

NARROWGATE HOUSE, 31-33 NARROWGATE, ALNWICK, NORTHUMBERLAND NE66 1JN

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Development History

Originally two *single-pile* houses, i.e. with a single row of rooms and probably in 2-storeys with a third attic floor with dormer windows, typical of the C16/17th, with No.31 having only one room up and down and No. 33 having two. The current north corridor inside No.31 would have originally been an open alleyway between No.33 and No.35. The original roofs to these earlier buildings would probably have had terracotta pantiled pitched roofs, similar to the adjoining corner buildings comprising No. 29 that were demolished in the mid C20th.

The brick chimney breast in Room 24 in the Basement, has a three centred, basket-handle design arch in 225/30 x 55/60mm 'scotch' bond, handmade brick, indicating a date before 1725, when it was probably added to a pre-existing stone C16th chimney breast.

The design of the stone Stable entrance doorway in an ogee Gothic arched head, indicates a date of c1750-1790 and the Coach House and Stable was first mentioned in the deeds of 1800.

The two properties were purchased in 1811 by John Lambert, a solicitor, and both houses on Narrowgate, appear to have been faced with ashlar stone, vertically surrounding the attic dormer windows, with a parapet above. This C19th fashion unified both houses externally and internally, together with the inclusion of the North alleyway, a new South staircase, the two storey Dining Room extension to the rear in similar ashlar stone and new slate and lead covered roofs. The top of original coal-chute from the alleyway to the room at the South of the Basement, visible in the North-East corner, is now below the C19th corridor floor.

All of this work would have been completed before 1827, when the increased footprint from that shown on Armstrong's 1769 plan, first appears on Wood's Town Map of Alnwick.

John Lambert was succeeded by his son Anthony in 1849 and following his death in 1856, the property was sold to William Dickson in 1861, an attorney and founding partner of the Law firm which later became Dickson, Archer & Thorp, who occupied the offices on all floors until 2003.

It was probably around 1865 that the North-West rear stone extension was built as living accommodation and around the late C19th/early C20th, that the toilet tower was added to the stairwell.

The property was Listed Grade II* in 1977, which included the Coach House, Stable and boundary walls, due to their pre-1948 existence within the curtilage.

Narrowgate House has been on English Heritage's *Heritage at Risk Register* for several years now, as Priority Category A.

For almost ten years from August 2003 until May 2013, the majority of the property stood unoccupied until its sale to Mr & Mrs Johnson in May 2013.

Significance

The building comprising Nos. 31 and 33 Narrowgate, was occupied continuously by one law firm, later known as Dickson, Archer & Thorp, from 1861 until August 2003 and during those 142 years, was altered only minimally and often only decorated over each preceding layer of paper or paint.

This means that this whole interior is a time capsule still holding most of the evidence of its Regency and early Victorian existence. There is some evidence of its earlier pre-Georgian construction in the Basement in the form of chimney breasts, doors and fittings.

The many original internal features include:

Plaster ceiling cornices and decoration, panelled doors (some C18th), sash windows with original glass, shutters (some C18th and some with original stencilling), door and window furniture, skirtings, architraves, floorboards, wallpapers, gas light fittings, early electrical fittings, coat-hooks, service bells, fire surrounds and C18th kitchen ranges, brick chimney breasts and C18th coal-chute.

The property was Listed Grade II* in 1977 and includes the Coach House, Stable and boundary walls, due to their pre-1948 existence within the curtilage but they are not specifically included in the Listing description or listed separately.

The Northumberland County Council HER [HER 4522 & 23470-7], contains details of eight other entries within the gardens of the property boundaries. These include several medieval pits which were excavated in 2008 during trial evaluation trenches. *[Land at Narrowgate House, Alnwick, Northumberland; archaeological evaluation. Archaeological Services, Durham University]*.

THE NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST FOR ENGLAND: LISTING DESCRIPTION

List entry Number: 1041425

Location

GENERAL LAMBERT'S HOUSE, 31 AND 33, NARROWGATE, ALNWICK

County/District: Northumberland Unitary Authority

Parish: Alnwick

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 25-Aug-1977

UID: 235795

IoE Number: 235795

NARROWGATE (West Side) Nos. 31 and 33 (General Lambert's House)

II* GV 2.

Early C19.

Three storeys and basement. Seven windows.

Plain ashlar; sill strings to 1st and 2nd floors, which also have moulded cornices.

Glazing bar sash windows, single hung on 2nd floor.

Wide 6 panel door to left; 8 panel door to right on ground floor.

Railings to area.

National Grid Reference: NU 18518 13495

HISTORIC ENGLAND: HERITAGE AT RISK REGISTER ENTRY

LIST ENTRY NUMBER: 1041425

SITE NAME: General Lambert's House, 31 and 33, Narrowgate, Alnwick

DESIGNATION: Listed Building grade II*, CA

CONDITION: Poor

OCCUPANCY: Vacant/not in use

PRIORITY CATEGORY: A (A)

OWNER TYPE: Private

Early C19 townhouse in plain ashlar, with three storeys and a basement. Most of the original interior detailing is still present. The building is vacant and deteriorating due to a lack of maintenance. Dry rot is now present in the main body of the building.

NORTHUMBERLAND HER ENTRY

HER ID 4522

Site name Nos. 31 and 33 Narrowgate

Description:

5330 NARROWGATE (West Side)

(NU 18511350 - OS 1:2500 1972) Nos. 31 and 33 (General Lambert's House)

NU 1813 SE 1/79

NU 1813 NE 2/79 20.2.52

Grade II* GV

Early 19th century. Three storeys and basement. Seven windows. Plain ashlar; sill strings to first and second floors, which also have moulded cornices. Glazing bar sash windows, single hung on second floor. Wide six-panel to left; eight-panel door to right on ground floor. CONSERVATION AREA.