Case information

Case ID	300017387
File Reference	HGH/B/HC/65
Name of Site	Cruck Cottage, Fingask Drive, Kirkhill

Local Authority	Highland Council		
National Grid Reference	NH 55493 45702		
Designation No. (if any)	N/A		
Designation Type	N/A	**Current Category of Listing**	N/A
Case Type	Designation		

Received/Start Date	21/08/2015
Decision Date	29/04/2016

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Cruck Cottage, Fingask Drive, meets the criteria for listing at category A. The building has been designated (listed).

Current Statutory Address	N/A
New Statutory address	Cruck Cottage, excluding 20th century timber boarded addition to southwest, Fingask Drive, Kirkhill

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

Kirkhill Parish, where this building is located, was resurveyed in 1986.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The Cruck Cottage at Fingask Drive, Kirkhill was visited on 29/10/2015.

The exterior and interior was 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

Elizabeth McCrone
Head of Designations
Heritage Management
Historic Environment Scotland

Contact	Dawn McDowell, Deputy Head of Designations dawn.mcdowell@hes.scot, 0131 668 8903

ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria*
Cruck Cottage, excluding 20th century timber boarded addition to southwest, Fingask Drive, Kirkhill

1. Description

Probably second half of the 18th century, with 19th and early 20th century alterations to the interior. Single storey, 3-bay traditional cruck-framed cottage with steeply pitched and piended corrugated iron roof covering some remains of old thatch. In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following is excluded from the listing: 20th century timber boarded building abutted to southwest.

The building is partially submerged in ground that has gradually been built up around the outer walls. It is built with coursed rubble with large and squared rubble quoins. There are two jointed and pegged curved crucks, set into walls and ending above ground, with overlaying of purlins and cabbers. The doorway is situated to the southeast elevation to the far right with two small square window openings to the left with two-pane timber windows. There is a small window opening to northeast end elevation.

The interior was seen in 2015. The cottage is subdivided into 3 rooms. The walls are flush-pointed to the interior and painted with some surviving plaster. There is a hanging lum set between the north and middle rooms, which has been modified in the 19th century to serve as the flue for an inserted brick hearth and fireplace below. The internal subdividing walls are of wattle and daub construction (with straw and dung or clay evident) and are plastered and whitewashed.

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

Kirkhill is a rural village situated to the northwest of Inverness, near the shores of the Beauly River and Beauly Firth. The cruck cottage at Kirkhill appears on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed in 1868) as part of a group of similar buildings referred to as 'Groam Cottages' which was likely built in the second half of the 18th century to resettle crofters scattered elsewhere in the parish. This group of buildings still appeared in the same arrangement on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey

map of 1907. The Groam Cottages grouping no longer survives and this cottage now sits in isolation behind a mid-20th century council housing estate in Fingask Drive.

According to information held by the local authority, the land and existing housing surrounding the cottage was acquired by the authority and developed for social housing in the 1940s. The local authority allowed the last tenant to remain at the property indefinitely, without payment, until their death. The last tenant was named as 'Miss MacDonald' and her family's association with the cottage was known locally to be long-standing. It is said that in the aftermath of Culloden (after 1746), the MacDonald family, who were resident at the time, hid two Jacobite fugitives. By 1989, the property was known to be uninhabited.

The Ordnance Survey name book for Inverness-shire mainland (vol. 52), provides some information on the appearance and ownership of the Groam Cottages buildings in 1876-78. The cottages are described as being all one storey high, thatched and in ordinary repair, with John Fraser Esq of Achnagairn and D Cameron Esq of Clunes as proprietors. The estate of Achnagairn was held by the Frasers of Lovat and latterly Belladrum during the 18th century (see 'Achnagairn' National Records of Scotland, B59/38/6/187).

Crofting or 'ferm-toun' settlements fulfilled the individual and communal needs of crofters, while also providing for their basic need for shelter and for livestock and crop management. During the 18th century old farming traditions were gradually replaced in an agricultural revolution as significant for rural landscapes as was the industrial revolution for urban development. In the Highlands, the result of this improvement was full-scale estate clearances which started in the 18th century and continued into the 19th century, contributing to a dramatic change to crofting and the rural landscape. Land and settlement patterns were comprehensively reorganised. The political background of the Jacobite Rebellions during the 18th century would have also had a considerable effect on the traditional Highland way of life. Therefore the re-settlement of crofters to Groam Cottages in Kirkhill Parish is likely and the survival of Kirkhill is remarkable in this context.

The single-storey croft house or cottage, constructed using the same traditional methods over an extensive period, was a mainstay of 17th, 18th and 19th rural settlements in Scotland. Their survival into the 21st century is now extremely rare and those which still evidence traditional construction techniques, including cruck-framing, are now exceptional. There are around 40 listed examples of cruck-framed buildings in various states of survival, and there are very few of these which survive with their historic interiors largely intact and which may contain a hanging lum or box-bed recesses. A small number of important examples survive, including Moirlanich Longhouse, Killin (LB8263 - owned by the National Trust for Scotland), Briar Cottage, Lochearnhead (LB4173) and Auchtavan Cottage, Aberdeenshire (LB50074).

While there have been some changes made to its interior, the cottage at Kirkhill is a rare and important survival of traditional cruck-framed construction, thatched roofing and the continuation of open hearth tradition which characterised Scotland's rural buildings in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

The small timber outbuilding which is a later alteration to the southwest of the cottage is not considered special in listing terms. The 1st Edition Ordnance survey map shows the footprint of this outbuilding formerly enclosed by a wall, an area possibly used for livestock.

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

Cruck Cottage, Kirkhill, has lain empty for over 35 years. The survival of 18th century fabric to the interior, including walling, plaster and the partially surviving hanging lum, is of significant interest.

The hanging lum was modified around the late 19th century and the lum itself was converted to a chimney flue when a brick fireplace and hearth was inserted below.

Sources on traditional building methods suggest that hanging lums were an improvement which spread in east-central and northeast Scotland in the second half of the 18th century (see Fenton, p18.). They reached the more northerly parts in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and the spread of this feature in rural dwellings is compatible with the dating Kirkhill Cottage and its location in Inverness-shire.

Plan form

The rectangular plan of the cottage, as evident on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed 1868), is unchanged and adds to the building's special interest. A byre was not incorporated into the plan which also points to a later 18th century date of construction.

Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality

Cruck Cottage, Kirkhill is constructed using traditional methods which are characteristic of cruck-framed cottage dwellings of the 18th and 19th centuries. The extent of 18th century fabric is substantial and its survival informs our knowledge and understanding of Scottish vernacular architecture.

The crucks are intact and are seen part way down the wall with rafters that rise from the wallhead. Some old thatch is found here at the wallhead to the interior.

Setting

The building is situated in its own small plot of land, formerly part of a group of cottages of similar date and type, but is now set to the rear of a mid-20th century housing estate located to the east and south east. To the north there is a shelter belt of trees which border a field which is likely to date to the late 18th or early 19th century and is contemporary with the building. While there is no pattern of crofting settlement remaining, the cottage is still found in a semi-rural setting.

Regional variations

The traditional single storey crofter's cottage was once common to the Highlands and is a building type that is of regional interest.

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 the cruck cottage on Fingask Drive has particular interest under a, c and d

a. The cottage is a rare example of a cruck-framed cottage in a rural setting.

c. The cottage is a rare survival of a traditional building type in Scotland and its fabric provides evidence of the type of construction once prolific across Scotland, especially in the Highlands.

d. There has been a degree of alteration to the internal fixtures and fitting, including the alteration to the internal fireplace; the cottage has been little altered to its exterior since the date of its construction.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

The Cruck Cottage at Kirkhill is an outstanding and rare example of a traditional dwelling, once common to the Highlands and the northeast of Scotland, but now extremely rare. While there has been some alteration to the interior, there is extensive survival of late 18th and early 19th century fabric and construction methods. The building has a tangible connection with 18th century life in the Highlands and is thought to have an association with the Jacobite Risings.

In our current state of knowledge this building meets 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

It is proposed that the cruck-framed cottage at Kirkhill meets the criteria for listing at category A as an outstanding and rare surviving example of a traditional domestic building once common to rural Scotland. While inhabited until the 1980s, the building

has not been altered or modified since the early 20th century and does not include any modern facilities such as running water, plumbing or heating systems.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Canmore

http://canmore.org.uk/ CANMORE ID 68547

Measured survey (January 2016). Drawing No. DC62074.

Map sources

Ordnance Survey Inverness Mainland Sheet XI.1 Surveyed 1868, Published 1876) 25 inches to the mile. 1st Edition. London: Ordnance Survey

Ordnance Survey Name Book, Inverness-shire (1876-1878). London: Ordnance Survey

Archive sources

Search term: 'Achnagairn', National Records of Scotland, B59/38/6/187.

Printed sources

Emerton, G. (2000) *The Pattern of Scottish Roofing*. Edinburgh: Historic Scotland

Fenton, A. and Walker, B. (1981) *The Rural Architecture of Scotland*. Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd.

Stewart, J. (1990) *Settlements of Western Perthshire* (for background information).

Walker, B., McGregor, C. and Stark G. (1996) *Historic Scotland Technical Advice Note 4: Thatch and Thatching Techniques*. Edinburgh: Historic Scotland.

Walker, B., McGregor, C. and Stark G. (1996) *Historic Scotland Technical Advice Note 6: Earth Structures and Construction in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Historic Scotland.

* 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