

Case information

Case ID	300017318		
File Reference	HGH/B/LA/494		
Name of Site	36 Newhaven Road, Edinburgh		
Local Authority	City of Edinburgh Council		
National Grid Reference	NT26059 75895		
Designation No. (if any)	LB27831		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	C
Case Type	Removal		
Received/Start Date	09/07/2015		
Decision Date	12/01/2016		

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, 36 Newhaven Road, Edinburgh continues to meet the criteria for listing. The statutory listing address and the listed building record will be amended.

Current Statutory Address	36 Newhaven Road
Proposed Statutory address	36, 38 and 40 Newhaven Road, excluding the single-storey section to rear, Edinburgh

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

36 Newhaven Road was listed at category C on 28/02/1975. Harbour Ward, Edinburgh, where this building is located was resurveyed in 1995.

There is no known review of this building since the resurvey.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

36 Newhaven Road was visited on 05/08/2015.

The interior and exterior were seen.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The building was found to meet the criteria for listing.

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*

36, 38 and 40 Newhaven Road, excluding the single-storey section to rear,
Edinburgh

1. Description

36-40 Newhaven Road is a 3-storey, 14-bay former tannery, built in 1879 and which has been converted to office use.

In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing: Single-storey section to rear.

The building is of squared and snecked rubble with smooth, raised margins and pebbledash render to the sides. There is a cill course and the ground and 1st floor windows have raised scalloped margins. The 2nd floor windows are set in rectangular panels, divided by ashlar jambs and have decorative Moorish-style iron grilles.

The windows are predominantly plate glass timber sash and case. The entrance is off-centre with a modern entrance door and pall stones at either side.

The interior was seen in 2015. The interior has been comprehensively altered for the purpose of office accommodation and there are no apparent 19th century features of interest.

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

36-40 Newhaven Road is the remaining section of a once extensive complex of tannery buildings on this site called Bonnington Tannery. Photographs from 1975, taken by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland show a substantial number of buildings at the site, with 36-40 Newhaven Road as the main building at street elevation. The photos show the date 1879 over the entrance door, together with the words 'Bonnington Tannery', but both the date and wording have been removed following alteration to the door and the panel above. Other alterations since 1975 include the removal of square vents on the roof

and timber louvred windows to the rear, which formerly provided ventilation to the upper level where hides would have been cured.

Tanning animal hides to produce leather is an old industry and there are surviving tanning pits from around the 14th century in Scotland. As the population expanded over the centuries and industrial processes developed, buildings dedicated to tanning were established in all areas of the country. During the course of the 19th century with increasing industrialization, tanning became a more prominent industry and many new tanneries were built. Some of these, particularly in urban areas, were very substantial complexes. 1879, when Bonnington Tannery was built, is not a particularly early date for a building from this industry. There was a tannery in Maybole, South Ayrshire, for example, from around 1860 and in Dalkeith, Midlothian from around 1850.

The process of tanning involved soaking hides in tanning pits for between 9-12 months. After being treated by curriers, the hides were dried, normally in the upper floors of the buildings. This process required ventilation and there were usually timber louvred windows on this level for this purpose; a distinctive feature which set tannery buildings apart from other industrial structures. Photos of now demolished tanneries on SCRAN (www.scran.ac.uk) suggest that most tanneries had these timber windows on the top floor. Examples include tanneries in Forfar, Ayr and Jedburgh (www.scran.ac.uk).

At Bonnington, historic photographs from 1975, taken by the then Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland show that 36-40 Newhaven Road had timber louvred windows to the rear and square vents on the roof, suggesting that in common with most other 19th century tanneries, the upper level was an area used for curing hides. The surviving decorative iron grilles on the top storey of the street elevation also indicate a ventilated upper storey, which demonstrates the function of the building as a tannery. They are in themselves a rare feature (see *Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality* below).

With the change in tanning processes and the introduction of alternative materials during the 20th century, most tanneries went out of business and many former tannery buildings were demolished. Only a few now survive in Scotland, and, of these, most have been altered. Examples of surviving former tannery buildings include Drumlasie in Aberdeenshire, (listed at category C) where the former tannery is a house and workshop and at Dalkeith, Midlothian (listed at category B), where the tannery is now converted into flats. Bonnington tannery closed around 1970 and has been converted into office accommodation.

Built in 1879, 36-40 Newhaven Road is not an early example of a tannery. The industry was well established by this time and many tanneries had been built throughout the country. However, as the majority of these tanneries have now been demolished, this building is a good surviving example of a rare building type. The use of atypical decorative metal grilles to provide ventilation is a feature of interest.

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

The interior was seen in 2015. This has been comprehensively altered to provide modern office space and there are no apparent features of special architectural interest.

Plan form

The rectangular plan-form is standard for an industrial building. The building has a long frontage which would have been necessary to accommodate the drying of hides on a large scale. Photographs from SCRAN (www.scran.ac.uk) show that the whole complex was a substantial size and this building was in proportion to the others on the site.

Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality

The use of stone as a building material for industrial buildings is not unusual in Scotland. The raised margins decoration around the windows provides some decorative element to the building, but the design is not exceptional.

The decorative Moorish-style iron grilles to the windows on the top storey street elevation may be unique to this building as by far the most common way to provide the necessary ventilation was by the use of timber louvres. Decorative iron grilles are not apparent on any other former tannery looked at for the purposes of this assessment. While more standard timber louvred vents provided ventilation to the rear of the building, the iron grilles provide a more decorative feature at the street elevation.

The pall stones on either side of the entrance door protected the stonework from carriage wheels, etc and date from the time that this was an open entrance way to the other sections of the tannery behind.

Setting

In the late 19th and early 20th century, the tannery was set within an industrial area that included a paper mill, corn and grain stores, a manure factory, iron works, goods yards and road, rail and tram links to other parts of Edinburgh (Ordnance Survey 1895; <http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/spw027356>). The area has since undergone change with the closure of these former industries and the conversion or demolition of former industrial buildings. The rail and tram lines no longer exist and there is now a mix of residential properties and businesses.

This remaining section of the former large tannery is an important reminder of the heavy industry that was once prevalent in this area and is a good representative of 19th century industry in Edinburgh. The 3-storey form of the building is in some way similar to the residential tenements in the street, but the ventilated upper storey marks it out as a former tannery.

Regional variations

There are no known regional variations.

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 36-40 Newhaven Road has particular interest under a and d.

- a. The building is a rare survivor of a once more prevalent building type and the iron grilles may be a unique decorative form of providing ventilation.
- d. The windows to the upper floor of the street elevation are of particular interest as the ventilated upper storey identify the building as a former tannery.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

36-40 Newhaven Road is a good survival of a tannery building, which itself is a rare building type. The decorative iron grilles to the top storey are perhaps a unique decorative response to the more common timber louvres seen on the upper storeys of other former tanneries. The building has been altered to provide modern office accommodation, but the ventilated upper storey is a visual reminder that this was a tannery building. Situated in an area of Edinburgh which once had a great deal of heavy industry, the former tannery building is a good representative of 19th century industrial expansion in Edinburgh and an important link to the district's past.

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

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

36-40 Newhaven Road is a small part of a once much larger tannery complex and has been altered to provide modern office accommodation. While the complex does not survive intact, the building is a good survival of a rare building type, in that there are now few surviving former tannery buildings. The iron grilles are also features of interest. Category C is the most appropriate category of listing in this case.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Canmore: <http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/canmore.html> CANMORE ID 51983

Ordnance Survey (1895), Edinburgh, Sheet 111.4.1. Large Scale Town Plan. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Hume, J. R. (1976). *The Industrial Archaeology of Scotland. 1. The Lowlands and Borders*. London: B T Batsford p184.

Stell, G et al. (eds), (2003) *Scottish Life and Society, Scotland's Buildings*. Vol 3. East Linton: Tuckwell Press. p.540-1.

Gifford, J. et al. (1988) *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh*. London: Penguin Books. p.647.

SCRAN. www.scran.ac.uk (accessed 16/09/2015).

Information from Britain from Above at

http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/spw027356?quicktabs_image=0#comment-647365 (accessed 04/11/2015).

* 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