lilliesleaf.

This document will provide an architectural commentary on the as-built structure in relation to what would be considered acceptable in relation to the historic context of the walled garden, taking into account the previous comments of Scottish Borders Council's Conservation Officer.

2. 0 PLANNING CONTEXT

Listing is the process by which buildings of special architectural or historic interest are protected. The listing of buildings is undertaken by Historic Environment Scotland (HES). A listing applies to the whole of the building or structure named on the listing. Buildings are assigned to one of three categories depending upon their importance.

Buildings are listed because they are considered to have special architectural or historic interest, as set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. Listed buildings are rightly provided with statutory protection through the planning system, to ensure that special character and interest are taken into account where changes are proposed.

Linthill Walled Garden is a Category B Listed. Forming part of the wider Linthill Estate, including the Steading, Bridge and Main House, it is considered to be of early 19th century origin, appearing in the 1859 Ordnance Survey Map of Roxburghshire as indicated in Fig. 01.

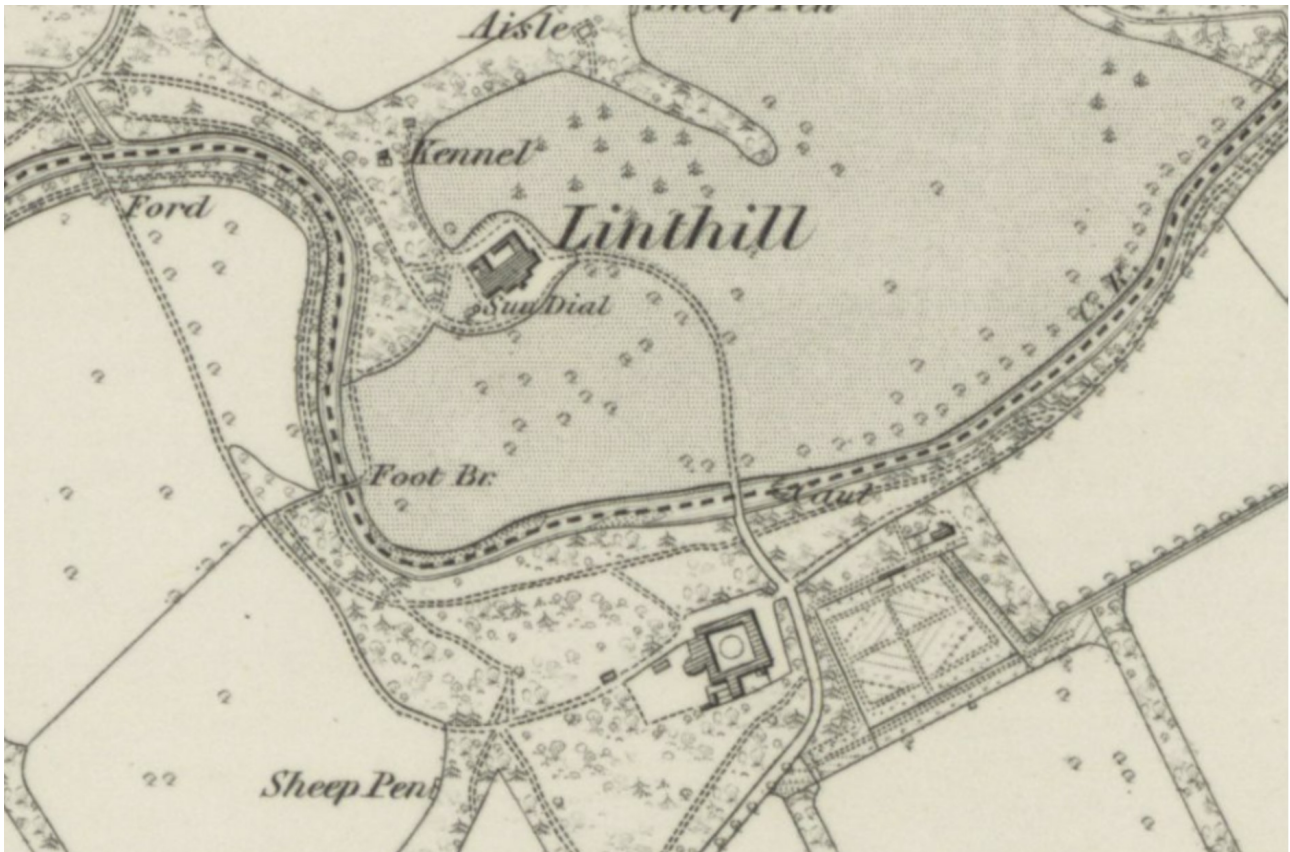


Fig. 01: Ordnance Survey Map of Roxburghshire, 1859

The walled garden is organized in an atypical rectangular plan and characterized by its flat-coped uncoursed rubble walls and red sandstone ashlar portico. A slate-roofed, uncoursed rubble lean-to is located to the north elevation, which also contains the remnants of circular flues.

Under application references 07/01619/FUL and 07/01618/LBC, planning approval and listed building consent were obtained for the erection of a new dwelling adjacent to the original 19th century glasshouse. This dwelling, now constructed, is contemporary both through its material nature and form. Clad in horizontal larch boarding with aluminum windows, the single storey structure with curved roof sits respectfully below the coping level of the walled garden to form a deferential yet contemporary intervention within the formal historic landscape.

In 2019, the original 19th century glass house was dismantled and reconstructed, and a link added to the new dwelling. At the time of dismantlement, it was widely accepted that the original glass house was in a parlous state and that the majority of the original, historic fabric was beyond repair. This included excessive rot to the original timber structure and broken and fractured panes of glass.

No record appears to exist of any consent required to undertake this work though the conservation officer does make reference to this in their response to the retrospective application 23/00646/LBC, noting that as the works to the glass house generally sought to match the detailing and character of the original, it was accepted that listed building consent was not required for these works.

An image of the original glass house, prior to development, is shown in Fig. 02. Constructed in a painted, timber frame on a brick and red ashlar plinth, the lean-to construction appears to be ventilated at the top with either clips or lead t-sections holding each of the glass panes in place. Whilst much of the detailing around the eaves and fascia is essentially utilitarian, a prominent finial can be seen on the far gable.



Fig.02: Original 19th century glasshouse

3.0 COMMENTARY ON CURRENT CONDITION

The existing glass house, reconstructed in 2019 and connected to the dwelling via a link, now forms part of the overall dwelling.



Fig 03. Reconstructed Glass House, circa 2019

To the appellant's credit, the existing base course appears to have been reconstructed using salvaged material, where possible. The red ashlar is legible, as are the presence of some historic bricks.

The detailing of the new vertical glazing is consistent with the historic glass house. As can be observed by comparing Figures 02 and 03, the utilitarian, structural joinery details, as would be expected of a building of this nature, such as corner posts and cills, have been largely replicated successfully. Furthermore, a clear effort has been made by the appellant to re-create the slim-profile mullions that give the original elevations such an elegant, vertical emphasis. These hold thin, single sheets of glass that are jointed horizontally using a similar traditional clip/ lead T-section detail as can be seen on the original.

Credit must be given to the appellant in relation to the effort, commissioning of craftsmanship and attention to detail that are evident within these specific parts of the reconstruction. Without such intervention, it is possible that the original glass house would have fallen into such a state of disrepair, whereby it would have to be taken down and, potentially, not reconstructed. Such a loss would have had a significant effect on the historic setting of the walled garden.

In their response to applications 23/00647/FUL and 23/00646/LBC, the conservation officer notes that the implementation of the solid roof to the reconstructed glass house compromises the significance of the walled garden on the basis that the original intention and functionality of the building is lost, with the understanding of the relationship between the structure and the garden somewhat eroded.

However, it should be considered that the dismantlement of the original glass house and loss of the majority of its historic fabric such as glass, structural timbers and any manually operated ventilation system have resulted in the loss of evidential significance of the glass house, therefore affecting the overall significance of the walled garden itself. It is widely recognized that one of the tenets of contemporary conservation practice is to minimize intervention and, if such a level of intervention is accepted and sanctioned by the planning authority, as is the case here, to the point of

reconstruction, it must be acknowledged that the current significance of the wider setting of the walled garden has been somewhat reduced and that the glass house in question is effectively a contemporary construction.

Furthermore, it must be recognized that the accepted proposal to integrate the glass house into the new dwelling in 2019, has affected the perceived, autonomous nature of the structure itself. Traditionally built as lean-to structures with expressed gables to either end, it must be recognized that the connection of the glass house to the contemporary dwelling alters the perception of how the glass house is read in the wider context of the walled garden.

In addition, it should be recognized that the absorption of the reconstructed glass house into the contemporary dwelling, as a habitable room, presents specific challenges to the inhabitants in terms of day-to-day living, maintenance and energy efficiency. It is believed that the implementation of the solid roof was following prolonged and unsuccessful attempts by the appellant to resolve defects in the glazed roof. It must be acknowledged that the day-to-day comfort requirements of a dwelling are vastly different from that of a predominantly glazed historic building designed for horticultural purposes that, in plain terms, is wholly unsuitable for sustained habitation.

One of the key considerations for historic building conservation is its ability to respond to the challenges of climate change. It could be stated that the principle of the solid roof, with its enhanced capacity to retain heat, repel increased rainfall and mitigate energy loss, is a positive gesture towards adapting a historic structure to deal with environmental challenges.

The current roofing material and associated flashings, verges and fascias are formed from felt sheet and upvc respectively. These materials are typically not reflective of the aesthetic quality required when working with a listed building such as Linthill Walled Garden.

It is believed that no attempt was made by the planning authority to reach out to the appellant to discuss the works prior to refusal. We are firm believers that the guardianship of built heritage works most successfully when local authority officers and consultants work collaboratively towards a common goal.

With hindsight, a compromise may be potentially sought whereby a more appropriate, high quality material, such as natural slate with lead flashings, is implemented to the solid roof. This approach, as is willing to be adopted by the appellant, could potentially retain the legibility of the glass house, as desired by the conservation officer, whilst also achieving the levels of thermal comfort and maintenance considerations desired by the appellant.