



## Case information

<b>Case ID</b>	300009344		
<b>File Reference</b>	HGH/B/GD/75		
<b>Name of Site</b>	Huntly Family Centre, 4 Deveron Road, Huntly		
<b>Local Authority</b>	Aberdeenshire Council		
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	NJ 52643 40084		
<b>Designation No. (if any)</b>	N/A		
<b>Designation Type</b>	Listed Building	<b>Current Category of Listing</b>	N/A
<b>Case Type</b>	Designation		
<b>Received/Start Date</b>	2015 [Drill Hall Listing Review]		
<b>Decision Date</b>	25/05/2016		

## 1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Huntly Family Centre meets the criteria for listing at category C.

<b>Previous Statutory Address</b>	N/A
<b>Amended Statutory Address</b>	Huntly Family Centre (Former Drill Hall), 4 Deveron Road, Huntly

## 2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

### 2.1 Designation Background

Huntly Burgh has not been resurveyed and there is no known previous assessment of Huntly Family Centre for listing. The building is within the Huntly Conservation Area.

### 2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

### 3. Assessment

---

#### 3.1 Assessment information

Huntly Family Centre was considered for designation as part of the Drill Hall Listing Review 2015-16. The building was visited on 11/02/2016 and the exterior and interior were both seen during the visit.

#### 3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The building was found to no longer meet the criteria for listing.

An assessment against the listing criteria was carried out. See **Annex A**.

*The designation criteria are published in the Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 2, pp. 51-53.*

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/historic-environment-scotland-policy-statement/>

---

#### **Elizabeth McCrone**

Head of Designations  
Heritage Management  
Historic Environment Scotland

<b>Contact</b>	Rosanne Watts, Senior Designations Officer rosanne.watts@hes.scot, 0131 668 8091
----------------	---

## **ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria\***

Huntly Family Centre (Former Drill Hall), 4 Deveron Road, Huntly

---

### **1. Description**

---

This former drill hall was designed by George Sutherland in 1901-2, in a Free Renaissance style. The principal (northeast) elevation comprises an advanced 2-storey gable with a 3-stage, square tower to the left, with a single bay to the right of the gable and a single storey porch to the far right. It is constructed in tooled, squared and coursed grey Avochie granite with long and short, pink Auchindoir ashlar, dressings. There is a battered base course and a string course between the ground and first floor, and the rear elevation is rendered. The tower and the porch elevation have crenelated parapets and the tower has a dentilled cornice.

The advanced gable has bipartite ground floor windows and round arched, keystoned first floor windows. In the gable head is a plaque with the inscription 'A Company 4th VBGH' which is set under a decorative hoodmould with a thistle motif and the gable is topped with an ogee shaped stone. The first floor window of the single bay to the right of the gable extends above the eaves and has a gabled dormer with a small carved shield in the dormerhead. The porch section has a single wide segmentally arched opening while the southeast wall of the drill hall itself has shallow arched window openings.

The windows have been replaced and are predominantly multipane sashes over a single pane. The rainwater goods are predominantly metal with decorative hoppers. The roofs are pitched with grey slates, except the roof of the right section, including the porch, which has a corrugated sheeting roof. There are straight skewes and coped wallhead chimney stacks with cylindrical cans.

The interior, seen in 2016, has been comprehensively refurbished and subdivided into offices and training rooms. The iron roof trusses of the hall are still evident in the attic rooms.

### **2. Assessment Against the Listing Criteria** (HES Policy Statement, 2016) Annex 2, pp. 51-52

---

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**

This former drill hall was built for A Company, 4th Volunteer Battalion Gordon Highlanders. This company was established around 1860, at the beginning of the volunteer forces movement. The company's former armoury and sergeant-instructors quarters were in a building on The Square in Huntly, and they rented the existing Stewarts Hall to practice. As the company continued to grow this arrangement became insufficient and a purpose built drill hall was required.

A plot of land on Deveron Road was provided by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, and the drill hall was officially opened in November 1902 by Colonel Jackson, the commanding officer of the battalion. The building was deliberately positioned to the northeast corner of the site in order to provide a large parade ground to the west. It cost £2000, £1025 of which was raised by a bazaar the previous year. At the opening ceremony the generosity of the local community in helping fund this drill hall was noted. The building is now owned by Aberdeenshire Council and has been converted to offices, meeting and training spaces for the Huntly Family Centre.

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 believed to have been built in Scotland of which 182 are thought to survive today, although few remain in their original use. 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. They also, unusually for a nationwide building programme, were not standardised and were often designed by local architects in a variety of styles and they also have a part to play in the history of our communities.

Completed in 1902, Huntly drill hall was built during the peak era of drill hall construction from 1880 – 1910. Whilst the building has been altered because of its change of use, it is a notable example of a drill hall within this period because of its stonework detailing to the principal elevation (see Architectural and Historic Interest section below).

## **2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest**

### ***Interior***

The interiors of a drill hall 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. A wide entrance was also a typical feature to allow large groups of drill marching volunteers to enter and exit the building.

An article in Aberdeen Journal of 19 November 1902 describes the interior detailing and materials when the building was first opened. The walls of the hall were lined to a height of 4 feet with moulded pitch pine, and all the other parts of the building were finished with stained and varnished yellow pine. The hall ceiling had pitch pine rafters supported by slender iron trusses, from which corona gaslights were suspended.

The interior hall of the building has been comprehensively remodelled and with the exception of the roof trusses, no other original interior details are evident. However, the detailing described in this article is typical for a drill hall of this date and the interior remodelling of a former drill hall is not unusual.

### ***Plan form***

The requirements for drill halls were basic – a large covered open space to train and drill as well as a place for the secure storage of weapons. The vast majority of drill halls were modest utilitarian structures. Most drill halls conformed to the pattern of an administrative block containing offices and the armoury to store weapons along with a caretaker or drill instructors accommodation, usually facing the street. 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 accommodation of this former drill hall is described in the Aberdeen Journal article of 19 November 1902. The building was arranged around a 70 feet by 45 feet hall. Opposite the entrance was an armoury, fitted up with rifle racks, and with doors at both ends so that the men could pass right through. Behind the hall were cloakrooms, a large storeroom and accommodation for the sergeant-instructor. The first floor, which was accessed by a staircase in the tower section, had an officers' room and the men's clubroom/lecture room.

This internal arrangement of rooms has been comprehensively changed as part of the building's change of use and with the exception of the staircase, none of the former plan form is discernible. The building is shown on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1924. Some outshots to the south corner of the building, shown on

this map, have been removed, but the footprint of the building appears to be largely unaltered from the original layout.

### ***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 usually designed by local architects and constrained by tight budgets. They often had a strong link to their local communities and could be used for other community activities. Architectural style could reflect the streetscape of the local community and be small and modest, similar to surrounding domestic properties, or they could be more eye-catching and overtly military in appearance, particularly for larger forces or headquarter buildings.

The castellated parapets used at Huntly drill hall are an architectural detail seen on a number of other drill halls, including Blair Atholl (1906-7) and Kilmarnock (1914), which are both listed at category B. The 70 feet high castellated tower that dominates the building gives it a distinctive military style appropriate for a drill hall. The principal elevation has a number of carved stonework details, particularly to the advanced gable, and it retains its wide doorway. This doorway is described in the Aberdeen Journal of 19 November 1901 as being 'sufficient for 4 men to march abreast'. The building has been altered internally and the ashlar dressings of the pair of windows at the centre of southeast wall have been replaced, suggesting that this section of wall has also been altered. With the exception of the replacement of the windows the principal elevation is largely unaltered.

George Sutherland (1861-1927) designed a variety of buildings, primarily in Aberdeen and Banffshire, including churches and schools but most of his work was house designs. It is not known what connection Sutherland had with the volunteer forces but he designed at least two drill halls, with the other known example at Grattan Place, Fraserburgh, designed in 1901 and now used as a community church.

### ***Setting***

The building is on the principal route heading west from the centre of Huntly. The street is characterised by 2-storey granite villas set back from the road and therefore this drill hall is a distinctive building on this street.

### ***Regional variations***

An article in the Aberdeen Journal of 19 November 1901 describes the building as being constructed with Avochie granite. The Avochie quarry is about 8km to the north of Huntly and consequently many of the 19th century buildings in Huntly and the surrounding towns are built in this stone. The pink stone for the dressings was also locally sourced from Auchindoir quarry, which is about 15km to the south of Huntly.

## **2.3 Close Historical Associations**

None known at present.

### 3. Working with the Principles of Listing (HES Policy Statement, 2016) Annex 2, pp. 53

---

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 Huntly Family Centre has particular interest under a.

a. This former drill hall is a good example of its building type because of its stonework detailing to the principal elevation, particularly its advanced gable, porch and landmark tower giving the building a distinct military appearance.

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

---

Huntly Family Centre was built in 1901-2 as a drill hall for the thriving A Company, 4th Volunteer Battalion Gordon Highlanders. It is a distinctive building on this road, because the principal elevation has very good stonework. The castellated style of the landmark square tower and porch gives the building an appropriate military appearance in keeping with its function. In our current state of knowledge this building is considered 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](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/heritage/historicandlistedbuildings/listing)

Category C is for 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. This former drill hall has been altered internally and therefore category C is considered to be the most appropriate category of listing.

### 6. Other Information

---

N/A

### 7. References

---

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 180056

## Maps

## Archive

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1924, published 1926) Aberdeenshire 026.06 (includes: Drumblade; Huntly). 25 inches to the mile. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

## Printed Sources

Aberdeen Journal (18 October 1901) Military Bazaar at Huntly. p.7.

Aberdeen Journal (19 October 1901) Huntly Volunteer Bazaar. p.7.

Aberdeen Journal (19 November 1902) New Drill Hall at Huntly. p.7.

Aberdeen People's Journal (22 November 1902) Huntly Drill Hall Opened. p.6.

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

Osborne, M. (2006) Always ready: Drill Halls of Britain's Volunteer Force. p.280

Sharples, J., Walker, D.M. and Woodworth, M. (2015) *The Buildings of Scotland: Aberdeenshire: South and Aberdeen*. London: Yale University Press. p.531.

Shepherd, I A G. (2006) *Aberdeenshire, Donside and Strathbogie: an illustrated architectural guide*. Edinburgh. p. 24 and 29.

## Online Sources

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. *George Sutherland* at [http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect\\_full.php?id=200166](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200166) (accessed 15/03/2016)

---

\* 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 <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/what-is-listing/>