



## Case information

<b>Case ID</b>	300016469
<b>File Reference</b>	HGH/B/TC/213
<b>Name of Site</b>	Armoury House (Former Drill Hall), Perth Road, Birnam

<b>Local Authority</b>	Perth & Kinross Council		
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	NO 03228 41769		
<b>Designation No. (if any)</b>	LB11129		
<b>Designation Type</b>	Listed Building	<b>Current Category of Listing</b>	B
<b>Case Type</b>	Amendment		

<b>Received/Start Date</b>	2015 [Drill Halls Listing Review]
<b>Decision Date</b>	26/05/2016

## 1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Armoury House continues to meet the criteria for listing. The statutory listing address and the listed building record have been amended. The category of listing has changed from B to C

<b>Previous Statutory Address</b>	Drill Hall (Armoury House), Perth Road, Birnam
<b>Amended Statutory Address</b>	Armoury House (former Drill Hall) excluding two rear extensions to southwest, Perth Road, Birnam

## 2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

### 2.1 Designation Background

This building was listed at category B on 16/02/1976. It is located within the Birnam Conservation Area.

### 2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

## 3. Assessment

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### 3.1 Assessment information

The former Drill Hall was considered for amendment as part of the Drill Halls Listing Review 2015-16 and was visited on 26/11/2015. The exterior and interior were seen during the visit.

### 3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The building was found to no longer meet the criteria for listing.

An assessment against the listing criteria was carried out. See **Annex A**.

*The designation criteria are published in the Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 2, pp. 51-53.*

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/historic-environment-scotland-policy-statement/>

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## **ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria\***

Armoury House (former Drill Hall) excluding two rear extensions to southwest, Perth Road, Birnam

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### **1. Description**

The building was constructed about 1895-1897 and is a 1 and 2-storey, 5-bay, L-plan former drill hall, armoury and drill instructor's house in a Tudor cottage style, now used as a house. In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing: the two rear extensions toward the southwest.

It is built of blue squared rubble with snecked ashlar dressings and the building has timber bracketed eaves with exposed rafter ends. The projecting outer bays are gabled, that to the left is a single storey former hall with a mullioned tripartite window with Tudor hoodmould which rises over a carved inscription (now partly eroded) '5 VBRH 1895'. The former hall is entered through a projecting porch which has a shouldered doorcase and twin-leaf timber door. The entrance to the house is to the right of the porch and has a rectangular fanlight and single timber door.

In the house and armoury section on the right there is mainly 3- and 4-pane glazing in timber sash and case windows. In the hall section to the left there is multi-pane glazing in the upper part with 3-pane glazing below in timber sash and case windows. The roof is grey slates and there are corniced chimney stacks, some with yellow clay cans.

The interior which was seen in 2015 has a good surviving late 19<sup>th</sup> century scheme. The former hall has timber boarding to dado height, a timber panelled entrance door in a moulded architrave, a late 19<sup>th</sup> century chimneypiece, plain cornice and central ventilator. Within what was the drill instructor's house there is a row of bells and chimneypiece in the kitchen and timber panelled doors.

### **2. Assessment Against the Listing Criteria** (HES Policy Statement, 2016) Annex 2, pp. 51-52

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Criteria for determining whether a building is of 'special architectural or historic interest' for listing under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 [[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/9/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/9/contents)]

*To be listed, a building need not meet all the listing criteria. The criteria provide a framework within which judgement is exercised in reaching individual decisions.*

#### **2.1 Age and Rarity**

The drill hall was built about 1895-7 and is shown on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed 1898, published 1900), marked as a 'drill hall'. However

newspaper sources seem to imply that it was actually built in two phases in 1894-5 and 1897-8. The first phase was the construction of the 'armoury and dwelling house for the drill instructor' which was mentioned in October 1894 when a feu had been secured and the building 'so long talked about' was 'in a fair way of becoming an accomplished fact'. In December 1895 there is clear evidence that the armoury and house had been erected but there is no mention of the hall at this date. The hall may have been completed the following year or in early 1897 as in August 1897 a grand bazaar was held in aid of the 'building fund of the Birnam volunteers' in the drill hall itself. The date stone inscribed with 1895 which is on the wall of the hall may have been carved later but showing the date of completion of the first part. The differences in the windows between the two sections would seem to support that the building was constructed in two phases.

As indicated in the inscription the hall was built for the 5<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Highlanders (later the Black Watch). The Birnam hall is a very small example compared to many. In 1899 the volunteers met for their annual drill at the Birnam Institute in preference to their own hall in Perth Road, presumably because it was not large enough.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century two rear wings added to the southwest. These are not considered of special interest in listing terms and are proposed to be excluded from this listing.

In the late 1850s there was concern in the British Government about the Army's ability to defend both the home nation as well as the Empire. Britain's military defences were stretched and resources to defend Britain needed to be found. One solution was to create 'Volunteer Forces', a reserve of men who volunteered for part-time military training similar to that of the regular army and who could therefore help to defend Britain if the need arose.

In 1859 the Rifle Volunteer Corps (and Artillery Corps in defended coastal areas) were formed and the Volunteer Act of 1863 provided more regulation on how the volunteer forces were run and it set out the standards for drills and a requirement for annual inspections. Most purpose-built drill halls constructed at this time were paid for by a major local landowner, the subscriptions of volunteers, local fundraising efforts or a combination of all three. The Regulation of the Forces Act 1871 (known as the Cardwell Reforms after the Secretary of State for War, Edward Cardwell) gave forces the legal right to acquire land to build a drill hall and more purpose-built drill halls began to be constructed after this date. The largest period of drill hall construction, aided by government grants, took place between 1880 and 1910. The Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907 (known as the Haldane Reforms after the Secretary of State for War, Richard Haldane) came into force in 1908 and the various Volunteer Units were consolidated to form the Territorial Force. The construction of drill halls largely ceased during the First World War and in 1920 the Territorial Force became the Territorial Army.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century changes in warfare and weaponry made many of the earlier drill halls redundant and subject to demolition or change to a new use. Around 344 drill halls are believed to have been built in Scotland of which 182 are thought to survive

today, although few remain in their original use. Drill halls are an important part of our social and military history. They tell us much about the development of warfare and the history of defending our country. They also, unusually for a nationwide building programme, were not standardised and were often designed by local architects in a variety of styles and they also have a part to play in the history of our communities.

The Birnam drill hall falls in the middle of the most intense period of building activity of drill halls which lasted from 1880 to 1910. As an example of the building type this drill hall complex is not rare and is relatively late in date in the history of drill hall, but what distinguishes this building from many others is its small size and the picturesque cottage design which is very much the local building style at this period. The house and the hall are largely unaltered both externally and internally.

## **2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest**

### ***Interior***

The interiors of drill halls were designed to be practical and largely unembellished. The main requirement was the provision of a large open space unimpeded by columns. In some cases a viewing balcony would be included. A wide entrance was also a typical feature to allow large groups of drill marching volunteers to enter and exit the building.

The interior of the Birnam hall retains much of its late 19<sup>th</sup> century detailing, but this detailing is not exceptional for a drill hall of this date.

### ***Plan form***

The requirements for drill halls were basic – a large covered open space to train and drill as well as a place for the secure storage of weapons. The vast majority of drill halls were modest utilitarian structures. Most drill halls conformed to the pattern of an administrative block containing offices and the armoury to store weapons along with a caretaker or drill instructors accommodation, usually facing the street. To the rear would be the drill hall itself. Occasionally more extensive accommodation was required, such as for battalion headquarters where interior rifle ranges, libraries, billiards rooms, lecture theatres and bars could all be included.

The plan form of the hall in Birnam is not typical of the building type, perhaps because the hall was almost certainly added after the construction of the drill instructor's house and armoury. It is relatively easy to identify the hall from the exterior – from the large gable end toward the street and the fact that it is single storey with tall windows. In this respect it is similar to the slightly later hall at Blair Atholl.

### ***Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality***

Drill halls were built in a variety of architectural styles and no individual type dominates. They were usually designed by local architects and constrained by tight budgets. They often had a strong link to their local communities and could be used for other community activities. Architectural style could reflect the streetscape of the local community and be small and modest, similar to surrounding domestic properties, or

they could be more eye-catching and overtly military in appearance, particularly for larger forces or headquarter buildings.

A style of drill hall with recognisably domestic elevations began to be constructed in Scotland towards the turn of the twentieth century and was particularly prevalent for drill halls constructed following the Territorial Forces Act 1907. This domestic or informal appearance is characterised by the scale of predominantly two storey, three bay structures with stylistic detailing focussed upon chimneys and dormer or bay windows. The style of the building was often influenced by the architecture of the area as well as the availability of materials.

There were a number of reasons that the domestic style was favoured, including a deliberate attempt for these military buildings to appear less conspicuous, particularly those in rural or village settings, as well as restricted finances and urgency of construction. Osborne in his book *Always Ready* notes that the domestic design also lent itself to conversion, possibly to housing should the requirement for the drill hall be short lived(p.24).

Like a number of halls in smaller towns, the Birnam example is a domestic style drill with picturesque Tudor cottage details. The use of barge boards and exposed rafter ends is to be found throughout the town in buildings designed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The station in Birnam which was designed by the architects A & A Heiton of Perth in the 1850s is a good example of this style.

It is possible that the Andrew Grainger Heiton (1864-1927) was responsible for the design of the building. He was the nephew of the prominent Perth architect Andrew Heiton Junior, who, with his father, was responsible for the design of the station. As a young man Andrew Grainger Heiton was a keen sportsman and an enthusiastic volunteer. Andrew Grainger Heiton attended a dinner on 21 December 1896 in honour of the veteran commanding officer of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of Perthshire volunteers, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Robert Menzies. Heiton served with the Black Watch during the First World War, the Highland Regiment having become the Black Watch at this date.

A comparison of domestic work by Heiton in the 1890s shows some similarities to the Birnam hall - for example the much larger Dungarhill of about 1890 with its extensive use of timbering in the gables. However no documentary evidence has been found to support the attribution of Heiton to the Birnam drill hall. The hall might simply have been the work of a local builder or joiner following the local building style.

### ***Setting***

The hall in Birnam is located on what was the main route north from Perth and is near the centre of the town. It is a prominent site and makes a significant contribution to the townscape. It is located within Birnam Conservation Area.

### ***Regional variations***

There are no known regional variations.

## 2.3 Close Historical Associations

None known at present.

## 3. Working with the Principles of Listing (HES Policy Statement, 2016) Annex 2, pp. 51-52

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In choosing buildings within the above broad headings particular attention is paid to:

- a. *special value within building types*
- b. *contribution to an architecturally or historically interesting group*
- c. *the impact of vernacular buildings*
- d. *authenticity*

When working with the principles of listing the Armoury House has particular interest under a and d

a. This is a good example of a small and picturesque cottage style former drill hall, armoury and drill instructor's house.

d. The building remains largely unchanged since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century both externally and internally.

## 4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria\*\*

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The Armoury House is a good example of a small late 19th century picturesque Tudor cottage style drill hall with armoury and drill instructor's house. The principal elevation appearance remains largely unchanged since it was built, and many interior details have been retained. It has distinctive bargeboarded gables with exposed rafter ends and mullioned windows with a Tudor style hoodmould. It has significant presence in the streetscape in a central position in Birnam where a number of buildings are designed using a similar picturesque architectural style.

In our current state of knowledge it continues to meet the criteria for listing.

The two rear wings to the southwest of the building were added in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and are not considered of special interest in listing terms at the time of this review. They are proposed to be excluded from this listing.

## 5. Category of Listing

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**Categories of listing are non-statutory and buildings are assigned a category (A, B or C) according** to their relative importance following the assessment against the criteria for listing.

Category definitions are found at: [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/heritage/historicandlistedbuildings/listing](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/heritage/historicandlistedbuildings/listing)

Category C denotes buildings of local importance; lesser examples of any period, style, or building type, as originally constructed or moderately altered; and simple, traditional buildings that group well with other listed buildings. In comparison to other drill halls of a similar date the interest of the Armoury House is considered to be of local rather than regional importance. Therefore category C is the more appropriate category of listing for this building.

## 6. Other Information

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The details of the construction and opening of this hall were not reported in newspapers as this event was overshadowed by what was termed at the time 'the Birnam Volunteers Scandal' in 1894. This was caused by a complaint by the sergeants of the Birnam volunteers about the company being incorrectly charged for expenses relating to the uniform of pipers to be paid from the capitation grant. The commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Menzies, believed the men were in the wrong and degraded them to the ranks. However, after an appeal to higher authorities, the men were exonerated and reinstated.

## 7. References

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Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 226772.

### Maps

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1898, published 1900) Perth and Clackmannanshire 062.09 (includes: Little Dunkeld). 25 inches to the mile. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Southampton: Ordnance Survey

### Printed Sources

Dundee Courier (20 June 1894) p.5.

Dundee Courier (23 June 1894) p.6.

Dundee Courier (4 July 1894) p.3.

Dundee Courier (29 October 1894) p.3.

Dundee Courier (12 December 1895) p.5.

Dundee Courier (2 December 1896) p.5.

Dundee Courier (14 August 1897) p.8.

Dundee Courier (11 May 1898) p.7.



Dundee Courier (30 January 1899) p.6.

Dundee Evening Telegraph (12 July 1894) p.2.

Historic Environment Scotland (2016) Scotland's Drill Halls Preliminary Report. Unpublished.

Osborne, M. (2006) *Always ready: Drill Halls of Britain's Volunteer Force*. Partizan Press. p.268.

## Online Sources

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. *Andrew Grainger Heiton* at [http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect\\_full.php?id=201032](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201032) [accessed 30/04/2016].

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\* This assessment is based on our current state of knowledge and has been prepared for the purpose of consultation or to provide a view on the special interest of a building. This assessment is a consultation document and will form the basis of any new or updated listed building record should the structure be listed. The content of this assessment may change to take into account further information received as a result of the consultation process.

\*\* A building may be found to meet the listing criteria but in some circumstances may not be added to the list. See 'When might Historic Environment Scotland list a building' at <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/what-is-listing/>