

Par	CUERDEN	Dist	
Add	Cuenden Hall Shady Lane	NGR	564 239
Type		Dates	
Use			

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Grade	II*
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A3/17



A3/17

Des:

Country mansion, early C18, and 1816-19 by Lewis Wyatt, the older part altered internally. Brick with stone dressings, roof concealed by high parapets. Irregular plan, the original C18 house incorporated in the central third between stable court to west and Wyatt's addition to east. Two storeys, the east end higher, with very large stair well rising to form a hamper in the centre, the east end lower than the centre. Original house was simple rectangular double pile plan 7 windows in length, 2 storeys: this now has in both front and rear walls stone bands on 2 levels, and sashed windows with glazing bars, projecting corner chimneys, a high brick parapet, and in centre of south side a prominent stone porch with 6 Tuscan columns (2 groups of 3 at corners) and dentilled cornice, above which is a canted bay (some of these alterations may be by Wyatt). The east range added by Wyatt is rectangular, 5 bays each side, has tall square-sectioned corner chimneys with narrow inset stone panels on both levels, terminating above the parapet in 4 clustered flues with stone caps; moulded stone bands on 2

nec

levels carry round these chimneys, and there are high stepped parapets with stone copings; at right ends of ground floor of east and south sides are large stone canted bay windows with panelled parapets; on north side a projecting single-storey stone pavillion of 7 bays extends the whole length of this wall, incorporating in the centre a round-headed front door with a carved stone coat of arms in the parapet above, flanked by a carved stag and a hawk. (This feature not shown on Wyatt's drawings). Otherwise, all windows are sashed with glazing bars and moulded architraves, those at ground floor very tall, rising from ground level, those at 1st floor with 12 panes each. To right (west) side of original house is lower "office court", originally of 3 sides open at the west subsequently extended and enclosed. This is 2 lower storeys with high parapet; the front (north) side, linked by a small recessed pantry bay (now altered as entrance to offices), is 6 unequal bays (each breaking back slightly); 1st bay is high single storey (originally kitchen) with 2 tall round-headed windows; next 2 bays have 3 stone-cased sashed windows on each floor; next 3 bays (apparently later additions) have in the centre a large round-headed arch to courtyard, flanked by pilasters and surmounted by a decorative stone pediment in the coping with flanking ball finials, and on each side 2 windows to each floor, all sashed with splayed stone heads. South range (garden front) breaks forward from original house, has a polygonal corner with round-headed windows (originally designed by Wyatt as an octagonal dairy) and a recessed porch with Tuscan columns in centre; otherwise all windows sashed with stone cases. Interior: of east range retains original features by Wyatt, principally the fine open well staircase with carved oak balusters and closed string, but also fireplaces, doors, etc. (complete set of drawings by Wyatt in RIBA Drawings Collection).



Other
Assessts

Info
Sources

Survey Date

Building Condition



Cuerden Hall, Cuerden. Now the headquarters of the Central Lancashire New Town Development Corporation, which bodes ill for the future of the park—already the eastern fringe is being developed with pretentious new houses. Cuerden was bought by the Army 1958 from the Tatton family and was well-maintained as the official residence of the GOC, North West District. The estate had descended from the Cuerdens and Banastres to the Townley-Parkers and finally the Tattons. At the end of this sequence of private occupation, all the family papers are said to have been fed to a bonfire in the yard. The earliest part of the present house is the lower office wing which is, in fact, the house built 1717 by Banastre Parker. It was remodelled 1816–19 when Robert Townley-Parker, Tory MP for Preston, added the larger main block to the design of Lewis Wyatt, preliminary designs prepared by John Webb in 1815 not being adopted (vch). Wyatt's design is an enterprising attempt to execute in Classical language a dramatic Picturesque composition influenced by Vanbrugh and the Elizabethans. The chimneys are grouped at the corners and treated as little towers while the staircase hall has a clerestory carried up above the level of the roof like a larger tower. Cuerden was the first c19 Classical mansion with a belvedere tower of this type which was to be popularized later by Osborne. The interior comprises large, plain rooms with marble chimneypieces while the tall central hall has a carved oak staircase and a coved ceiling embellished with heraldic plasterwork. Cuerden was once noted for an excellent picture collection formed in Italy 1830–40 (now dispersed), and this together with Wyatt's neo-Classical architecture and the romantic landscaping of the park probably by John Webb—lake, woods and stone-built lodge gates—all combined to form an important early c19 Picturesque ensemble. TATTON (formerly TOWNLEY-PARKER) of Cuerden/LG1952.

Cuerden Hall, Lancashire, 10049

Nigel Morgan writes —

Country house. Mostly 1816–19, by Lewis Wyatt, for Robert Towneley-Parker; but incorporating at least part of an 18th century house. Recently occupied as offices of New Town Development Corporation.

A big brick building in its own parkland, two storeyed except for a large lantern to the staircase. A somewhat intimidating exterior (in keeping with the character of the client), containing much of Wyatt's original interior features, of which the fine open-well staircase is probably the best.

Brick with stone dressings, sandstone ashlar porch; roofs concealed by parapets. Irregular plan in which the earlier building is sandwiched between a stable court to the west and Wyatt's addition to the east. Mostly two storeys. The east block is higher than the rest, five by five windows, and is distinguished by high parapets stepped up in the centre, thick clasping pilasters to the corners which contain chimneys and carry up above the parapet like turrets, and a large rectangular lantern in the centre which includes chimneys in its sides. (The effect is by no means accidentally castellar.) The entrance front to the north has a projected ground floor of ashlar, seven bays wide with pilasters, parapet, a tall round-headed entrance arch in the centre (under an upstand to the parapet with carved arms flanked by a deer and a hawk) and tall sashed windows. The windows on the floor above, and in the other sides, are mostly twelve-pane sashes with moulded stone architraves (those at ground floor much taller) but at the right-hand end of the east and south sides there is a single-storey canted bay with a high parapet carrying urns. The middle block, slightly lower and with seven-window front and rear walls, was remodelled by Wyatt with stone cladding, high brick parapets and corner turrets, and on the south side a prominent Tuscan porch with a canted bay above it. The former stable court to the west was also partly remodelled and its former open west end enclosed with an added range, plus an octagonal dairy on the south corner.

Historical note. The client, Robert Towneley-Parker (1793–1879) was Tory MP for Preston 1837–41 and 1852–57, and Guild Mayor 1862.

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02/03/2001

References

- Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: North Lancashire* (1969), pp.110–11
John Martin Robinson, *A Guide to the Country Houses of the North-West* (1991), pp.176–7