

Case information

Case ID	300016923
File Reference	HGH/B/GE/75
Name of Site	15, 17, 19 Seafield Street and The Square, Seafield Arms Hotel and Town Hall

Local Authority	Moray Council		
National Grid Reference	NJ 51274 67105 and NJ 51289 67092		
Designation No. (if any)	LB23743		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	A
Case Type	Amendment		

Received/Start Date	11/07/2014
Decision Date	15/10/2015

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel continues to meet the criteria for listing. The statutory listing address and the listed building record has been amended. The category of listing has changed from A to B.

Proposed Statutory address	Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel, 15, 17, and 19 Seafield Street and The Square, excluding both 2-storey and attic wings adjoining north elevation of hotel, Cullen
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2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel was listed at category A in 1972. Cullen Burgh, where this building is situated, was resurveyed in 1989 and the listed building record was updated at this time. There is no other known review of this listing.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals. The Seafield Arms Hotel was closed circa 2011 and was sold in 2014.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The Seafield Arms Hotel was visited on 23/07/2014, and the exterior and interior of the hotel and the town hall were seen at this visit.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

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

The designation criteria are found in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), pp. 71-85. <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/shep-dec2011.pdf>

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria*

Seafield Arms Hotel and Town Hall, 15, 17, 19 Seafield Street and The Square, Cullen

1. Description

William Robertson, 1822-23; John Fowlie, 1899-1900, additions to town hall (facing The Square), repaired after fire by George Legg between 1951-53. 2-storey, L-plan corner range comprising 3-bay bowed corner flanked by 5 ranges with advanced outer bays, facing Seafield Street (hotel) and The Square (town hall). Further 2-storey, 5-bay stable court frontage extending to east along Seafield Street. 1899-1900 4-bay addition to The Square elevation. 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 1822-23 (rebuilt and remodelled circa 1972) and late 19th century (remodelled circa 1972) 2-storey and attic, rectangular plan wings adjoining the rear (north) elevation of the hotel.

Harled with ashlar dressings and margins. Ashlar faced bowed pivotal corner angle with 3 segmental-headed entrances in ground floor approached by curved flight of steps and 1st floor windows set in round-headed shallow recesses. 1st floor windows in advanced bays are set in shallow round-headed ashlar recesses, all other 1st floor windows have bracketed cornices. Continuous band course between ground and 1st floor. Deep ashlar corniced eaves band and blocking course, stepped above advanced bays and supporting Seafield coat of arms at pivotal angle bay. Blocking course removed at Seafield Street frontage to accommodate 4 mid-20th century piended dormers. Wide segmental-headed centre entrance to hotel in Seafield Street; similar entrance in original 5-bay frontage facing The Square (but no longer in centre of facade owing to additions). Former stable court fronts Seafield Street at east; centre tall basket-arched entrance flanked by tripartite windows in shallow recessed bays; small 1st floor (former loft) windows, the centre 3 are oval. Single storey with dormered attic and 2-storey and attic wings adjoining to north elevation of stable court range.

Predominantly 12-pane glazing pattern in timber frames. Pitched slate roof with projecting eaves, bowed at corner. Corrugated asbestos roof (1951-3) with shallow pitch to town hall. Coped ridge stacks.

Interiors, seen in 2014, largely date to circa 1951-3 in town hall and circa 1972 in hotel, some 19th century decorative detailing evident. 1st floor council chamber in bowed corner with 1822 curved panelled doors in reeded doorpieces and plaster ceiling rosette. Council chamber reached by 1951-3 imperial staircase with surviving Greek key-pattern dado and banding to top light, and niche with marble statue of Venus. All other rooms in town hall re-modelled in 1951-3. The hotel has a 19th century dog-leg staircase with decorative cast iron balustrade and southeast facing lounge at 1st floor with beaded panelled window shutters and moulded door cases.

2. Assessment Against the Listing Criteria (SHEP, 2011) pp74-75

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]

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

Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel was built in 1822-23 to designs by William Robertson. It was constructed as part of the significant early 19th improvements to the burgh, instigated by the Earl of Seafield. The Earl of Seafield owned much of the parish of Cullen and in 1811 commissioned George MacWilliam to design a plan for the New Town of Cullen. The New Town followed a typical 'planned town' layout popularised in the late 18th and early 19th century, with a regular grid pattern arranged around a central square. It was positioned on elevated ground overlooking Cullen Seatown and has a commanding view of the Moray Firth.

Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel was designed as a set piece, with separate entrances for the town hall and hotel (or coaching inn). It is presumed that the town hall and hotel were managed/owned separately when the building was completed. The town hall had a council-room, courtroom and assembly room. The inn included a post office and stables. It was funded by the Earl of Seafield at a cost £3,000. The *New Statistical Account*, written in 1842 describes it as 'the only modern building deserving of notice...and add much to the appearance of the town'.

Seafield Street was part of the turnpike road between Banff and Fochabers and there was a daily stagecoach between Elgin and Banff. The Seafield Arms Hotel was the principal inn in the burgh and is described in the *New Statistical Account* as 'a handsome and commodious building, and inferior to none on the route from Aberdeen to Inverness'.

On the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (published 1871) the footprint of the buildings comprise an L-plan range to the corner of Seafield Street and The Square (town hall and inn) with a range of outbuildings to the rear, and a stable range to the east arranged around a square courtyard and with pend access to Seafield Street. At the end of the 19th century the town hall was considered too small, and after purchasing the adjoining plot to the north of the square and after considerable consultation, John Fowlie, architect to Seafield estates, designed the additional 4-bay extension. This extension is shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map (published 1904). This map also shows a rectangular plan addition to the rear of the hotel. This was extended to the outbuildings by the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map (published 1938). After 1938 the rear wing of the former stable court was demolished.

Information from the owner indicates that the 1822 wing was largely demolished and rebuilt in concrete blockwork and the late 19th century wing was remodelled, circa

1972 to designs by Seafield Builders Ltd. Architectural Department. The interior decorative scheme of the hotel may date from this time.

During the Second World War (and possibly earlier) the town hall was used as a cinema. During a performance in 1942 the projection box caught fire and the building was severely damaged. From information formerly held at Moray District Council Record Office it was rebuilt circa 1951-3. A 1952 account in *The Builder* attributes this work to George Legg and the remodelling cost £12,000. As part of this work the roof line was lowered and a square lantern (evident in a photograph held in the Cullen, Deskford and Portknockie Heritage Group's Collection) was removed. The interior decoration of the town hall largely dates to this remodelling.

Prior to developments of the early 19th century, burgh judicial functions, were commonly housed in a single building: the tolbooth or town house. Town houses were the centre of local administration and they served as meeting places for councils and courts, a place to keep records and to collect taxes and customs, and for the imprisonment of suspected criminals.

By the 19th century there was an increase in the separation of civic, administrative and penal functions and Town and County buildings were constructed in larger burghs. Town houses continued to be constructed, particularly in smaller burghs, and about one third of the surviving town houses were built or rebuilt in the first third of the 19th century. These town houses would have a shared chamber for civic and judicial functions, and many remained in use for burgh administration until the local government reorganisation of 1975.

Town houses are significant examples of our civic architecture as well as being an important part of our social and cultural history. Often designed by leading architects they are typically constructed from high quality materials and form a focal point in the streetscapes of our towns and cities. Cullen Town House and Hotel is no exception to this and is described in the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland's book '*Tolbooth and Townhouses*' as 'In common with many of the building in the town...it was given special emphasis by its sophisticated architectural details' (p.62). The inclusion of a hotel (or coaching inn) in the design of a town hall is very unusual and in our current state of knowledge this is the only known town hall which was designed with an adjoining hotel.

Early 19th century town houses are not a rare building type and can be found across Scotland. In smaller burghs they can often be among the most prominent buildings, however their architectural interest and quality can vary. Examples of listed town houses of a similar date and out with major cities include Cupar (1815-18) which is listed at category A, and Newburgh (1808-10), Strichen (1816) and Nairn (1818-19), which are listed at category B.

Cullen Town House and Seafield Arms Hotel is a well-detailed example of an early 19th century civic building and burgh coaching inn, with a number of good classical architectural details to its principal elevation and main interior spaces (see *Architectural or Historic Interest* section below), and is an integral component of this

early 19th century planned town. It has been altered and extended to some degree and may be considered a building of regional significance.

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

Town houses were often highly decorated buildings in keeping with their important civic status. The interior of the town house largely dates to 1951-3, though some details from the 19th century decorative scheme are evident, including the timber and plasterwork to the 1st floor council chamber. The 1823 building contract, held at the National Archives of Scotland, indicates that ashlar masonry was reused, in particular for the staircase, from Rannas House near Rathven (listed at category B). Rannas was the ancestral home of the Hay's of Rannas and when Andrew Hay, the last of the line, died in 1789 the property was bought by the Earl of Seafield. The timberwork to the stair has been renewed, following the fire.

The interior of the hotel was substantially remodelled in the late 20th century and only some 19th century details survive (a stone staircase with cast iron balustrade and panelled window shutters and a moulded door surround case to the 1st floor lounge). Such detailing is typical for its early 19th century date.

Plan form

The interior plan form of the town hall and Seafield Arms Hotel predominantly dates from the mid-20th century and late 20th century remodelling of the properties to the extent that the 1822 plan form is largely no longer discernible, with the exception of principal components, such as the main staircases and entrance vestibules. The circular plan of the entrance vestibule, staircase and 1st floor council chamber are unusual and distinctive and make good use of the prominent bowed corner.

Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality

Late 18th and 19th century town houses are typically classical in design as an appropriate indication of the important civic status of this building type. Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel is no exception to with classical proportions and detailing including bracketed and corniced 1st floor windows, band courses, and an armorial panel with Seafield arms which is understood to have been reused from the Cullen gateway.

The 1823 building contract specified that the building was to be harled with polished freestone to the bowed corner and the 4 window recesses. With the exception of the roofline (which was altered following a fire) the street elevation remains largely unaltered since the late 19th century when the extension to the town hall was added. By the early 17th century it was obligation of every burgh to have a clock to call meetings and public events and to mark rising time and curfews. Typically town houses would have a landmark tower or steeple to house the clock, as well as a stylistic reference to the earlier tollbooth. At Cullen the clock is positioned in the glazing of the central window of the bowed corner, with a face to the exterior and interior. This is appropriate for the scale and proportion of the building in its setting rather than a tower.

William Robertson (1786-1841) was born in Lonmay, Aberdeenshire and established his own architectural practice in Elgin around 1823. His work was wide ranging including churches, public buildings and domestic architecture. Robertson worked for the Seafield Estate, Cullen and designed numerous buildings in Cullen, including Cullen Harbour (1834), most of the buildings around The Square around 1823, as well as villas around the same time.

The late 19th century wing adjoining the rear (north) elevation of the hotel is a later addition to the building and has been significantly altered externally and internally. Information from the owner indicates that the 1822-3 wing, to the rear of the stablecourt elevation, was largely demolished and rebuilt in concrete blockwork; these wings are not considered to be of special interest in listing terms at the time of the listing review.

Setting

Town houses form a focal point in the streetscapes of our towns and cities and Cullen Town House with its integral coaching inn is no exception to this as it is located on a prominent corner site of the central square in Cullen town centre. The setting of the building has not been greatly altered since 1823 with most of the buildings on The Square dating from this time. This includes those to the other prominent corners which are understood to be designed by William Robertson in 1823 and all have bowed corners.

Regional variations

None known at present.

2.3 Close Historical Associations

None known at present.

3. Working with the Principles of Listing (SHEP 2011, p76)

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 Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel has particular interest under a, b and d.

- a. A well-detailed example of an early 19th century town house and unusually including an integral burgh coaching inn which has good classical details and proportions to its principal elevation and a distinctive council chamber.
- b. It is an important civic building and key component of the early 19th century new town of Cullen which is centred around the square, and which forms of good grouping with other buildings of a similar date on the square.

d. With the exception of the roofline the principal street elevations remain largely unaltered since the late 19th century when the extension to the town hall was added. However, the interior has been comprehensively altered.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel is a well-detailed example of an early 19th century civic building and a very unusual example of such designed with an integral coaching inn. The building is designed by a local architect, William Robertson and is classically proportioned with good architectural details, notably the bowed corner articulated in ashlar and surmounted by the carved coat of arms. Located on a prominent corner site on the central square in Cullen town centre, this building has significant streetscape presence in the new town of Cullen. The decorative scheme and the interior plan form has been altered significantly, but retains some good 19th century details, including the distinctive circular council chamber, which has its early 19th century decorative timber and plasterwork. In our current state of knowledge it continues to meet the criteria for listing.

The late 19th century wing adjoining the rear (north) elevation of the hotel is a later addition to the building and has been significantly altered externally and internally and the 1822-23 wing was largely rebuilt and remodelled circa 1972. These wings are not considered to be of special interest in listing terms at the time of the listing review.

5. Category of Listing

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

The interest of Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel is as a well-detailed example of an early 19th century civic building with integral coaching inn, which is an important and prominent building in Cullen. When compared with town houses of a similar date and scale, and in particularly those listed at category A, its classical architectural arrangement and proportions are in keeping with the planned town arrangement of Cullen but are not considered to be outstanding in terms of their national significance. The building has also been altered and has lost much of its early 19th century interior decorative scheme. Category B denotes building of regional or more than local importance, and major examples of some particular period, style or building which type which may have been altered. Therefore category B is considered the most appropriate category of listing for Cullen Town Hall and Seafield Arms Hotel.

6. Other Information

Cullen New Town replaced an irregular old town, which was demolished to accommodate improvements at Cullen House, with only Cullen Old Church surviving as a remnant. The 17th century burgh cross (listed at B) was moved to Castle Hill circa 1820 and later to its present location on the Square.

7. References

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland:
<http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/canmore.html> CANMORE ID 17959.

New Statistical Account (1842) *Cullen, County of Banff*. Vol. 13. pp.328, 354.

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1866, published 1871) Banff Sheet III.5 (Cullen). 1st Edition. 25 inches to the mile. London: Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1902, published 1904) Banffshire 003.05 (includes: Cullen; Rathven). 2nd Edition. 25 inches to the mile. London: Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1938, published 1949) Banffshire Sheet III.NW (includes: Cullen; Fordyce). 3rd Edition. 6 inches to the mile. London: Ordnance Survey.

Cramond, W (1904) *Annals of Cullen* p.92

Banffshire Advertiser (13 April 1899, p.6; 15 June 1899; 1 Nov 1900)

National Archives of Scotland. GD248/784/5/56 (Specifications 1823).

Further information regarding fire and repairs thereafter (1951-3) courtesy of Moray District Record Office.

The Builder (21 November 1952) p.768

Private Collection. *Drawing number 472/4, Proposed alterations and additions to Seafield Arms Hotel (October 1972)*.

Beaton, E. (1984) *William Robertson 1786-1841: Architect In Elgin*. Inverness: Inverness Architectural Association. pp.7, 26.

McKean, C. (1987) *The District of Moray: An Illustrated Architectural Guide*. Edinburgh: Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland. pp.128-129.

Scottish Cinemas and Theatres Project. *Cullen Cinema* at <http://www.scottishcinemas.org.uk/scotland/cullen.html> (accessed 04/03/2015).

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. *William Robertson* at http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201792 (accessed 04/03/2015).

Further information courtesy of Cullen, Deskford and Portknockie Heritage Group (2014) and owner (2015).

Date of Assessment	11 August 2015
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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 www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/historicandlistedbuildings/whatwelist