

Case information

Case ID	300008835		
File Reference	HGH/B/GA/71		
Name of Site	Kaim House		
Local Authority	Aberdeen City		
National Grid Reference	NJ 91635 03060		
Designation No. (if any)	LB15782		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	B
Case Type	Amendment		
Received/Start Date	04/02/2014		
Decision Date	05/05/2016		

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Kaim House 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 B to C.

Previous Statutory Address	Kaim House
Amended Statutory address	Kaim House, Robert Gordon University, Garthdee Road, Aberdeen

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

Kaim House was listed at category B on 16/04/1971.

The building is located in Pitfodels Conservation Area.

2.2 Development Proposals

The building is part of on a Robert Gordon University's Garthdee campus. This campus is the subject of Robert Gordon University's Garthdee Masterplan:

Development Framework (dated June 2009) which has been adopted as supplementary guidance to the local development plan. No work is proposed to Kaim House in this plan.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

Kaim House was considered for review as part of the Pitfodels Conservation Area Listing Review 2014-16. The building was visited on 04/12/2014, and the interior and exterior were seen at this visit.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The building was found to continue 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*

Kaim House, Robert Gordon University, Garthdee Road, Aberdeen

1. Description

Kaim House was designed by A. Marshall Mackenzie and Son in 1910 and is a 2-storey and basement, U-plan, harled villa in a simple neo-Regency style. It has a symmetrical south elevation comprising prominent full height bowed and conical roofed bays flanking a curved railed terrace and steps. The other elevations have an irregular arrangement of windows. The south elevation entrance door is glazed with narrow rectangular sidelights and fanlight. The entrance door to the west elevation has a roll moulded architrave with the inscription from Psalm 121, verse 8. 'THE LORD SHALL PRESERVE THY GOING OUT AND THY COMING IN'. Adjoining the right of the west elevation is a garage with a segmental arched opening and stepped pyramid details to the corners. At the centre of the north (rear) elevation is a round stairtower with a candlesnuffer roof.

There a variety of glazing patterns in timber frames. The roof is pitched with grey slates and there are harled and coped wallhead and ridge stacks.

The interior, seen in 2014, has large public south-facing rooms at the ground floor with acanthus leaf and egg and dart corning. The ground floor room to the southwest of the plan has painted timer paneling. There is a curved stone staircase to the north of the plan, which has a decorative newel post, otherwise the balusters are plain. There are 6-panel timber doors throughout the building, and those to the ground floor public rooms are 2-leaf. Two first floor rooms have mantelpieces with a decorative mantle.

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

Kaim House was designed in 1910 by the Aberdeen architectural practice, A. Marshall Mackenzie and Son. The house was designed for Marshall Mackenzie's daughter, Phoebe, and her husband, Thomas Livingston Adam, who were married on the 28 September 1910. Adam was the only son of the shipowner, Thomas Adam of Denmore, and when Thomas Adam Snr died in 1919, Thomas Adam Jnr inherited the estate of Denmore and sold Kaim House. Newspaper advertisements for the sale of the house in November 1919 describe the accommodation as '3 public rooms, 5 bedrooms, 2 dressing rooms, 4 bathrooms, 2 servants bedrooms. Kitchen,

scullery, pantries, laundry, wash-house, motor-house etc, together with three-stall byre, man's room, dairy and outhouse adjoining' (Aberdeen Journal, p.1).

In the late 20th century Kaim House was bought by Robert Gordon University, as part of the expansion of their Garthdee campus, shortly after the college achieved university status in 1992. In 1953 Thomas Scott Sutherland (1899–1963), an architect and entrepreneur, gifted the 20 acre Garthdee estate to Robert Gordon's College for use as the college's School of Architecture. This gift was decisive in the history of Robert Gordon University. The relocation of Gray's School of Art to Garthdee in 1967 marked the beginning of the development of the campus. In the 1990s the university operated over 8 different sites and an estates strategy proposed expanding the Garthdee site by the purchase of neighbouring estates, a significant building programme and a phased relocation of departments.

The origins of Robert Gordon University can be traced back to 1729 when Robert Gordon, an Aberdeen merchant trader, founded Robert Gordon's Hospital, to educate the young sons and grandsons of the Burgesses of the Guild who were too poor to send them to school. In 1881 the hospital became Robert Gordon's College with a secondary day school and separate adult education college. Since 1881 the training work of various other institutes and societies were transferred to the college, leading to various name changes until it was awarded university status in 1992.

Kaim House is situated in the Pitfodels area of Aberdeen. The rural Pitfodels estate, which stretched from Cults to the Bridge of Dee, was owned by the Menzies family since the 15th century. From 1805 the last laird, John Menzies began to feu some of the estate and when he died in 1843, without any descendants the remaining estate was purchased by the Pitfodels Land Company. Brogden, in his book *Aberdeen, An Illustrated Architectural Guide* (1998), notes that the plots varied in size, but were as large as 8-10 acres along the side of the River Dee, where Garthdee is situated. An 1895 account describes it as follows "...The greater part of the lands of Pitfodels is now studded with beautiful mansions and villas, each of which stands amid well laid out and carefully kept grounds. They mostly belong to manufacturers and gentlemen engaged in business in Aberdeen, and retired gentlemen." (Mackintosh, p.29). Large villas surrounded by trees were erected in a number of the larger plots and these continue to be a feature of this area.

From the last quarter of the 19th century up to the First World War villas were constructed in large numbers in the expanding suburbs and villages neighbouring Scotland's large urban centres. In terms of age Kaim House is therefore not rare but is notable within its building type for its early 20th century date as a distinctive neo-Regency villa, designed by a prestigious local architect which is also largely unaltered (see Architectural or Historic Interest).

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

The interior has not been significantly altered and retains some decorative details, including decorative mantelpieces, some cornicing and a panelled room, however, this detailing is not exceptional for a villa of this date.

Plan form

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The plan form of Kaim House a distinctive symmetrical double pile plan with two parallel wings terminated with by bowed towers, and planned specifically to take views of the river, with south facing public rooms. The positioning of the main entrance to the side elevation, leading into the hall, is also unusual. There are some later subdivisions but the plan form has not been significantly altered or extended and the footprint of the building remains largely as that shown on the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1925.

Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality

The listed building record written in 1971 describes the style of Kaim House as an unusual mixture of neo-Regency and modern. The neo-Regency style is especially evident in the symmetrical south elevation, particularly the full height bowed bays and the terracing, which starkly contrasts with the irregularity of the other elevations. There are some good details such as the roll-moulded door architrave and the stepped pyramids to the garage. Externally the building is largely unaltered with no extensions, retaining its distinctive style.

Alexander Marshall Mackenzie (1848-1933) was one of Aberdeen's most prestigious and prolific architects, whose output extended over private commissions and large public works. His work was mainly concentrated in the northeast of Scotland, and includes the frontage of Marischal College in Aberdeen (1893-1905) and Aberdeen Art Gallery (1885), both of which are listed at category A. He was also responsible for Australia House in London (1913-1918).

Setting

Kaim House is at the centre of an estate which is part of a university campus. The house has retained its uninterrupted view to the River Dee, but its setting has been changed significantly from that shown on the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey map, with late 20th and early 21st century university buildings to the east and large car parks to the north, as well as storage building immediately to the west of the house. Slightly further west is the unlisted Kaim Cottage (not shown on 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey map) which has detailing inspired by Kaim House, such as the round tower entrance bay which is also harled.

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 Kaim House has particular interest under a and d.

- a. It is a distinctive example of the domestic work of the prestigious local architect, Alexander Marshall Mackenzie, blending neo-Regency with modern design details.
- d. It is largely unaltered to the exterior and interior.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

Kaim House is a largely unaltered and distinctive example of the domestic work of the prestigious local architect, Alexander Marshall Mackenzie. Designed in 1910 the style of this former villa is an unusual mixture of neo-Regency and modern, with the distinctive symmetrical south elevation and its full height bowed bays and terracing contrasting with the irregularity of the other elevations.

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 C indicates buildings of local importance; lesser examples of any period, style, or building type, as originally constructed or moderately altered; and simple, traditional buildings that group well with other listed buildings. The interest of Kaim House in listing terms is considered to be of local importance, therefore category C is considered the most appropriate.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 149551

Maps

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1923, published 1925) Aberdeenshire 086.02 (includes: Aberdeen; Banchory-Devenick; Nigg; Peterculter) 3rd Edition. 25 inches to 1 mile. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Printed Sources

Aberdeen Journal (29 September 1910) *Adam – Mackenzie*. p.6.

Aberdeen Journal (18 November 1919) *Kaim House, Cults, Aberdeen*. p.1.

Brogden, W.A. (1998) *Aberdeen: An Illustrated Architectural Guide*. 2nd Edition. RIAS: Edinburgh. p.169.

Ellington, H. (2002). *The Robert Gordon University: A History*. Aberdeen: Robert Gordon University Press. p.239.

Sharples, J. Walker, D.W. and Woodworth, M (2015) *Buildings of Scotland: Aberdeenshire South and Aberdeen*. London: Yale University Press. p.296.

Online Sources

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. *Kaim House* at http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building_full.php?id=209938 (accessed 31/12/2015).

* 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