



Case information

Case ID	300017845		
File Reference	HGH/B/TA/177		
Name of Site	3 Clerk Street, Brechin		
Local Authority	Angus Council		
National Grid Reference	NO 59762 60332		
Designation No. (if any)	LB22462		
Designation Type	Listed Building	Current Category of Listing	C
Case Type	Amendment		
Received/Start Date	22/03/2016		
Decision Date	13/09/2016		

1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, 3 Clerk Street Brechin 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 C.

Current Statutory Address	3 Clerk Street
Proposed Statutory Address	3 Clerk Street, excluding 1930s extension to bank to north and rear extensions to west, Brechin

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

3 Clerk Street, Brechin was listed at category C on 05/04/1979.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

3 Clerk Street, Brechin was visited on 05/05/2016.

The exterior and interior were seen and the section of the building which forms part of the bank was also seen at that time.

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/>

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria*

3 Clerk Street, excluding 1930s bank extension to north and rear extensions to west, Brechin

1. Description

This building was probably originally constructed as a town house in 1829 and adapted for use as the house and office for the agent of the British Linen Bank in 1836. It was subsequently remodelled by the architectural practice Wardrop and Reid in 1878. 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 1930s bank extension to north and rear extensions to west.

The former bank and bank house is built in a classical style comprising a 3-bay, 3-storey block with a slightly lower wing of one bay to the south and is approximately L-plan in shape. The front of the building is constructed in coursed ashlar with polished ashlar dressings and the sides and rear are built of coursed squared rubble. It has a deep overhanging cornice at eaves level and with cornices over the windows on the upper floor, the central window has scrolled brackets. The central doorway has pilasters and a cornice and is slightly advanced from the main building line.

There is mainly 4-pane glazing in timber sash and case windows to the front elevation and some small pane glazing to the rear and there are grey slates to the roof. There are corniced chimneystacks with yellow clay cans.

The interior which was seen in 2016 has fine 19th century decorative plasterwork in the hall and some upper floor rooms, timber 6-panelled doors and an unusual decorative architrave to one door in an upper floor room. The rooms at the right of the hall on the ground floor (first laid out as a bedroom then as a dining room) are in separate ownership with access from number 5 Clerk Street.

2. Assessment Against the Listing Criteria (SHEP, 2011) pp74-75

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

Although Clerk Street is indicated on John Wood's map of 1825, the bank building is not depicted at this date. The *New Statistical Account* dating from 1834-35 indicates that there was only one savings bank in Brechin confirming that the British Linen Bank was not as yet in place at this date. In his 'History of Brechin to 1864' David

Dakers Black states that the British Linen Bank opened business in Brechin in 1836. Black was Town Clerk of Brechin from 1826 and agent for the British Linen Bank from 1836 and so the opening date for the bank is reliable. The census for 1841 confirms that Black as the bank agent, and his family were living at this address by that date.

In his book Black also records that Clerk Street was so named because he as town clerk had built a house in the street in 1829 on ground expressly granted by the Town Council for this purpose. It would seem likely that the house was adapted in 1836 by the British Linen Bank when Black became agent at that time. He remained as the bank agent until the 1870s, probably until his death in 1875. As well as being Town Clerk of Brechin, he had various other business interests including agent for the Standard Life Assurance Company, factor for the proprietor of Newtonmill.

The building was remodelled in 1878 adding a grand Italian balustrade not long after the arrival of a new agent, William M Valentine with his wife and three children. The second edition Ordnance Survey map (revised 1901) shows the same footprint as the 1st edition map but with the addition of a new bank premises which are a long narrow building along the north side of the earlier building running from the street front toward the west.

The next phase of alterations which were mainly in the bank extension to the north were made in 1934 by Carver Symon & Ross. The changes would seem to have involved the reconstruction of the right hand wing and raising the single storey bank of 1878 from one to two storeys and remodelling the façade, (although the bank section of the building does not form part of this listing). However the footprint of the buildings, the bank agent's house and the bank, still remain largely as they were in 1901. Most of the 1878 additions to the elevation were removed in the late 20th century.

The British Linen Bank which was founded as a company for improving the manufacture of linen in Scotland in the 1740s but which became a banking company in 1767 was purchased by Barclays in 1919 and was sold to the Bank of Scotland by Barclays in 1970. Changes have been made to the ground floor and interiors since that date.

It is typical of a bank of the 1830s that the offices and house for the bank agent were within one building. However it is relatively rare for this arrangement to have survived in a recognisable form with the spaces within the buildings still interlocked. See under 'Plan Form' below for further details. The house and offices remained physically interlinked until about 30 years ago. Some current bank employees recall going through an interconnecting door to speak to the manager while he was in the house section.

Buildings erected before 1840 which are of notable quality and survive predominantly in their original form have a strong case for listing. The core of this building with a number of surviving features dating from the late 1820s with modifications in 1836 and 1878. The survival of a bank and manager or agent's

house in a recognisable form is significant. Good surviving examples of banks with attached agents' houses dating from the early 19th century are rare and fewer than 20 are known to be listed (2016). Examples can be found at Dumfries and Forres both of which date from the 1820s and at Kirriemuir which dates from the late 1830s but these are relatively unusual. The former bank building in Brechin is a good surviving example of the type.

2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest

Interior

Drawings which survive in the Rowand Anderson Collection in Edinburgh University Library show the appearance of the building in 1836 and the changes which were made in 1878. There are notable surviving features from the 1820s or 1830s, including the curved stair with iron balusters and timber railing, the decorative plaster cornices in the hall and some first floor rooms and on the first floor the elaborate architrave over the door with reeded pilasters in what was the original drawing room (see below under Plan Form). A number of the timber panelled doors would seem to date from this period and one timber chimneypiece in a first floor bedroom. The original buffet niche is still in evidence in what was originally the dining room on the first floor.

Plan form

In the 1830s both the dining room and the drawing room were located on the first floor with bedrooms on the ground floor. This is a very unusual layout as generally the dining room would be located on the ground floor. Numerous examples of this more usual arrangement dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries can be found – for example in some of the houses in the New Town of Edinburgh. The business part of the building was accessed via a separate entrance in the right hand wing. This consisted of a lobby, a top-lit telling room and the agent's room which was at the rear of the main block with access both from the bank area in the wing and from the hallway of the house. The reasons for this unusual plan with public rooms on the first floor may be connected with security. An intruder in the agent's room where the safe was held would be heard from the adjacent bedroom.

The 1878 alterations increased the bank accommodation. A single storey extension was added at the north. Access was still maintained from the house as well as from the street via a lobby. A more traditional arrangement was introduced with the dining room moving to the ground floor. The walls surrounding new book safe and cash safe were strengthened and thickened.

The subsequent separation of the bank from the house has involved further changes and the rooms to the right or north of the main door on the ground floor are now in separate ownership (number 5 Clerk Street).

Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality

Drawings survive in the Rowand Anderson Collection in Edinburgh University Library for both the original scheme of the 1830s and for the alterations made in the 1870s.

The original bank building was a simple two storey building (three at the rear) with matching lower symmetrical side wings. If the bank was adapted from a house, these two side wings were probably added when it was converted. As noted above there was a separate entrance in the right hand wing for bank customers which led to a top-lit telling room and the agent's room. The building may well have been converted to bank use by George Angus. He was the architect to the British Linen Bank at this time and designed the company's bank premises in Kirriemuir in 1839 and that in Tain in 1845 (both of which are listed at category B). Like Brechin, the bank in Kirriemuir would seem to have contained both agent's house and business premises within one building. The surviving architectural detailing at Brechin, particularly in the interior of the building which is less altered, suggest an architect of considerable ability.

George Angus (1792-1845) began practising in the 1820s in Edinburgh and he obtained a number of commissions in Dundee by the 1830s. He was architect to the British Linen Bank by that date. His public buildings are often designed in a classical style although the bank in Brechin is plainer than some. It is possible that Angus was employed to adapt the David Black's existing house for use by the British Linen Bank in 1836 and this would explain why the building is plainer with less classical detailing than the near-contemporary Kirriemuir branch.

The main changes in 1878 were the extension of the bank section of the building with a single storey addition to the north and the addition of attic bedrooms with new dormers at the front of the building. The plain windows on the front elevation windows were given classical style mouldings and those on the ground floor enlarged. The balustrade at eaves level which was added at this date has since been removed. The extension to the north was reconstructed in the 1930s. The 1878 alterations were executed by the practice Wardrop & Reid which was active from 1874 to 1883. After the death of his partner Thomas Brown, James Maitland Wardrop formed a partnership with George Reid, his chief assistant and younger brother of the Reids of Elgin. The practice was the root of the prolific and highly regarded practice of Robert Rowand Anderson. In 1876 the firm succeeded the ailing David Cousin as architects to the British Linen Bank.

The remodelling of the facade of the bank by Wardrop & Reid was Italianate in style with a balustrade at eaves level and windows and doors with pediments and open pediments. The use of the Italian Renaissance style in architecture was typical for public buildings at this date and is also typical of the work of the practice at this date. Wardrop & Reid favoured a subdued Italianate style for their classical designs (for example the former British Linen Banks in Langolm and Galashiels) while occasionally experimenting with a neo-Georgian style in some country house commissions. Some of the detailing at Brechin was removed in the 1930s alterations and in late 20th century repair work. However the fine window mouldings and tall corniced stacks are still in place.

Setting

Positioned on Clerk Street, one of the main streets in Brechin, the former bank building is particularly prominent in the streetscape. The line of Clerk Street appears on John Wood's map of 1825. It had been officially formed about 1829 and was so named because of this house built there by David D Black, town clerk, which, it

appears, became the British Linen Bank premises. The street is largely composed of 19th century single and two-storey buildings, largely commercial in character but with some public and domestic buildings.

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).

David Dakers Black who was a prominent figure in Brechin from the 1820s until the 1870s would seem to have commissioned the building and remained there as agent to the British Linen Bank from 1836 until the 1870s. He was a solicitor but also had varied business interests as well as being Town Clark of Brechin from 1826 until the mid-1860s. He published a book on the history of the town in 1867.

3. Working with the Principles of Listing (SHEP 2011, p76)

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 the grouping of building*
- d. authenticity*

When working with the principles of listing 3 Clerk Street, Brechin has particular interest under a and d

- a. 3 Clerk Street, Brechin is important as a building which evolved from private villa to bank premises and back to private villa in the late 20th century. It is unusual because of its combined function from 1836 until the later 20th century as house and office of the bank's agent, later manager, which is a relatively rare survival.
- b. The building is significant because of its good classical detailing and its scale which conveys its important status in a principal commercial street in the town.
- d. The building has been adapted and altered at various times but the footprint of the building remains largely unaltered from 1901 and a number of details dating from the early and later 19th century are still in place both inside and out.

4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria**

3 Clerk Street which dates from the 1820s with alterations in 1836, 1878 and 1934 is a good survival of a combined bank and house for the bank agent which remains, though now divided, in domestic and commercial use. The 1836 alterations were

almost certainly undertaken by the notable architect George Angus while the 1878 reconstruction work was designed by the prominent Edinburgh practice Wardrop & Reid. The classically proportioned street elevation is relatively unaltered and the moulded doorpiece and window architraves are good stonework details that add grandeur and interest to the building and are indicative of a building of status in the town. Located in a central position within the town this property contributes to the historic architectural streetscape of Brechin.

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 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 interest of 3 Clerk Street is the early date of the core of the building, the fact that it is an unusual survival of a combined bank and agent's house and its good classical detailing. Although the principal street elevation is relatively intact, the building has been altered, and therefore category C is considered the appropriate category of listing.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 193395

Maps

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Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1862, published 1865) 25 inches to the mile. 1st edition (Forfar Sheet XXVII.13). Southampton: Ordnance Survey

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Archives

Edinburgh University Library, Centre for Research Collections. Sir Robert Rowand Anderson Collection. E.Coll. no.94

Printed sources

Aberdeen Journal 21 July 1830, p.3

Black, David D (1867) *History of Brechin to 1864*. 2nd edition. Edinburgh: William Paterson.

New Statistical Account of Scotland (1834-35). *Brechin, County of Forfar. Account of 1834-35*, volume 11, p140

Perthshire Advertiser 17 January 1839, p.1

Online sources

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. Entry for George Angus

http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201152 [accessed 14/06/2016]

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. Entry for James Maitland Wardrop

http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200053 [accessed 14/06/2016]

* 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/>