



Case information

Case ID	300016465
File Reference	HGH/B/CC/87
Name of Site	Former Drill Hall, Princes Street, Stirling

Local Authority	Stirling Council		
National Grid Reference	NS 79468 93751		
Designation No. (if any)	LB41103		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	B
Case Type	Amendment		

Received/Start Date	2015 [Drill Hall Listing Review]
Decision Date	25/05/2016

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge the Former Drill Hall Offices, Princes Street continues to meet the criteria for listing. The statutory listing address and the listed building record have been amended.

Previous Statutory Address	Drillhall, Princes Street (Front Building Only)
Amended Statutory Address	Former Drill Hall Offices (excluding hall to rear), Princes Street, Stirling

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

This building was listed at category B on 03/02/1978 and is situated within Stirling Conservation Area.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The former drill hall was considered for amendment as part of the Drill Hall Listing Review 2015-16 and was visited on 07/08/2015. The exterior and interior of the building 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/>

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria*

Former Drill Hall Offices (excluding hall to rear), Princes Street, Stirling

1. Description

This 2-storey, 3-bay, approximately square plan, Scottish Baronial style former drill hall offices was designed by Ebenezer Simpson and built in 1892. It was altered at various times including 1911 and 1935. 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 hall at the rear.

It is built of squared rubble with finely droved ashlar dressings and is situated in a conspicuous position at the upper end of Princes Street. The southwest (Princes Street) elevation has a crowstepped wallhead gable between broad twin tourelles and a moulded doorcase at the top of a short flight of steps. The doorcase is surmounted by a carved panel inserted in an arched aedicule. The carved letters '4 V B' (4th Volunteer Battalion) are in the pediment and there is a crest of the regiment (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) with a boar's head and a wild cat in the panel below flanked by the carved letters 'D M F'. The triangular pediment above the central first floor window bears the date 1892. The base of the tourelles are battered and there is a cill course with carved water spout features and an eaves course. The window architraves are mainly chamfered and the ground floor windows are mainly two-pane glazing in timber sash and case windows, while the first floor has 16-pane glazing in the upper sash and a single pane lower sash. There are grey slates on the roof and corniced chimney stacks with red clay cans.

The interior was seen in 2015. In the ground floor front rooms some late 19th century details survive including curved timber architraves to windows with shutters and curved plaster cornices

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

A new drill hall in Stirling was first considered in 1891. In April of that year the first steps were taken toward erecting a 'suitable headquarters and drill hall for the regiment' (Falkirk Herald, 18 April 1891). In September 1859 the Stirling Volunteers (about 100 men strong) had been meeting for drill practice for about two months. (The Dunfermline Press, 29 September 1859). An earlier drill hall in Stirling had been

within the precincts of the castle and as it was deemed unsightly it was taken down some time before the 1890s. The volunteers were offered a site in Princes Street and a subscription fund initiated shortly after. The building was to cost £2000, which is a relatively modest sum for a large hall. By comparison East Claremont Street Hall in Edinburgh, built in 1912, was to cost £7000, while a more standard one in a provincial town would usually cost about £1500.

This building was the headquarters and drill hall for the 4th Battalion of the Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers. The building is dated 1892, but it is not yet clear when precisely the building was completed. In June 1893 a report appeared in the 'Stirling Observer' which indicated that the hall had been in use for some time, and the finishing touches may well have been being made in the autumn of 1892. In August 1892 Colonel D McFadyen, commanding officer of the 4th Battalion of the Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers, was decorated for long service (he had been serving as a volunteer for 23 years at that time) and it may be in recognition of this that his initials 'DMF' were inscribed on the front of the building.

The footprint of the building has remained unchanged from that shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map (revised 1896, published 1898). However, it seems that a number of changes have been made, particularly to the rear part of the building which at some point may have been rebuilt in brick. The hall itself is not considered to be of special interest in listing terms and is proposed to be excluded from the listing. A report in the Scotsman of 7 March 1935, records that improvements were made to the building in 1935, including the installation of central heating, the replacement of the stone floor with a wooden floor and additional accommodation for a recreation room and sergeants' room.

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 Volunteers Corps in defended coastal towns) 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 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.

In terms of age the Princes Street drill hall falls within the busiest period of drill hall building, which lasted from 1880-1910. However what distinguishes it from other drill halls of this period is the good Baronial detailing of the office section and its commanding position in on the street in central Stirling.

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 interiors of the two rooms in the towers at the front of the Princes Street drill hall and the hallway between them retain some Victorian details such as some timberwork and plaster cornices. The exterior 2-leaf door on the principal elevation and that on the northeast elevation date from the 1890s, as does the interior lobby door with small pane glazing. The detailing is typical for a drill hall of this date. Elsewhere the building has been comprehensively changed and few elements of the rooms elsewhere recognisably date from the 1890s.

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 of this building was dictated by the constricted site created by the steep slope of the hill on the west side. The hall is positioned at right angles to the office building at the front (normally the long axis of the hall would run backwards from the offices). Internally apart from the two ground floor rooms which originally

accommodated offices, little of the 1890s layout is still recognisable. The rooms above which were accommodation for the Sergeant Major are still in domestic use [2015].

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 architect who designed the building was Ebenezer Simpson (1854-1934). He is thought to have made alterations to the Bridge of Teith Church in about 1890 and possibly undertook some work on the country house, Dollarbeg, at about the same time. However, the Drill Hall in Stirling is possibly the first new building he designed in independent practice, and he may have secured the commission because he was a keen volunteer. In 1889 along with Colonel McFadyen and various other officers representing the 4th Battalion he attended a reception for the Forth Volunteer Brigade given by The Lord High Commissioners at Holyrood Palace. Simpson was a captain with the 4th Stirlingshire Volunteer Battalion by 1892, and he was promoted to Major in 1900, by at least 1905 he had reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and by 1907 was Colonel and commanding officer of the Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers.

Simpson's choice of the Scottish Baronial style for the headquarters and hall is significant. It was clearly an attempt to convey the military purpose of the hall and make a definitive architectural statement to highlight the significance of the building. Simpson used a variety of styles for his designs: the Museum Hall at Bridge of Allan (designed while still in his father's practice) is Italian Romanesque while his later work is mainly free Jacobean. However where the need arose he used the Baronial style – for example in his reconstruction of Auchentroig House (1901-1903) and here at the drill hall. The principal elevation of this drill hall has a wealth of good stonework details, such as carved panels, an imposing moulded doorcase and broad twin tourelles that dominate this elevation.

Setting

Princes Street, in which the building is situated, is a steeply sloping cul-de-sac on the lower east side of the castle hill in Stirling. The road was formed in the late 19th century (the street does not appear on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map, surveyed 1860, published 1865) and the buildings on it are mainly domestic. The former drill hall sits at the higher end of the street, facing down the slope, and this dominant position enhances the sense of the building's importance.

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 on Princes Street, Stirling has particular interest under a and d

- a. This building is a significant example of the offices section for a late 19th century drill hall designed in the Scottish Baronial style, with a wealth of good stonework details.
- d. The exterior of the front part of the building has undergone little change since the late 19th century.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

The former drill hall and headquarters of the 4th Volunteer Battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders is a very good example of this building type and is one of the best detailed examples of a drill hall in central Scotland. The building was designed in 1892 by the prominent local architect Ebenezer Simpson and is designed in the Scottish Baronial style, which was used in a number of drill hall designs throughout Scotland because of its military connotations. The principal elevation has a wealth of good stonework details, such as carved panels, an imposing moulded doorcase and broad twin tourelles that dominate this elevation. It is in a commanding position at the top of Princes Street and makes a good contribution to this largely domestic street in this part of Stirling.

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

The hall at the rear of the building has been altered and partially rebuilt in brick. It is not considered of special interest in listing terms at the time of this review and 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 B denotes buildings of regional or more than local importance; or major examples of some particular period, style or building type, which may have been

altered. In listing terms the interest of the former drill hall and office complex in Princes Street Stirling is considered to be of regional importance. Therefore category B continues to be the most appropriate category of listing.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 221329

Maps

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1860, published 1865) Stirling Sheet XVII.3 (Combined). 25 inches to the mile. 1st Edition. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1898, published 1896) Stirlingshire 017.03 (includes: St Ninians; Stirling). 25 inches to the mile. 2nd Edition. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Printed Sources

Dundee Courier (4 January 1911) p.4.

Dunfermline Press (29 September 1859) p.2.

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Falkirk Herald (20 August 1892) p.4.

Falkirk Herald (25 January 1908).

Falkirk Herald (8 June 1907).

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

The Scotsman (9 January 1925) p.16.

The Scotsman 7 March 1935, p.7

Stirling Observer 7 June 1893

Online Sources

The London Gazette (1 May 1900) at <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/27188/page/2767/data.pdf> [accessed 10/01/2016]

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. *Ebenezer Simpson* at http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201207 [accessed 22/02/2016]

* 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/>