



Case information

Case ID	300017776		
File Reference	HGH/B/BB/29		
Name of Site	35 Back Row (former Volunteer Hall), Selkirk		
Local Authority	Scottish Borders Council		
National Grid Reference	NT 47182 28539		
Designation No. (if any)	LB 43741		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	C
Case Type	Designation		
Received/Start Date	2015 [Drill Halls Listing Review]		
Decision Date	25/05/2016		

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, the former volunteer drill hall at 35 Back Row, Selkirk continues to meet the criteria for listing. The statutory listing address and the listed building record have been amended.

Previous Statutory Address	Back Row, Drill Hall and boundary wall
Amended Statutory address	35 Back Row (former Volunteer Hall), Selkirk

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

This building was listed at category C on 11/12/1996 and is located within the Selkirk Conservation Area.

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 10/02/2016. The exterior and interior were both seen during the visit.

No evidence of a surviving boundary wall associated with the building was noted during the site visit and so the reference to boundary walls has been removed from the proposed revised statutory address.

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*

35 Back Row (former Volunteer Hall), Selkirk

1. Description

The former volunteer hall at 35 Back Row, Selkirk was built in 1867. It is a single-storey, 3-bay building set close to the road, which is rectangular in plan and projects some distance forward from the line of the other buildings on the street. The symmetrical, classically detailed frontage is of squared, pale grey whinstone with rusticated pilaster quoins and polished ashlar dressings while the side and rear elevations are of whinstone rubble. The glazed double door to the central bay has a classical doorpiece with a consoled pediment and the windows to either side have corniced architraves. Above the moulded cornice is a rectangular plaque, flanked by scrolled consoles and carved with 'Volunteer Hall' and dated to 1867. There is a coped chimney stack with a clay can at each of the front corners. The roof has a platform apex with grey slates and the windows and doors to the principal elevation have fixed, multi-pane glazing. There is a later powder-coated metal and glazed entrance outshot (added circa 2000) and an earlier lean-to addition to the south elevation.

The interior was seen in 2016. The entrance has been remodelled for use as a community centre with a reception area, café and partitioned office space extending into the hall area. The hall has a king post trussed ceiling, with the timber arch braces supported on stone corbels, and each tie beam has two decorative timber bosses.

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 former Volunteer Drill Hall, Back Row, Selkirk was built in 1867. It is understood to have been built for the Selkirk Rifle Volunteer Corps, also known as the 'Ettrick Forest Rifles'. Newspaper notices between 1868 and 1910 show that the Selkirk Volunteer Hall was 'very popular as a meeting place' (Southern Reporter, 28 April 1910) for various local organisations and played host to events including dances, music recitals, comic operas, dramas, flower shows and the 2nd Selkirk Rifle Volunteer's annual ball for many years. In 1909 and 1910, the Southern Reporter

newspaper drew attention to confusion over 'the erection and ownership' of the volunteer hall 'becoming the subject of an enquiry' (Southern Reporter, 28 April 1910). The building passed into the ownership of the Territorial Force, which replaced the volunteer system after 1908. By 1914 the Volunteer Hall was the drill station of "C" Squadron, Lothian & Border Horse and base for "H" Company, 4th battalion, King's Own Scottish Borderers. The Selkirk Home Guard held their 'farewell' social evening at the hall in 1944 (Southern Reporter, 30 November 1944).

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 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 understood 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.

Funds for the construction of drill halls often came from the patronage of local land or business owners or from the subscriptions of the volunteers and local fundraising efforts. The Selkirk Volunteer Hall has an embellished, carved stone frontage of some quality which suggests that additional funds for the building, over and above what may have been considered practically necessary, were raised in this way. 35 Back Row is a good example of a purpose-built former drill hall. While the building has been altered, principally during the late 20th century, it remains an early example of the type, built well before the main period of drill hall construction between 1880 and 1910.

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 interior of the former Selkirk Volunteer Hall has been altered following its change of use to a local community centre in the late 20th century. The building retains its timber frame truss ceiling with stone corbels, although the hall itself has been reduced in size by the addition of partitioned offices extending into the south end of the hall area..

The Selkirk volunteer hall features a wide front entrance which was a typical feature to allow large groups of drill marching volunteers to enter and exit the building with ease.

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 the Back Row hall is typical within the building type, with the former administration area in the front section and the large hall space behind. As noted above, the internal layout has been altered with partitioned offices extending into the south end of the hall area but structurally the hall is intact and can still be easily recognised and with the exception of the later entrance outshot the footprint of the building is largely unchanged from that shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map (published 1899).

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 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 eye-catching or architecturally ambitious, while larger forces or headquarter buildings were more likely to be overtly military in appearance.

The former Volunteer Hall, Back Row, Selkirk is a good example of a purpose-built volunteer drill hall, using good quality stone and distinctive Classically-influenced detailing, such as a consoled pediment doorpiece and a rectangular plaque flanked

by scrolled consoles to the principal elevation. The classical style is less common than other styles, such as Scots Baronial, for a drill hall.

Setting

The former Selkirk Volunteer Hall, Back Row is very prominent on the street, set forward from the other buildings and noticeably different in style. The building lies within the Selkirk Conservation Area.

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. 51-52

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 former drill hall at Bruce Street has particular interest under a.

- a. the former drill hall in Selkirk is notable within the building type because of the good quality materials and distinguishing classical detailing to the principal elevation.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

The former Volunteer Hall, Back Row, Selkirk is an early and good example of a purpose-built volunteer drill hall in the Borders region. Built in the wake of the Volunteer Act of 1863, the hall uses good quality materials and distinctive Classically-influenced principal elevation which has not been significantly altered. It has a prominent presence on a street just to the east of Selkirk town centre. 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 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. The former Volunteer Hall, Back Row is an early and good example of its building type which has been altered. We consider that the current category C continues to be the most appropriate category.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID: 231556

Maps

Ordnance Survey (revised 1897, published 1899) Selkirkshire 012.05 (includes: Selkirk), 25 Inches to the Mile. 2nd Edition. London: Ordnance Survey.

Printed Sources

The Southern Reporter (28 April 1910; 30 November 1944).

Cruft K. et al. (2006) *The Buildings of Scotland: Borders*. London: Penguin Books. p.674.

Osborne M. (2006) *Always Ready: Drill Halls of Britain's Volunteer Force*. Partizan Press. p.290.

Westlake R. (2010) *Tracing the Rifle Volunteers, 1859-1908: A Guide for Military and Family and Family Historians*. West Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Publishing. p.209.

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

Online Sources

Historic Scotland/Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (2013) World War One Audit Project at <http://canmore.org.uk/event/965980> [accessed 23/03/2016].

* 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/>