



Case information

Case ID	300017341		
File Reference	HGH/B/GE/94		
Name of Site	Harvest Centre, 10 Greyfriars Street, Elgin		
Local Authority	Moray Council		
National Grid Reference	NJ 21757 62774		
Designation No. (if any)	LB52400		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	N/A
Case Type	Designation		
Received/Start Date	03/08/2015		
Decision Date	23/08/2016		

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Harvest Centre is considered to meet the criteria for listing at category C. The building has been designated (listed).

Previous Statutory Address	N/A
New Statutory Address	Harvest Centre (former St Giles Parish Church Hall), 10 Greyfriars Street, Elgin

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The building is within the Elgin High Street Conservation Area.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

Harvest Centre was visited on 12/02/2016 and the exterior and interior were seen at this visit.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The building was found to 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

Contact	Rosanne Watts, Senior Designations Officer rosanne.watts@hes.scot, 0131 668 8091
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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria*

Harvest Centre (former St Giles Parish Church Hall), 10 Greyfriars Street, Elgin

1. Description

Harvest Centre was designed by John Wittet in 1897 and is a double height, Scots Baronial style, roughly rectangular plan former church hall for St. Giles Parish Church. It is constructed in bullfaced stone with crowstepped gables and the openings predominantly have roll-moulded surrounds. There are a variety of late 19th century single-storey, piended roofed outshots to the rear and the east side of the building.

The principal (south) elevation has a central and slightly advanced, entrance gable and the bays flanking this gable have a stone balustrade. The bay to left of the entrance gable is curved and there is a datestone between the windows. The two-leaf timber entrance door has a decorative leaded fanlight and is set in a shallow arched surround. The entrance is flanked by single windows, and the door and windows are all under a stepped hoodmould. Above the entrance door is a six-light window with stone mullions and transom and above this is semicircular carved panel topped by a thistle. The gable has a Latin cross finial.

The windows have a variety of glazing patterns in timber frames and the glass is predominantly coloured. The roof has grey slates, clay ridge tiles and ventilators. The slating to the curved bay is in a fishscale pattern.

The interior was seen in 2016 and comprises a double-height hall with ancillary rooms to the rear and west of the plan. The floor of the entrance lobby has red quarry tiles with a black tiled border. There are panelled timber doors throughout the building. The ancillary rooms have timber boarding to dado height and simple corncicing. The main hall has arched-braced roof trusses on scrolled stone corbels and there is vertically boarded timber to a dado around the walls. A partition has been added to the gallery to create a first floor office; the late 19th century panelled timber balustrade and the columns supporting the gallery are intact.

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

Harvest Centre was built as St Giles Parish Church hall. It was designed in 1897 by John Wittet (1862-1952) whilst part of the Elgin based practice, A and W Reid and Wittet.

St Giles Church was built 1825-1828 by Archibald Simpson. Located on the High Street the church building is in a prominent position in the centre of Elgin and is an impressive Greek Revival design (listed at category A, LB30713). The church hall is under 500 metres away to the southeast from St Giles and was commissioned in recognition of the parish church's need for additional space, and in particular a place to hold their Sunday Schools. Newspaper articles at the time of its opening note of its role in providing religious education and its use as a space for hosting church meeting groups.

Churches are a prolific building type in Scotland and many of them have an associated church hall. The 1696 Education Act established the principle of a school for every parish in Scotland. However attendance was not compulsory and from the late 18th century the Sunday School movement was established to supplement education. As was noted in Reverend Marshall's opening ceremony speech for the hall in 1897 (The Elgin Courant, 14/06/1897), the Sunday School movement grew significantly in Scotland after the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act which placed responsibility for education in the hands of locally elected school boards and elementary education was made compulsory for all children aged 5 to 13. Churches recognised that religious education was no longer receiving as much attention by teachers as it had prior to this act, when education had been administered by parish schools. Consequently churches needed a suitable space to accommodate their growing community activities. Church halls are typically additions to existing churches or repurposed buildings (often in association with Free Church or parish school buildings).

Buildings put up between 1840 and 1945 which are of special architectural or historic interest and of definite character either individually or as part of a group may be listed. There are currently over 300 church halls listed in Scotland, of which just under 50 are standalone and purpose built church halls. The majority of these date to the end of the 19th century.

Constructed at the end of the 19th century Harvest Centre was built in the most significant period of church hall construction in Scotland. It is a notable example of its relatively common building type because of its scale and good stonework particularly to its principal elevation and consequently it has a significant streetscape presence.

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

In comparison to a church the interior of church halls were often more modest and utilitarian. The interior of Harvest Centre has some good timberwork to the main hall, but it is not exceptional for its late 19th century date. The interior has been

altered by the addition of a partition wall at the gallery. However, the original interior spaces are clearly visible by the survival of the gallery balustrade and the roof trusses to the first floor office (former gallery).

Plan form

Arranged around a large central hall with ancillary rooms to the rear and side, the plan form of the hall is unexceptional and has been altered by the loss of the gallery.

Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality

Church halls were often designed to reflect the architectural style of the church but are typically plainer and more utilitarian structures. This church hall cannot be seen from St Giles Church and the design of these two buildings are very different.

Harvest Centre has good stonework and noteworthy architectural detailing, particularly to its principal elevation, including a carved panel above the first floor window, balustrading and a distinctive bowed corner bay with fishscale roof. The stone entrance to the single storey ancillary rooms to the left of the principal elevation is a later addition and is not shown on Wittet's original architectural drawings. However, with the exception of this entrance the principal elevation remains largely unchanged from when it was built.

John Wittet, became a partner in A and W Reid's architectural firm in 1893, following William Reid's death that same year. The second brother, Alexander Reid died in March 1897, which is the year that this church hall was built. Alexander's son, William Charles, was now partnered in the firm, but given the date and the passing of both original Reid brothers, it could be considered that the hall was one of the first buildings Wittet designed relatively independently and could be seen as important in defining his own style. The same could be said for the Grand Hotel, located metres away on the corner of South Street and Academy Street, which was designed by Wittet and built in 1898. It is similar to the church hall as it is in a Scots Baronial style and constructed in bull-faced rubble. Wittet parted ways with Reid in 1901, eventually setting up his own practice and becoming a defining figurehead in Elgin and Moray architecture.

In total, Wittet worked on 26 churches (including extensions and interiors) but only fully designed four during his career. He designed five church halls, including Hopeman Free Church in Moray (1895), Elgin Free Church Hall on South Street (1903, which is listed together with the church at category B, LB30890), the United Free Church hall in Grantown-on-Spey (1912) and the Aberlour Parish Church hall in Banffshire.

Setting

Greyfriars Street, is close to the centre of Elgin, just to the south of the High Street. The majority of the buildings on this street date from the 19th century, although there are some substantial late 20th century buildings, including Moray Council offices to the east end of Greyfriars Street and the Citizens Advice Bureau office immediately opposite Harvest Centre. Harvest Centre is a significant building in the streetscape of Greyfriars Street because of its scale and good stonework detailing to the street

elevation. It is diagonally opposite the former Presbyterian Church (listed at category C, LB30837), built by A and W Reid in 1857-8.

Regional variations

There are no known regional variations.

2.3 Close Historical Associations

There are no known associations with a person or event of national importance at present (2016).

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 a grouping of buildings*
- d. authenticity*

When working with the principles of listing Harvest Centre has particular interest under a and d.

a. It is a good example of its building type and an early work of John Wittet, a renowned local architect . It has good stonework to its principal elevation and is a distinctive building in the streetscape.

d. With the exception of the later stone frontage to the ancillary rooms, the principal elevation is largely unchanged from when it was built in the late 19th century. Internally the building has been altered by the partitioning of the gallery at the south end of the main hall, however the original plan form and interior detailing is still visible.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

Designed and built in 1897 Harvest Centre (former church hall) is a notable example of its building type and is an early work of the prominent local architect, John Wittet. Its principal elevation is largely unaltered and retains good stonework including a carved panel above the first floor window, balustrading and a distinctive bowed corner bay with fishscale roof. It is a distinctive building in the streetscape of Greyfriars Street.

In our current state of knowledge it meets 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: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/what-is-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. For its relatively prolific building type the interest of Harvest Centre in listing terms is considered to be of local importance.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Archives

Elgin Library. Architectural drawings of Elgin Parish Church Hall. Reference: DAWD P 3309/1, 2, 3 and 4.

Maps

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1904, published 1905) Elginshire 007.16 (includes: Elgin; St Andrews Lhanbryd). 25 inches to 1 mile. 2nd Edition. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Printed Sources

The Elgin Courant (11/06/1897) Elgin Parish Church Hall. p.6.

The Elgin Courant (15/06/1897) Opening of Elgin Parish Church Hall. p.7.

* 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/>