

Address 51 Malone Park Belfast BT9 6NN	HB Ref No HB26/18/024	
Extent of Listing House		
Date of Construction 1900 - 1919		
Townland Malone Lower		
Current Building Use House		
Principal Former Use House		

Conservation Area	Yes	Survey 1	Not_Listed	OS Map No	147/5
Industrial Archaeology	No	NIEA Evaluation	B2	IG Ref	J3250 7042
Vernacular	No	Date of Listing		IHR No	
Thatched	No	Date of Delisting		SMR No	
Monument	No			HGI Ref _____	
Area of Townscape Character	No				
Local Landscape Policy Area	No				
Historic Gardens Inventory	No				
Vacant	No				
Derelict	No				

Owner Category

Building Information

Exterior Description and Setting

Two-storey with attic, freestyle, multi-bay detached villa, located on the south-west side of Malone Park, close to the Malone Road in South Belfast, built in 1903 to designs by Belfast architect William John Fennell.

Malone Park is a wide tree-lined private avenue which runs between the Lisburn Road and Malone Road in south Belfast and is comprised of a number of large private residences in large mature-landscaped plots.

No. 51 is asymmetric on plan with projecting bays. Walls are red clay brick to ground floor in Flemish Bond and upper storeys of painted roughcast; projecting brick corbel course between brick and roughcast levels.

Rosemary tiled pitched roof with decorative ridge tiles to main roof; porch and single storey bays are hipped/lean-to with same tiles; small section of flat roof on rear of south-east elevation; 1990's single-storey sunroom extension with pitched roof to left side of rear façade.

Plain painted timber eaves and painted timber-sheeted soffit to main roof; front porch and bay window have overhanging eaves with exposed painted timber rafter ends and timber sheeted soffits.

Two painted roughcast chimneys located close to each gable apex.

Mock half-timbering to top of two-storey projecting bay to front, and to north-west gable.

Mixture of replacement uPVC and original cast iron rainwater goods.

Window openings are a mixture of segmental-arched (with brick voussoir heads on ground floor level) and straight heads.

Windows are predominantly original painted timber sliding sash with single glazing or decorative leaded lights, some are original painted timber casements, and one fixed leaded light to porch window.

Sandstone cills.

Decorative terracotta vents at plinth level.

Front Elevation (north-east):

Asymmetric façade with entrance located in single-storey porch to right side; hipped roof, deep projecting eaves with exposed rafter-ends, and decorative, chunky carved timber bracket supported on a carved stone sandstone corbel to semi-open portion; diagonal patterned painted timber ceiling to open end of porch; quarry-tiled entrance steps, leading to original timber painted bolection-moulded panelled front door with glazed upper panes and ornate Art Nouveau-style brass letterbox featuring flowing, organic lines and stylised natural motifs; stepped brick piers with large decorative leaded-pane window to porch.

Two-storey projecting bay to left of porch has a large window opening on each level and mock half-timbering to gable.

Lower two-storey section on left side and single-storey return/extension on extreme left with timber sheeted door leading to internal store.

Side Elevation (north-west):

Two-and-a-half storey asymmetric gabled façade with single-storey sunroom extension (1990s) on right side. Single-storey canted bay on left side with lean-to roof. Exposed, projecting chimney breast to centre, flanked by window openings of varied sizes on all levels; attic level has mock half timbering either side of chimney breast. Stepped, splayed, brick buttress wall on right corner at ground floor level.

Rear elevation (south-west):

Asymmetric façade with single-storey sunroom extension on left side, lean-to roof over canted bay with patio doors to centre, and then lower two-storey section set back with hipped roof to right.

Single-storey canted bay to centre has been altered with the addition of aluminium glazed patio doors to raised patio area.

Lower two-storey section has a wide window opening with a replacement double-glazed timber window.

Side Elevation (south-east):

Façade partially seen at time of survey as it is close to the boundary with No.53 Malone Park.

Asymmetric gable abutted by single storey return with pitched roof; projecting stairwell window sits above the single storey return; pitched roof of return is abutted by single storey extension with flat roof.

Materials:

Walls: Red clay brick in Flemish Bond to ground floor level, painted roughcast to upper floor level

Roof: Rosemary tiled roof with decorative clay ridge tiles

Windows: Predominantly original painted timber sliding sash with single glazing or decorative leaded lights, some are original

painted timber casements, and one fixed leaded light to porch window. Sandstone cills. Two replacement timber

double-glazed windows on ground floor level on north-west gable and rear elevation (kitchen)

Rainwater goods: Mixture of replacement uPVC and original cast iron, including cast iron hoppers

Setting:

Detached villa, located on the south-west side of Malone Park, at the Malone Road end in South Belfast. Dual vehicular entrances with replacement red brick pillars and modern metal gates. Red brick detached garage located on north-west side of site (built sometime between 1938 and 1957). Mature boundary landscaping to all boundaries.

Interior Overview

Interior layout largely unchanged. Detailing partially altered.

Architects

Fennell, William J

Historical Information

This house, originally known as 'Lisderg', was built in 1903 for Mr. William Rodgers to designs by Belfast architect William John Fennell.

Belfast-born William Rodgers (b.c.1845) had had a long and successful career in the local linen industry, culminating c.1898 in his becoming managing director of the New Northern Spinning and Weaving Company, Falls Rd, a role that led to him overseeing the building of the firm's new factory at the junction of Northumberland St in 1905. A bachelor, he and his two unmarried sisters, Elizabeth and Mary Ann, had previously lived at Brookview Terrace on Cliftonville Road. The designer, William J. Fennell, meanwhile, was by this date one of the leading local architects with a long and varied list of commercial, religious and domestic commissions to his name since setting up in practice in 1880. Within Malone Park itself, he had already worked on the pair of somewhat plainer red brick semidetached houses directly opposite this site - nos.54 and 56, built in 1898, with neighbouring no.52 completed in 1903. Lisderg itself was completed at a cost of £1,250 and initially rated at £83 but reduced to £80 after an appeal by the owner in 1906.

William Rodgers, 'a man of many parts...[who] "knew more about everything than that most people know about anything"', died in June 1909 and the property passed to his sisters. In the 1911 census both ladies are recorded as living here with their cousin, Rebecca Gilmore, and a domestic servant, Annie Henry, with the house itself noted as a '1st class' dwelling with 7 windows in front and 15 rooms in use.

After the death of the younger sister, Elizabeth Rodgers, in April 1937, the contents of the house were auctioned off and the residence ('with panelled entrance hall and modern culinary apartments &c.') was sold for £2,000. The purchaser appears to have been A. (Alexander?) Lindsay, a chartered accountant. Mr. Lindsay retained the property until 1946 when it was sold by private treaty to James Alexander Ireland (d.1972), a woollen manufacturer with premises in May Street. The next owner (from c.1955-56) was Major Horace Reginald Haslett, chairman and managing director of wholesale grocery firm J. and J. Haslett, who, amongst other accomplishments had been made a Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur for his exploits during WWI, and was later awarded a C.B.E. Major Haslett died in early 1962 and but no.51 remained with his family into the mid-1970s.

Towards the end of 1973 the 'magnificent detached residence' was put up for sale, the estate agent's notice speaking of, a 'tiled entrance porch, entrance hall with cloakroom off, drawing room...with French windows to garden', dining room...kitchen in two parts, ironing room, rear corridor with mistress's pantry, 7 good-sized bedrooms, [and] 2 bathrooms (one with coloured suite)' whilst outside was the garage and 'extensive and extremely well laid-out gardens to front, side and rear, in lawns flowerbeds and rockeries.' Despite all of this the property does not appear to have sold immediately and is recorded as vacant in the 1975 street directory. It was eventually acquired c.1976 by Kevin Barrett, who appears to have been still living here in 1995.

The house (now renamed 'Nephin') was advertised for sale in June 2020.

The sunroom extension to the south was added in 1996, replacing a verandah that originally continued around the south-west corner of the building. What appears to have been a small garage is shown to the immediate north-west of the house on the 1920 OS map. Map evidence suggests this was replaced by a larger structure sometime between 1938 and 1957

MALONE PARK – GENERAL BACKGROUND In common with the other streets is this area, Malone Park is located within one of the narrow strip farms that originally stretched from the Malone Ridge to the Bog Meadows. Probably established in the early 17th century, these plots had their integrity compromised in the early 19th century, firstly by the cutting of Lisburn Road in 1816-19 and then with the construction of the Ulster Railway in the later 1830s. Around the same time, land in the area began to be (effectively) sold off by the increasingly cash-strapped Donegall estate. Subsequently sites in the area were acquired by Belfast merchants and professionals for the building of out-of-town villas, many with generous grounds. Towards the end of the 1800s, as more plots became freed up and greater numbers sought to reside outside of the city centre, denser suburban development along regularly laid-out streets followed, (several tracking the former boundary lines of the old farmsteads), a trend largely completed in the Edwardian period.

This general pattern was followed in what is now Malone Park, though being relatively far from the town centre its development was slightly later and more condensed in terms of time. Beginning the mid-1860s 'Malone Park House', a brick and stucco Italianate villa, was built on the northern side of the present thoroughfare for Robert Henderson (d.1876), a shipowner and Belfast Harbour Commissioner. It stood in isolation until the early 1870s, when it was joined on the same side by a new manse for nearby Malone Presbyterian Church (present no.20), a pair of semis - Woolsey Villas (nos.16-18), Melvyn (no.32) and the gate lodges at each end, with nos.12 and 28 following later in the decade. The side avenue of Malone Park Central, linking to what is now Balmoral Road, is also of this time. In the 1880s, nos.6, 14 and 26 were added to the north of the main drive with the remainder of this side largely complete by the early 1900s. To the south the bulk of building was carried out by the firm of R.J. McConnell & Co. in the 1890s, though aside from nos.51 and 53 (added 1901-03) a large swathe to the eastern (Malone Road) end of this side remained undeveloped until the 1920s.

References – Primary sources

- 1 'Belfast Telegraph' – 23 March 1876, p.3
- 2 'Northern Whig' – 8 October 1898, p.5; 22 November, p.6;
- 3 'Belfast and Province of Ulster Directory' / 'Belfast and Northern Ireland Directory', (J.A. Henderson, [later Century Newspapers]) – 1903-1995
- 4 PRONI VAL12B/43/P/1, 4, 7 Annual valuation revision books, Windsor ward – 1897-1930
- 5 PRONI VAL12A/7/R/9 Valuers' office notebook, Windsor ward (added area) – 1903
- 6 OS maps, County Series, Antrim sheet 64 – 1903, 1920, 1931, 1938; IG sheet 147-5 – 1957, 1966, 1986
- 7 PRONI VAL12A/7/R/18 Valuers' office notebook, Windsor ward (added area) – 1906
- 8 'Belfast News-Letter' – 7 September 1907, p.4; 15 June 1909, p.8; 4 February 1931, p.1; 21 April 1937, p.1, 1 May 1937, p.9; 28 February 1946, p.1; 31 January 1957, p.2; 4 January 1972, p.2
- 9 'Belfast Weekly Telegraph' – 14 August 1909, p.1
- 10 PRONI VAL12F/3/14/3 Annual valuation revision book, Windsor ED – 1930-35
- 11 'Belfast Telegraph' – 31 October 1942, p.4; 29 September 1954, p.6; 17 February 1962, p.6; 11 October 1973, p.22; 22 December 1982, p.10; 23 June 2020 [online at <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/life/house-home/belfast-home-designed-by-mater-hospital-architect-goes-on-market-for-17m/39307124.html>]
- 12 Mid-Ulster Mail – 24 October 1953, p.1

Secondary sources

- 13 Larmour, Paul, 'The architectural heritage of Malone and Stranmillis', (Belfast, UAHS, 1991), p.

Criteria for Listing

NB: In March 2011, revised criteria were published as Annex C of Planning Policy Statement 6. These added extra criteria with the aim of improving clarity in regard to the Department's explanation of historic interest. For records evaluated in advance of this, therefore, not all of these criteria would have been considered. The criteria used prior to 2011 are published on the Department's website under 'listing criteria'.

Architectural Interest

- A. Style
- B. Proportion

Historical Interest

- R. Age
- S. Authenticity

C. Ornamentation
D. Plan Form
H-. Alterations detracting from building
I. Quality and survival of Interior
J. Setting

X. Local Interest
V. Authorship

Evaluation

Two-storey with attic, freestyle, multi-bay detached villa, located on the south-west side of Malone Park, close to the Malone Road in South Belfast. Built in 1903 to designs by Belfast architect William John Fennell. This house exhibits the architectural language of 'Freestyle' with its asymmetric floor plan and projecting bays, varied fenestration to the façades and eclectic detailing that create proportions typical of the style. The materials are also characteristic of the period with a blend of red clay brick, roughcast walls and a Rosemary tiled roof. This is a notable example of the domestic work by the distinguished Belfast architect W J Fennell who was responsible for many residential and public buildings in Belfast. Much of the original turn-of-the-century historic fabric and detailing remains- including the original timber sliding sash and casement windows with decorative leaded lights, and internally, the original timber staircase and oak panelling, which allow the building to convey its architectural significance. These features of interest, which have definite quality and character, display a level of integrity and authenticity. No. 51 Malone Park sits among other listed villas on Malone Park, a tree-lined private avenue with mature landscaping to large private plots. It is of local interest for its design, retention of historic character and is the work of an important Belfast architect.

Replacements and Alterations

If inappropriate, Why?

General Comments

Monitoring Notes – since Date of Survey

Date of Survey 10/02/2026
