

## Case information

<b>Case ID</b>	300017537		
<b>File Reference</b>	HGH/B/SA/167		
<b>Name of Site</b>	The Smiddy and Forge Cottage, Strachur		
<b>Local Authority</b>	Argyll and Bute Council		
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	NN 09664 01371		
<b>Designation No. (if any)</b>	LB 18781		
<b>Designation Type</b>	Listed Building	<b>Current Category of Listing</b>	B
<b>Case Type</b>	Amendment		
<b>Received/Start Date</b>	20/10/2015		
<b>Decision Date</b>	10/12/2015		

## 1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, The Smiddy continues to meet the criteria for listing at category B. Forge Cottage is not considered to meet the criteria for listing. The statutory listing address and the listed building record has been amended.

<b>Current Statutory Address</b>	The Smiddy
<b>Proposed Statutory address</b>	Strachur Smiddy Museum excluding Forge Cottage and shop to rear of Forge Cottage, Strachur

## 2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

### 2.1 Designation Background

Strachur Parish was resurveyed in 1994 and in 2006 as part of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs Resurvey. The Smiddy (now known as Strachur Smiddy Museum) was listed at category B in 1994. The listed building record for the smiddy mentions

the former post office (now Forge Cottage) adjoining The Smiddy but does not describe it. There is no known previous assessment of Forge Cottage for listing.

On 4 June 2015, a 'Certificate of Intention Not To List' (COINTL) application was received for Forge Cottage. On 13 July 2015, Argyll and Bute Council advised that Forge Cottage was considered as part of the curtilage of The Smiddy.

## 2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

## 3. Assessment

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### 3.1 Assessment information

The Smiddy and Forge Cottage were visited on 25 June 2015. The exterior and interior of The Smiddy and Forge Cottage were seen.

### 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\*

### Strachur Smiddy Museum excluding Forge Cottage and shop to rear of Forge Cottage, Strachur

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#### 1. Description

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The Smiddy:

Strachur Smiddy, erected around 1790, is a largely intact and operational blacksmith's shop including a forge and two furnaces (operating as Strachur Smiddy Museum since 1997). In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing: Forge Cottage and the shop adjoining the rear of Forge Cottage.

The Smiddy is a single-storey, one-room building, constructed of lime-washed rubble with its gable end facing the road. It has a large, squat, gable-end chimney stack with thackstane, low eaves and a grey slate roof. There is a timber boarded half-door to the northwest elevation with a small-pane fixed window to the left. There is a stone set between the door and window with a small cast iron loop for tying horses. There is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century lean-to section with corrugated-iron roof to the rear (southeast) elevation.

The interior, seen in 2015, is a single room with a rubble forge with two furnaces and two pairs of bellows. The floor is partly cobbled. Non-fixtures and fittings that are part of the museum collection include early boring equipment suspended from the rafters, a fire extinguisher, an anvil and a large collection of smaller blacksmith and farrier tools.

Forge Cottage:

Probably early 19<sup>th</sup> century with later additions and alterations. Forge Cottage is a single storey and attic, 3-bay dwelling house (used as a former post office) with a slightly lower additional bay to the right. There are 3 dormer windows breaking the eaves to the front elevation and one dormer window to the rear elevation. There are coped chimney stacks and a grey slate roof. The windows and doors are plastic replacements. The interior, seen in 2015, has been refurbished after 1970 and contains no features of special architectural or historic interest.

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

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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 Smiddy and Forge Cottage are adjoining buildings sited on the main thoroughfare through the 'clachan' village of Strachur, situated near Loch Fyne at the north western part of the Cowal Peninsula in Argyll. The Strachur Smiddy was first established around 1790, the period when the Laird of Strachur, General Campbell, was building a large house with parkland to the north of the village. His tradesmens' houses in the village were improved as part of these works with stone walls and slate roofs. Early buildings in Strachur include the Strachan Parish Church (listed at category B) built in 1789, and the Clachan Inn (listed as 'Strachur Hall' at category B).

The intensification of farming methods across Scotland during the 18<sup>th</sup> century promoted the improvement of estate workers housing conditions in order to increase efficiency and foster better working. New settlements or estate villages were established, or existing clachans were improved. The house type was commonly a single storey, symmetrical plan cottage. Towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, estate improvement cottages in rural areas were typically built next to existing older buildings in pairs or rows, sometimes presenting their gable-ends to the road.

Strachur Smiddy is prominently located beside the main thoroughfare through the village with its gable end orientated towards the road. A building at this location is marked as a 'post office' and 'smithy' on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey, surveyed 1866 and published 1870. The smiddy fell out of use in 1950, before becoming a working museum in 1997. The plan form of the Smiddy has been altered by the 19<sup>th</sup> century lean-to extension to the rear. The lean-to addition to the rear of Forge Cottage is used as the Smiddy Museum reception and craft shop. Forge Cottage operated as a district post office from around 1840 to 1970 and was subsequently sold and converted to a single dwelling house (information courtesy of Strachur Smiddy Museum).

Largely intact examples of working blacksmith and farrier's forges from this period is rare, and there are relatively few listed examples that remain operational. Strachur Smiddy is of interest as a rare, largely intact and operational example of a blacksmith's forge. 'Etterick Smithy' on the Isle of Bute is another early 19<sup>th</sup> century example with an intact interior in the Argyll and Bute region and is also listed at category B (listing reference 45032). As an example of its industrial building type, The Smiddy, Strachur contributes to our understanding of rural life and industrial history in the Argyll and Bute region.

Forge Cottage is a standard example of rural early 19<sup>th</sup> century cottage architecture, itself a prolific building type, which has been altered significantly after 1970 (see architectural and historic interest below). Its former use as a post office is not directly evidenced in the physical fabric and is not considered of special interest for its former use.

## 2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

### *Interior*

Smiddy: The comprehensively intact, working blacksmith forge interior is a particularly distinguishing feature of Strachur Smiddy.

Forge Cottage: In listing terms there is no interest under this heading because there are no internal features of special interest evident at Forge Cottage. The interior has been remodelled and refurbished.

### **Plan form**

Smiddy: A large single space is typical for the purpose of the work of a blacksmith.

Forge Cottage: The interior plan form has been altered as part of its various conversions over the years, with an enlarged floor space to the principal room on the ground floor and has no special interest in listing terms.

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

The Smiddy: The building is a good example of a simple 18<sup>th</sup> century cottage building and includes early features such the gable end facing the road and intact thackstone beneath the chimney stack, indicating that the building had a thatched roof. The close proximity of the single window to the low eaves also evidences building techniques of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century in Scotland.

Forge Cottage: A photograph of the post office circa 1900 shows that the former single storey wing to the right has been raised to attic level and the arrangement of ground floor openings have been altered, with a window converted to a second door before 1900 and the central door converted to a window during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Decorative barge boards and finials to dormer windows, shown in the 1900 photograph, are no longer evident. The timber windows and doors have been replaced with plastic units.

### **Setting**

The Smiddy and Forge Cottage are part of a small run of circa 1800 and later buildings. Whilst these buildings form a group, interest in listing terms has been lessened by the extensive later alterations to Forge Cottage.

Following the expansion of Strachur village during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the setting of The Smiddy and Forge Cottage has been altered by late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing and industrial development in the immediate surrounding setting. Newer housing has been built by the Forestry Commission for staff working in nearby Glenbranter Forest. The village is described by F.A. Walker, in the book '*Buildings of Scotland – Argyll and Bute*' (published 2000) as 'almost overwhelmed by workshop chaos' (p.466).

### **Regional variations**

There are no known regional variations

## **2.3 Close Historical Associations**

There are no known historical associations of national significance at present.

The Smiddy and the former post office (Forge Cottage) have associations with the local Montgomery family of tradesmen. Four generations of the Montgomery family

have managed the Smiddy between 1790 and 1950, and the family ran the post office between 1840 and 1970.

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

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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 Smiddy has particular interest under a, c and d.

- a. The Smiddy is a rare and largely unaltered survival of a working blacksmith forge with a forge, furnace and bellows to the interior.
- c. The Smiddy forms part of a group of historic buildings which are among the earliest surviving in the village.
- d. The interior of the smiddy, with its furnaces, bellows and other blacksmith and farrier equipment, has not changed significantly since it was closed in 1950 and opened as a museum in 1997. It demonstrates rural life and industry in Scotland during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

When working with the principles of listing Forge Cottage has no particular interest under a, b, c or d.

Forge Cottage is a standard example of rural early 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture which has been extensively altered.

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

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Strachur Smiddy is a rare, largely intact and operational example of a blacksmith's forge, now operating as a local museum. The interior retains many early 19<sup>th</sup> century fixtures and fittings. The Smiddy contributes to our understanding of rural industrial history in Scotland more widely.

In our current state of knowledge The Smiddy is considered to continue to meet the criteria for listing.

Forge Cottage is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century traditional dwelling that has been altered and remodelled following its change of use to and from a post office. There are no distinguishing features to set it apart as an example of early 19<sup>th</sup> century rural building in Scotland. In our current state of knowledge, Forge Cottage is not considered to meet the criteria for listing and should be excluded from the listing of The Smiddy.

## 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 B denotes buildings of regional or more than local importance; or major examples of some particular period, style or building type, which may have been altered. As a rare, working example of its early industrial building type, The Smiddy is considered to continue to meet the criteria for listing at category B.

## 6. Other Information

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N/A

## 7. References

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Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID: 82460

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1866, published 1870) Argyllshire. 6 inches to the mile. 1st Edition. London: Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1897, published 1900) Argyllshire. 6 inches to the mile. 2nd Edition. London: Ordnance Survey.

Groome F. (1896) *A Gazetteer of Scotland*. p. 404 at <http://www.gazetteerofscotland.org.uk/scotland/gazettr.htm> [Accessed 28 October 2015]

Walker F.A. (2000) *The Buildings Of Scotland – Argyll and Bute*. London: Penguin Books Ltd. p.466

Carruthers A. and Frew J. (2003) 'Small Houses and Cottages' in *Scotland's Buildings – Scottish Life and Society, A Compendium of Scottish Ethnology*. Scotland: Tuckwell Press, p.93

Further information courtesy of Strachur Smiddy Museum at <http://www.strachursmiddy.org.uk/index.php> [Accessed 28 October 2015]

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<b>Date of Assessment</b>	19/11/2015
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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](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/historicandlistedbuildings/whatwelist)