

Case information

Case ID	300016474		
File Reference	HGH/B/SA/163		
Name of Site	Geilston Hall (former Drill Hall), Main Road, Cardross		
Local Authority	Argyll and Bute Council		
National Grid Reference	NS 34068 78006		
Designation No. (if any)	LB42911		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	C
Case Type	Amendment		
Received/Start Date	2015 [Drill Halls Listing Review]		
Decision Date	06/05/2016		

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge Geilston Hall 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 C to B.

Previous Statutory Address	Cardross, Main Road, Geilston Hall
Amended Statutory address	Geilston Hall (former Drill Hall), Main Road, Cardross

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

This building was listed at category C on 23/02/1996.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

This former drill hall is being reviewed as part of the Drill Halls Listing Review 2015-16 and was visited on 09/02/2016. The exterior and interior were both seen during the 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*

Geilston Hall (former Drill Hall), Main Road, Cardross

1. Description

Geilston Hall was built in 1889-90 by Honeyman and Keppie as a drill hall for the local rifle volunteers. The pale sandstone hall is set back from the road and is in a Collegiate Tudor style. There is a 2-storey administration block at the west end incorporating a square tower with a crenellated parapet. The former instructor's accommodation is on the upper level, and is accessed by a stone forestair to the rear.

The single-storey hall has two gabled porches, each with a roll-moulded Tudor-arched doorpiece. Above each door is a cast stone plaque with the inscriptions 'The Geilston Hall' (to the west door) and 'Erected 1889 in memoriam J.T.G' (to the east door). There are three buttresses between the porches and arrow-slit air vents equally spaced between them. There are tripartite window openings with stone mullions and transoms, while the upper stage of the tower has round-headed timber window frames. The roof is of grey slate with roof lights along the ridge and there is a chamfered chimney stack with clay cans on the west side of the tower. A smaller (pre-1950) hall addition adjoins the building at the northeast corner.

The interior, seen in 2016, largely retains its 19th century character with timber panelled doors throughout. The top-lit hall roof structure has arch-braced timber trusses on stone corbels. There is a timber platform to the west end, grooved timber panelling to the walls and some ornamental ironwork detail. The south wall has three timber vents, where the wooden framing has been carved to mirror the shape of the stone corbels. The fireplace within the tower has a carved timber surround. The former armoury room on the ground floor to the north of the tower has a heavy door with a large metal lock and key. The smaller hall adjoining to the rear has a metal, A-frame roof structure. The former instructor's dwelling on the first floor level was not seen (2016).

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

Geilston Hall was built in 1889-90 as the base for the 7th Dunbartonshire (Cardross) Rifle Volunteers, partly in memory of Major Joseph Tucker Geils who was their commanding officer from 1860 until his death in 1871. An earlier wooden drill hall

was built on the site in 1863–4, under the patronage of Major Geils, but was destroyed by fire on 7 March 1889. The newly formed Glasgow architectural practice of Honeyman & Keppie were immediately employed by the Geils family to replace it with a stone building. Major Geils, lived at Geilston House (listed at category B) which is located around 200 metres to the north of the hall.

An article in the Helensburgh and Garelochhead Times of 7 August 1889 reported that the commemorative stone of the new Drill Hall in Cardross was laid by Miss Catherine Geils on the 30 July 1889. The article also notes that the building was 'now sufficiently advanced to show that the design by Messrs. Honeyman & Keppie is a very beautiful one'. A temporary platform was erected on a level with the lintel of the principal door for the laying of the commemorative stone and information relating to the history of the hall and commemorating the life of Major Geils were placed inside the stone.

Geilston Hall is shown on both the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map (revised 1897) and 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey map (revised 1914) without the later hall addition to the rear. This addition is visible on the Ordnance Survey Air Photo Mosaics, which were flown 1944-1950. Geilston Hall was a popular venue for local meetings, shows, dinners and other uses and continues to be used by various local clubs and organisations (2016).

In the late 1850s there was concern in the British Government about the Army's ability to defend both the home nation as well as the Empire. Britain's military defences were stretched and resources to defend Britain needed to be found. One solution was to create 'Volunteer Forces', a reserve of men who volunteered for part-time military training similar to that of the regular army and who could therefore help to defend Britain if the need arose.

In 1859 the Rifle Volunteer Corps was formed and the Volunteer Act of 1863 provided more regulation on how the volunteer forces were run and it set out the standards for drills and a requirement for annual inspections. Most purpose-built drill halls constructed at this time were paid for by a major local landowner, the subscriptions of volunteers, local fundraising efforts or a combination of all three. The Regulations of the Forces Act 1871 (known as the Cardwell Reforms after the Secretary of State for War, Edward Cardwell) gave forces the legal right to acquire land to build a drill hall and more purpose-built drill halls began to be constructed after this date. The largest period of drill hall construction, aided by government grants, took place between 1880 and 1910. The Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907 (known as the Haldane Reforms after the Secretary of State for War, Richard Haldane) came into force in 1908 and the various Volunteer Units were consolidated to form the Territorial Force. The construction of drill halls largely ceased during the First World War and in 1920 the Territorial Force became the Territorial Army.

In the 20th century changes in warfare and weaponry made many of the earlier drill halls redundant and subject to demolition or change to a new use. Around 344 drill halls are understood to have been built in Scotland of which 182 are thought to survive today, although few remain in their original use. Unusually for a nationwide building programme, drill halls were not standardised and were often designed by local architects in a variety of styles. Drill halls are an important part of our social and military history. They tell us much about the development of warfare and the history

of defending our country and they also have a part to play in the history of our communities. Funds for the construction of drill halls usually came from the patronage of local land or business owners or from the subscriptions of the volunteers and local fundraising efforts, and this was the case at Cardross, as noted above.

Geilston Hall is a very good example of a purpose-built volunteer hall and much of its late 19th century character survives, both internally and externally. The relatively uncommon Tudor influenced style and traditional village hall setting distinguish this building within the drill hall building type.

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

The majority of drill hall interiors were designed to be practical and largely unembellished. The main requirement was the provision of a large open space unimpeded by columns. In some cases a viewing balcony would be included.

The 19th century interior of the Geilston Hall appears to survive relatively unaltered, retaining its timber frame truss ceiling on stone corbels, timber panelled doors and walls, timber vents and ornamental ironwork. Geilston Hall also features two large double door porches that directly access the hall space, allowing large groups of drill marching volunteers to enter and exit the building with ease.

Plan form

The vast majority of drill halls were modest utilitarian structures requiring a large covered open space to train and drill as well as a place for the secure storage of weapons. Most drill halls conformed to the pattern of an administrative block to the front, containing offices and the armoury to store weapons, along with caretaker or drill instructors accommodation. To the rear would be the drill hall itself. Occasionally more extensive accommodation was required, such as for battalion headquarters where interior rifle ranges, libraries, billiards rooms, lecture theatres and bars could all be included.

The plan form and orientation of this former drill hall partially adopts the visual character of a village hall with its two vestibule entrance porches and long single-storey, pitched roof set back parallel to the road. The original 19th century plan form of the hall to the east and the administration block and former armoury to the west appears to survive substantially intact. This plan form differs from the usual form drill hall plan, described above.

Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality

Drill halls were built in a variety of architectural styles and no individual type dominates. They were often designed by local architects and constrained by tight budgets. Architectural styles used might reflect the streetscape of the local community and be small and modest, similar to surrounding domestic properties. Volunteer halls tended to be more architecturally ambitious, while larger forces or headquarter buildings were more likely to be overtly military in appearance.

Geilston Hall is a purpose-built volunteer drill hall using a combination of collegiate and ecclesiastical style architecture, similar to a village hall. The building is among the earliest work of a significant architectural partnership of the period, Honeyman & Keppie, which was formed in Glasgow late in 1888 or early in 1889.

John Honeyman was a founder member of the 1st Dunbartonshire (Helensburgh) Artillery so the commission for Geilston Hall may have originated through this connection. Geilston Hall has also been linked with the internationally significant Scottish architect, Charles Rennie Mackintosh as it was built during the first year of Mackintosh's employment with Honeyman & Keppie. The stylised lettering in the plaques above the doors, particularly the double-bar on the H, hint at Mackintosh's personal font style, but there is currently no clear documentary evidence, such as signed architectural drawings, to indicate conclusively that he contributed to the design of the hall. Mackintosh's sketch book does however contain a drawing of the Coplaw Street Drill Hall in Glasgow designed in 1884 by John Bennie Wilson, which also has a crenellated tower and some similar architectural details to the Geilston Hall (Macaulay, p.82). Between 1901 and 1914 the same practice carried out a number of minor alterations and refurbishments to Geilston Hall.

Setting

Geilston Hall is a prominent building beside the Geilston Burn on the western edge of Cardross. The building is orientated on an east-west axis, parallel to the road but set back from it behind a large open grassed area, in the manner of a traditional village hall. A late 20th century residential block development to the immediate east of the hall has changed the open setting of the hall to some extent, particularly in views from the road.

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 Geilston Hall has particular interest under a and d.

- a) Geilston Hall is notable within the building type because of its good quality materials and distinguished Collegiate-Tudor influenced design.

- d. The exterior and interior of the hall largely retains its 19th century character, adding to the integrity or 'completeness' of the building.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

Geilston Hall is a very good example of a purpose-built volunteer drill hall in the Argyll and Bute region. The hall is an early design by the well-regarded Glasgow architectural practice, Honeyman and Keppie, in a distinctive Collegiate-Tudor influenced style, which is relatively uncommon for drill halls. It has a prominent presence to the west of Cardross, on the main road through the village. The east-west orientation and traditional village hall setting (parallel to the road and set back behind a large open grassed area) is unusual for a drill hall. The principal elevations and interior hall and administrative spaces do not appear to have been significantly altered and much of its authentic, late 19th century exterior and interior character survives.

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

Category B listing is for buildings of regional or more than local importance; or major examples of some particular period, style or building type, which may have been altered. Geilston Hall is a largely unaltered and distinctive example of a drill hall and therefore category B may be a more appropriate category of listing than the present category C.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID: 197606

Maps

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1860, published 1865) Dumbarton Sheet XVII.15 (Cardross), 25 Inches to the Mile. 1st Edition. London: Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey (Revised 1897, published 1898) Dumbartonshire n017.15 (includes: Cardross), 25 Inches to the Mile. 2nd Edition. London: Ordnance Survey.

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Ordnance Survey Air Photo Mosaics of Scotland (surveyed, 1944-1950) NS 37 N.W. (Dumbartonshire), London: Ordnance Survey.

Printed Sources

Helensburgh and Garelochhead Times (7 August 1889).

Historic Environment Scotland (2016) *Scotland's Drill Halls Preliminary Report*. Unpublished.

Jones, A. F. (1981), *Cardross - The Village in Days Gone By*. Dumbarton: Dumbarton District Libraries. p.80.

Macaulay, J. (2010) *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*. New York: W. W. Norton. pp. 82–3.

Walker, F. A. (2000) *The Buildings of Scotland: Argyll and Bute*. London: Penguin Books Ltd. p.167.

Walker, F. A. and Sinclair, F. (1992) *North Clyde Estuary*. Edinburgh: Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland. p.60.

Online Sources

Dictionary of Scottish Architects - http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building_full.php?id=207676 [accessed 11/03/2016].

Historic Scotland/Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (2013) World War One Audit Project at <http://canmore.org.uk/event/965766> [accessed 23/03/2016].

Mackintosh Architecture (Glasgow University) at <http://www.mackintosh-architecture.gla.ac.uk/catalogue> [accessed 11/03/2016].

* 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