



Case information

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| Case ID | 300018183 |
| File Reference | HGH/B/TA/182 |
| Name of Site | Upper North Water Bridge |

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|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Local Authority | See table below | | |
| National Grid Reference | NO 65266 66139 | | |
| Designation No. (if any) | See table below | | |
| Designation Type | Listed Building | Current Category of Listing | A |
| Case Type | See table below | | |

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Received/Start Date | 2013 [Angus Dual Designation] |
| Decision Date | 31/08/2016 |

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Upper North Water Bridge continues to meet the criteria for listing. The statutory listing address and the listed building record has been amended. The category of listing remains at A.

To ensure that there are no duplicate listing entries, the listing in Angus Council area has been removed (delisted) and the listing in Aberdeenshire Council area has been retained.

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Previous Statutory Address | See table below |
| Amended Statutory Address | Upper North Water Bridge over the North Esk River, near Bridgend |

| Current statutory address | LB number | Current Category of Listing | Local Authority | Proposed action |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Upper North Water Bridge | LB13892 | A | Aberdeenshire | Retain at category A |
| Upper North Water Bridge | LB11170 | A | Angus | Remove from the list as duplicate listing |

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The bridge spans two local authority areas and, as was the case with some early bridge listings, it was incorrectly listed in both Angus and Aberdeenshire, resulting in two listings for the one structure. This bridge was listed at category A on 11/06/1971. It was listed again at category A on 18/06/1972.

The bridge was also designated as a scheduled monument on the 06/10/1970. Following a review of sites which were both listed and scheduled, the bridge was removed from the schedule (descheduled) on the 26/03/2014.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

Both of the listings of Upper North Water Bridge were reviewed as part of the Angus Dual Designations project. The bridge was visited on the 11/10/2013.

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

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|----------------|---|
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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria*

Upper North Water Bridge over the North Esk River, near Bridgend

1. Description

A 3-span, ribbed segmental arched bridge over the North Esk, which dates from the 16th century bridge, repaired 1669 and repaired and widened in 1841-42 by John Gibb, Engineer. It is constructed from squared and coursed rubble with ashlar dressings. There are 5 square ribs of dressed stone to the intrados. It has triangular cutwaters and the parapet has railings.

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

Upper North Water Bridge was built in the 16th century, sometime between 1520 and 1590. The Old Statistical Account (1791-99) attributes its construction to John Erskine of Dun (1508-1591). Erskine was a friend of John Knox, the leader of the Protestant Reformation in Scotland, and Erskine himself was a religious reformer who was appointed superintendent of the reformed church of Scotland for Angus and Mearns in 1560. Paxton et al. dates the bridge to the 1520s (2007, p.62) because of its similarity in design and construction with the Bridge of Dee at Aberdeen, which is dated 1520 and 1523 (LB20068). Both bridges have ribbed arches, which is a rare construction detail. Paxton asserts that both bridges were built under the aegis of Bishop Gavin Dunbar by Thomas Franche, master mason, to the design of Alexander Galloway Minister of Kinkeld, although this attribution refutes the Old Statistical Account.

Since its construction the bridge has been repaired and widened, and the extent of the 16th century and 19th century fabric is now unclear. In 1669, David Erskine of Dun (descendant and successor of John Erskine) repaired the bridge and petitioned Parliament to make it a toll bridge in order to keep it in good repair (to the southwest of the bridge is a circa 1800 tollhouse, which is listed separately at category C, LB11172). The new Statistical Account of Marykirk Parish, written in 1842, describes the bridge as being repaired in the summer of that year. It is likely that this work including the widening of the bridge including the cutwaters. The previous list description, written in 1972, credits the repair and widening of this bridge to the Aberdeen engineer, John Gibb.

Buildings erected before 1840 which are of notable quality and survive predominantly in their original form have a strong case for listing. Pre-18th century bridges are rare and listed examples in Angus and Aberdeenshire include the 13th century Brechin Bridge (LB22549) and the aforementioned Bridge of Dee in Aberdeen, both of which are listed at A. Other A-listed bridges date from the end of the 18th century, such as the Bridge of Dun (LB4677) and Lower North Water Bridge (LB16330).

Upper North Water Bridge is a rare example of a 16th century bridge and an unusual and very rare example of a bridge with ribbed arches. With 3 wide segmental arches, the bridge is significant in size and is a prominent feature in the rural landscape. The scale and design detailing demonstrates its importance as a principal thoroughfare.

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

N/A

Plan form

N/A

Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality

The bridge has good stonework detailing from the 16th and 19th century. Of particular interest are the 5 dressed stone, square ribs to each segmental arch, a rare construction detail.

John Gibb (1776-1850) was a civil engineer whose work includes harbours, bridges, roads, lighthouses and railways. He was a close associate of the renowned engineer Thomas Telford after working with him on the reconstruction of Aberdeen Harbour (1809-1816).

Setting

The bridge is a prominent feature in the landscape and is visible from the A90. This major road is carried on a 20th century river crossing that superseded the Upper North Water Bridge.

Regional variations

The bridge shows similarities with the Bridge of Dee in Aberdeen, suggesting a regional preference for ribbed arches

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 Upper North Water Bridge has particular interest under a and d.

- a. Upper North Water Bridge is a fine and rare example of a 16th century bridge and is very rare example of a bridge with ribbed arches.
- d. The bridge has not been unaltered greatly since the earlier 19th century.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

Upper North Water Bridge is a fine and rare example of a 16th century bridge and is very rare example of a bridge with ribbed arches. With 3 wide segmental arches, the bridge is significant in size and is a prominent feature in the rural landscape. The scale of the bridge and its stonework detailing demonstrates its historical importance as a principal thoroughfare.

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

Category A is for buildings of national or international importance, either architectural or historic; or fine, little-altered examples of some particular period, style or building type. The bridge is considered to be of national interest because of its rarity in terms of age and ribbed arches.

6. Other Information

In the 20th century a bridge was constructed to the west to carry the A90 dual carriageway and Upper North Water Bridge ceased to be the principal route to Aberdeen. Since this time the old road has been partially blocked and today the bridge is used by pedestrians and cyclists (2016).

7. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 35883

Printed Sources

New Statistical Account (1834-45) *Account of 1834-45 Vol XI: Craig and Logie Perth parish, County of Forfar*. p.268

New Statistical Account (1834-45) *Account of 1834-45 vol.11 p.297 : Marykirk, County of Kincardine*. p.302.

Old Statistical Account (1791-99) *Account of 1791-99 vol.IX: Logie Pert, County of Forfar*. p.53-54.

Paxton R. and Shipway J. (2007) *Civil Engineering heritage: Scotland Highlands and Islands*. London: Thomas Telford Ltd. p. 62-3.

Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Scotland, CANMORE, *Upper North Water Bridge* <http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/35883/> [accessed 03/04/2014].

Skempton, A. (ed) (2002) *Biographical Dictionary of Civil Engineers Vol. 1 1500-1830 - John Gibb* London: Thomas Telford Publishing. p.248-250.

Warden, A. J. (1881) *Angus or Forfarshire, the land and its people, descriptive and historical*. Dundee. p.234.

Online Sources

Cameron, A. C (1899) *The History of Fettercairn, Chapter XXI—Bridges, Fords, and Ferries*. Paisley [available at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/fettercairn/chapter21.htm>] [viewed on 2/03/2014].

* 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/>