



Case information

Case ID	300016482		
File Reference	HGH/B/LA/474		
Name of Site	Army Reserves Centre, 124 McDonald Road, Edinburgh		
Local Authority	City of Edinburgh Council		
National Grid Reference	NT 26081 75184		
Designation No. (if any)	LB30285		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	B
Case Type	Amendment		
Received/Start Date	2015 [Drill Halls Listing Review]		
Decision Date	25/05/2016		

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, 124 McDonald Road continues to meet the criteria for listing. The statutory listing address and the listed building record will be amended. The category of listing will be changed from B to C.

Previous Statutory Address	124 McDonald Road, Former Territorial Army Administration Block
Amended Statutory address	Army Reserves Centre excluding former hall at rear, 124 McDonald Road, Edinburgh

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

This building was listed at category B on 24/07/1992.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

124 McDonald Road was considered for amendment as part of the Drill Halls Listing Review 2015-16. The building was visited on 29/05/2015 and the exterior and most areas of the interior were seen at this 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/>

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria*

Army Reserves Centre excluding former hall at rear, 124 McDonald Road, Edinburgh

1. Description

Designed by Thomas Duncan Rhind and constructed in 1911-12 with interior alterations by W G Brown & Co. in 1972-3, the building is a 3-storey, 3-bay rectangular plan, neo-Renaissance style drill hall administration block, on a corner site. In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing: the former hall located to the rear.

The street (front) elevation is of cream polished ashlar with distinctive channelled quoins and Gibbsian windows with bold projecting keystone features. The central entrance bay is advanced and topped by a triangular pediment and there is an arched doorway with a heavy timber semi-circular canopy. The 3rd floor windows break the eaves and are corniced. The side (northwest) elevation is squared and snecked pink rubble sandstone. There is 12-pane glazing in timber sash and case windows, a mansard roof with grey slates and a copy chimney stack to the end gable.

The interior which was seen in 2015 retains little of the original scheme as the spaces were re-arranged in the 1972-3 alterations. The original double stair is still in place. The former caretaker's flat on the second floor has a cast iron chimneypiece and some late 19th century timberwork.

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]

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

The McDonald Street former drill hall was designed in 1911 by Thomas Duncan Rhind and the plans were passed by the Dean of Guild Court (the equivalent of our local authority planning department today) in May 1911. The building was completed the following year and it is first shown on the Ordnance Survey map, which was revised about 1912.

A comprehensive programme of reconstruction was undertaken in 1972-73. In the office area on McDonald Road at the northeast of the building a number of changes took place at both ground and first floor level including the enlargement of the south room at the front to become the officers' mess and the subdivision of the two large

rooms on the ground floor. The rear part of the building, the original drill hall, was extended to McDonald Street and McDonald Place and reconstructed as a garage, workshop and other offices, with a mess added at first floor. As a result of these changes, the drill hall itself was halved in size and it is not considered to be of special interest in listing terms. It is proposed to be excluded from the listing

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 (and Artillery Corps in defended coastal areas) were 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 Regulation 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.

The McDonald Road drill hall falls in a period of intense building activity of drill halls in the wake of the Haldane Reforms. Within the two year period, 1911-1912, at least four drill halls were built in Edinburgh alone: Gilmore Place, Brandon Terrace, McDonald Road and East Claremont Street.

As a building type the McDonald Road former drill hall and offices is not rare and it is relatively late in date in the history of drill halls. What distinguishes this building from many others is its large size and the good quality of the materials and detailing of the administration building. The principal and side elevations of this section remain relatively unchanged when compared with the original drawings.

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

The interiors of drill halls 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.

The interior of the offices was altered in 1972-3 when rooms were subdivided and enlarged, reflecting the changing needs of the building. However, two areas retain their original layout and a number of details: the stairwell and the flat on the second floor. The stairwell divides at the landing into two upper flights, perhaps designed because the main room for the recruits (other than the hall itself) was on the first floor and therefore the stair carried a lot of traffic. The caretaker's flat retains some original timberwork and a chimneypiece. Vestiges of the *lincrusta dado*, probably part of the original decorative scheme are also in place. The surviving interior is not typical for a drill hall of this date.

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 plan form at McDonald Road is typical for a drill hall from this period, with the ground and first floors offices arranged on either side of a central corridor, which led to the hall at the rear on the ground floor. There is no evidence for a viewing balcony overlooking the hall.

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 hall and offices were built for the 1st Lowland City of Edinburgh Royal Field Artillery and Ammunition Column. A newspaper report which described and illustrated two halls in Edinburgh designed by Thomas Duncan Rhind in 1911 outlined the accommodation in both buildings which was to include 'quarters for administrative purposes, viz. orderlies' rooms, officers' rooms, men's recreation room

and sergeant's room as well as a caretaker's house and a large drill hall with stores for the transportation waggons'.

The architect Thomas Duncan Rhind (1871-1927) received his early training as a sculptor with his father, John Rhind and older brother William Birnie Rhind but went on to study architecture. Rhind was an enthusiastic member of the volunteer forces, becoming a major in The Royal Scots and receiving the Territorial Distinction. On the outbreak of the First World War he was appointed Commandant of Redford Barracks while German prisoners of war were held there and served as provost marshal for a time after which he became Brigade Major in the Lothian Brigade and was appointed CBE in January 1916. He then joined the staff of Sir Andrew Geddes, Director of Recruiting, at the War Office in London and was appointed Deputy Assistant Adjutant General, undertaking the organisation of the statistical branch of the Recruiting Department. He was promoted Brevet Lieutenant Colonel in 1917 and appointed Assistant Adjutant General. On the transfer of the recruiting to civil administration he was appointed Controller of Statistics under the Ministry of National Service and was knighted in 1918. Latterly he was chief recorder at the Ministry. During his time in London he was attached to the London Scottish. Because the latter part of his career was largely working in administration, Rhind's output was relatively small. This hall is therefore significant as an example of his work.

Rhind designed three drill halls in Edinburgh: Brandon Terrace, McDonald Road and East Claremont Street as well as Bathgate, West Lothian in the 1911-12 period. Although there is as yet no documentary evidence he seems to have also designed a number of other halls in West Lothian and in Midlothian. They can all be linked stylistically to the hall in Bathgate with many features in common. They also share some features with the Edinburgh halls. Rhind is therefore emerging as a significant designer of drill halls in the immediate pre-First World War period.

Stylistically the halls in East Claremont Street and McDonald Road have some elements in common. Both are neo-Renaissance in style but are also highly individualistic in a number of ways. The dominant features of the principal elevation in the McDonald Road hall are the channelled quoins and bold keystones over the windows. Also the treatment of the masonry around the doorway and at first floor level between the windows is very bold and sculptural. A similar sculptural approach can be seen in other work by Rhind: for example at the McVitties & Guest former teashop at the corner of Princes Street and South Charlotte Street where he uses keystoned segmental pediments at first floor level and rusticated blocks at third floor level. The sculptural treatment of these details perhaps stemmed from his early training.

Setting

The building is located on a prominent corner site in a mixed residential and commercial street. The tenement building with which it shares one wall is four storeys tall and much simpler in design. Rhind has made little or no attempt to link his design to the style of the surrounding buildings, in a more obvious way here than at the East Claremont Street Hall that he also designed. The smaller scale gives it a domestic character, and combined with the bold neo-Renaissance style gives the building significant streetscape presence.

Regional variations

There are no known regional variations.

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 the Army Reserve Centre at 124 McDonald Road has particular interest under a and d

a. The administration block for a drill hall uses good quality materials and good detailing and is a significant example of Thomas Duncan Rhind's bold unorthodox style.

d. The exterior of the front part of this building is almost completely unaltered since it was built, which can be easily seen when compared with the original drawings.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

The McDonald Road drill hall administration block is a good example of its building type built in the wake of the 1907 Haldane Reforms and designed by the prominent Edinburgh architect Thomas Duncan Rhind. The exterior of the office section has not been significantly altered since it was built in 1911-12 and it uses good quality materials and unusual neo-Renaissance details such as the bold keystone features on the windows and the channelled masonry on the principal and north elevation.

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

The hall to the rear was reconfigured in 1972-3 and it is not considered of special interest in listing terms at the time of this review. It is proposed to be excluded from this 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 denotes 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. In listing terms the interest of the McDonald Road administration block is considered to be of local importance. Therefore category C is the most appropriate category of listing rather than the present category B.

6. Other Information

N/A.

7. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 136819

Maps

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1912, published 1914): Edinburghshire 003.04 (including Edinburgh). 3rd Edition. 25 inches to the mile. Southampton: Ordnance Survey

Archive

Edinburgh City Archives, Dean of Guild plans 18 May 1911 and 19 January 1973.

Printed Sources

Edinburgh Evening News (13 April 1911).

Edinburgh Evening News (11 May 1911).

Edinburgh Evening News (16 May 1911).

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

Scotsman (22 February 1912).

Scotsman (25 April 1927).

Online Sources

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. Thomas Duncan Rhind

http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=100334 [accessed 27/07/2015]

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