

Case information

Case ID	300009928		
File Reference	AMJ/9279/1/1		
Name of Site	Crichton Castle		
Local Authority	Midlothian		
National Grid Reference	NT 38008 61118		
Designation No. (if any)	SM 90084		
Designation Type	Scheduled monument	Current Category of Listing	A
Case Type	Amendment		
Received/Start Date	01/07/2014		
Decision Date	19/11/2015		

1. Decision

Amend: Update to entry in the Schedule

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

Crichton Castle is a guardianship property in the care of Scottish Ministers and is scheduled under section 1 (2) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

There have been no previous amendments to the entry in the Schedule.

Crichton Castle is currently also listed at Category A but is proposed for de-listing as part of the dual designations project.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals affecting the site.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The monument was assessed for amendment as part of the S17 East 2014 scheduling project and visited on 02 October 2014.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The monument was assessed for scheduling against the criteria for determining national importance and found to meet the criteria (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>

3.3 Other considerations

The monument is a guardianship property in the care of Scottish Ministers.

There is a significant benefit in amending the existing scheduled monument designation. It will provide an up-to-date legal document and map and allow the monument to be accurately defined on the ground. It will also ensure that an appropriate area is designated. The boundary changes are an increase in the size of the scheduled area to encompass important components of the site such as a rampart downslope to the west, and a quarry to the south east. These lie outwith the present scheduled area.

Scheduling, rather than listing, is the most appropriate designation to secure the preservation of the monument. It is being delisted in tandem with the amended scheduling.

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria*

SM 13585 Crichton Castle

1. Description

The monument is a medieval courtyard castle, begun around AD 1400 and developed in phases during the 15th and 16th centuries. The castle occupies a terrace part way down a W-facing slope, overlooking the valley of a small burn that flows from S to N. It stands 175m above sea level, about 500m S of Crichton Kirk.

The earliest part is a tower at the centre of the E Range, which was originally a tower-house built around AD 1400. A 15th-century hall in the S range was built by William Crichton, Chancellor of Scotland under James II. The W range incorporates kitchens and chambers of the 15th and 16th centuries, while the N range is notable for a remarkable lodging built in the 1580s by the 5th Earl of Bothwell, who transformed the castle into a Renaissance palace. A two-storey building interpreted as a stable block lies to the S of the castle, where other low building remains are visible. A rampart lies downslope to the W of the castle and a variety of earthworks are visible on the rising ground to the E. The stone for the castle was won from quarries sited to the ESE and SSE of the main building.

The scheduled area is irregular on plan, to include the remains of the castle and an area around it in which evidence for the castle's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map. On the E side, the scheduling extends up to but excludes a post-and-wire fence. The scheduling also excludes the above-ground elements of other post-and-wire fences and gates that lie within the scheduled area. The scheduling excludes the above-ground elements of all modern structures, such as hand rails, barriers, window grills, signage, displays, the ticket office, cupboards and sheds, and electrical apparatus. The monument was first scheduled in 1921. The present amendment provides scheduling documents to modern standards.

2. Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria (SHEP 2011, 71-73**)

* This assessment is based on our current state of knowledge. It will form the basis of any new or updated scheduled monument record.
** A monument may be found to meet the scheduling criteria but in some circumstances may not be added to the Schedule. The purpose and implications of scheduling are issues that require to be taken into account when assessing monuments for scheduling. Scheduling may not be the only, or the most appropriate, mechanism to secure the future of all sites, even those that may otherwise meet the criteria.

Cultural significance

Characteristic	Assessment
Intrinsic	
Condition in which monument survives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The monument is a well-preserved castle. Many of the walls survive to wallhead or close to wallhead height and the masonry is in very good condition. There is also excellent potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive in good condition, in the castle footprint and in the area around the buildings. Features including trackways

	and platforms survive as earthworks to the E of the castle, and a rampart survives as a significant earthwork downslope to the W.
Archaeological, scientific, technological or other interest or research potential of the monument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crichton Castle has a very high degree of interest and research potential, both for architectural and archaeological features above the ground, and for buried archaeological remains. • Significant above ground features include the early tower house of the late 14th century with alternate timber and vaulted floors; the 15th-century hall range with hooded fireplace and stone cornice, approached by a fine stair with arched doorway at its head; and the late 16th-century N range, an exotic insertion with innovative scale-and-platt staircase. • Researchers regard this N range as the architectural highlight of Crichton. The façade is covered with diamond faceted ashlar and is carried on 16-faceted columns with sub-Corinthian capitals. • The detached block to the S, interpreted as a stable block, is remarkable for its survival, its scale, and details such as the window over the entrance in the shape of a horse shoe. • There is also very significant potential for the survival of buried features or structures. Very little modern archaeological work has been conducted, but excavations in 1985 in the tower house and along the S wall of the N range revealed the SE corner of the late 14th-century hall block, illustrating the potential of the castle footprint. Outside, there is strong potential for the survival of ancillary buildings, one of whose footings is visible to the S, and for a range of other remains including pits and middens, ditches and ditch fills, and siege works or temporary structures. These can be expected to contain artefacts and ecofacts with the potential to provide information about daily life and economy, diet, trade and exchange, and the use of foods and artefacts in expressing social status. The archaeological sensitivity is likely to be particularly high because there is no evidence that the site has seen major re-use or disturbance since the 17th century.
Apparent developmental sequence of monument (either long or short may provide insights of importance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the main components of the monument's significance is the clear development sequence from the late 14th century to the 16th century, which reveals how successive owners changed and adapted the accommodation, creating impressive new structures and spaces, in response to, or sometimes leading, architectural taste and fashion. • Buried deposits may help to increase our knowledge of the duration and character of occupation, and about any use of the site before the late 14th century.
Original or subsequent functions of the monument and its parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The castle served as a fortified dwelling for some of the most powerful individuals in Scotland in the 14th to 16th centuries. It provided accommodation and security, but it also served to reflect the wealth, power and sometimes innovative tastes of its owners. • The castle was recorded as being 'demolished' in 1441 and was besieged and looted in 1559. Some of the archaeological remains may relate to these sieges.

Contextual	
Present rarity or representativeness of all or any part of the monument, assessed against knowledge of the archaeology of Scotland and of the region in which the monument occurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crichton is a fine and important example of a major late 14th- and 15th-century castle. • However, the late 16th-century work is particularly rare and unusual. Researchers regard the design of the N range as revolutionary and a key milestone in the adoption of Renaissance ideas in Scottish architecture.
Relationship of the monument to other monuments of the same or related classes or period, or to features or monuments in the vicinity. (Particularly important for monuments forming part of a widespread but varied class)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The early tower house is comparable to others at Craigmillar Castle, Edinburgh and Stonepath Tower, East Lothian. All show a very solid construction and the use of alternate timber and vaulted floors. The design contrasts with the later U-plan keep of nearby Borthwick Castle built in c 1430. • The S range with hall and entrance beneath resembles the E range at Linlithgow Palace. • The insertion of important 16th-century buildings into earlier residences is paralleled at Linlithgow Palace and Falkland Palace. • From the late 15th century, Crichton was held by the Hepburns, and can be compared to other Hepburn residences such as Hailes Castle in East Lothian.
Relationship of the monument and its parts with its wider landscape and setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crichton Castle would have been a very imposing building in the medieval landscape, occupying a valley-side location that gives the castle considerable prominence when viewed from the N, W and S.
Associative	
Historical, cultural and social influences that have affected the form and fabric of the monument, and vice versa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The monument reflects varied influences on Scottish architecture over two centuries. The massive late 14th century tower reflects contemporary society and the need for security as well as imposing residence. The late 16th-century buildings are particularly important for embodying the influence of the Renaissance, particularly reflecting structures which the fifth Earl of Bothwell had seen in Spain and Italy in 1580-81.
Aesthetic attributes of the monument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The monument is a romantic but imposing ruin in the landscape. Its immediate surroundings comprise rough grazing and naturally regenerated woodland, giving the site a high degree of pastoral charm.
Significance in the national consciousness or to people who use or have used the monument, or descendants of such people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castles and romantic ruins such as this have a particularly significant place in the national consciousness. This castle is valued today by the owner, the local community and numerous visitors. Its high significance to contemporary people is reflected in its status as a guardianship site in the care of Scottish Ministers.
Associations the monument has with historical, traditional or artistic characters or events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The castle has a wealth of associations with prominent historical characters and events. The 15th-century S range was erected by William de Crichton, Chancellor under James II. Later, in 1561, the castle was the venue for the marriage of Lord John Stewart and Lady Janet Hepburn, attended by the Queen and much of her court. In March 1586, the fifth Earl of Bothwell entertained his cousin, James VI, at Crichton.

Assessment of national importance

Criteria	Assessment
Its inherent capability or	The monument has considerable potential to add significantly to

potential to make a significant addition to the understanding or appreciation of the past	understanding of late medieval and post-medieval domestic fortified dwellings, their architecture, construction, maintenance, development and abandonment. The upstanding buildings retain their structural and decorative characteristics to a marked degree, incorporating may fine and significant architectural features. There is also very high potential for the survival of important buried archaeological remains, including structures within and around the castle and artefacts and palaeoenvironmental evidence that can enhance our understanding of how such buildings functioned, as well as adding to knowledge of the daily domestic life of the inhabitants and their society and economy. The monument would have been a highly prominent part of the contemporary landscape during its occupation and remains a significant feature of the modern landscape. Because of the prominence of its owners, there is rich potential for documentary records to add to understanding of the castle and its functions. Our understanding of the form, function and character of castles in E Scotland would be diminished if this monument were lost or damaged. Ruined castles have a significant place in the national consciousness and, as a property in the care of Scottish Ministers, Crichton is visited and valued by large numbers of people.
Its retention of the structural, decorative or field characteristics of its kind to a marked degree	
Its contribution, or the contribution of its class, to today's landscape and/or the historic landscape	
The quality and extent of any documentation or association that adds to the understanding of the monument or its context	
The diminution of the potential of a particular class or classes of monument to contribute to an understanding of the past, should the monument be lost or damaged	
Its place in the national consciousness [a factor that may be considered in support of other factors]	

References

RCAHMS records the monument as NT36SE 7. The Midlothian Historic Environment Record reference is MEL8502.

Lewis, J, 1997 'Excavations at Crichton Castle, Midlothian', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, **127**, 697-705.

MacGibbon, D and Ross, T 1887-92 The castellated and domestic architecture of Scotland from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries, vol 1, 208-221.

RCAHMS, 1929, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland. Tenth Report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the Counties of Midlothian and West Lothian. Edinburgh. 47-51, No 56.